

Make Waves: What you do today can change the world around you.

DAY 1

Read Philippians 4:5

When others look at you, what do they see? Maybe your freckles or your dimples, or your long legs. There are things about our physical appearance that are obvious and allow others to recognize us.

What if the qualities we've been talking about, the things that God wants to do in us to change the world us, were as obvious as the freckles across your nose? In other words, what if your kindness, or patience or gentleness, was the first thing someone noticed about you?

Jesus was gentle. This week, we looked at the story of how Jesus welcomed children with open arms. He used gentle words when He spoke. He was gentle in the way He treated His friends, the disciples, even when they didn't understand what He was trying to do.

Sometimes being gentle is the strongest choice you can make. So here's a question to think about: how can you be gentle in an obvious way this week?

DAY 2

Read Titus 3:2

When you hear the word "weakness" what do you think about? Does this equation come to mind?

Gentleness = Weakness

Choosing to be gentle towards someone else isn't a sign of weakness. Choosing to be gentle, to put others first, requires strength! It's not easy to live humbly but when you do, you're showing everyone around you just how strong you really are.

That's why the following equation is more accurate . . .

Gentleness = Strength

Every time you are careful with your words and actions, you are showing gentleness. Every time you remain calm instead of blowing up when something frustrates you, you are being gentle with others. Gentleness is the biggest strength test ever.

And the best part is, you don't have to do this on your own. God will help you. His strength and power are unlimited! Pray and ask God to help you have the strength to be gentle to everyone you meet this week.

Read Ephesians 4:2

When you hear the word *payback*, what do you think about? Maybe you think about money or stuff. If you borrow someone's pencil and accidentally lose it, you should pay them back by giving them a new pencil. If you borrow money to buy popcorn at the ball field, you should pay them back by buying their popcorn at the next game.

Sometimes, we are tempted to pay back a wrong for a wrong. When someone breaks something of ours, we feel like breaking something of theirs. Or when someone says something that hurts our feelings, we want to say something mean right back. But God tells us there's a better way.

What does it mean to "put up with one another?" Write your answer here:

Guess what? You are not perfect. You'll say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing sometimes. And the same is true for every person you meet. They're going to mess up too. Instead of looking for ways to pay someone back, God wants us to choose gentleness. After all, wouldn't you want someone to be gentle with you, to "put up with" you when you mess up?

God can give you the strength to be gentle.

Read Proverbs 15:1

Have you ever said something you didn't really mean just because you were mad? It's easy to let your emotions take over. And before you know it, you've let words fly that you normally would never say. The problem is that our words can hurt. And once unkind words are said, you can't take them back.

Today's verse reminds us that being gentle or careful with our words turns away anger. That means we can stop a problem or argument before it starts simply by thinking about what we say before we say it.

This week, before you speak, ask yourself the questions below. If the answer to any of them is "no," you probably shouldn't say it.

Think Before You Speak

1. Grab an index card and write the text as you see it below. Write the title, the three questions, and the verse.
2. Hang the card on the fridge or place it on the counter in your kitchen as a reminder to your whole family to use gentle words this week

THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

It is true?
Is it helpful?
Is it kind?

A gentle answer turns anger away. But mean words stir up anger. Proverbs 15:1, NIV