

## Daily Devotional, July 7, 2020 Be Gentle

***Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV)***

This is a great, familiar passage to most of us, one of those that really gives us joy and speaks to the heart. In these verses, Paul is telling the Philippians to rejoice, not to be anxious, to pray, and to present their requests to God so they can experience God's peace. These appeals from Paul go together well. But caught up in the midst of these verses, he tells the Philippians to, "Let your gentleness be evident to all."

So, what does rejoicing during trouble and not being anxious have to do with letting your gentleness become evident to those around you? When we are anxious, our thoughts affect everyone around us. If we allow anxiousness to rule over us, gentleness is hardly what others will experience from us.

Instead, what others will experience will be our irritability and the anxiousness in our faces. People will hear our frustration, our anger, and quite possibly, our complete lack of hope.

What we do with our anxiety is not simply about us, because it affects everyone around us. In fact, anxiousness, much like frustration, anger, and fear—can be contagious. Other people can "catch" our bad moods. But when we are able to take care of our own hearts, we then are able to love others well.

So, how can you let your "gentleness be evident to all" when you do *not* feel gentle?

First of all, I urge you to follow the second part of Philippians 4:6. "Pray... present your requests to God." Then, give Him thanks and release your burdens to Him.

When you turn over your cares to Christ, joy and peace will become a part of your existence, they will go with you in all that happens in your lives. When you do so, others will see the peace and joy that flows through you—and they will experience the gentleness that comes to all of us when we rest in the truth and the knowledge that we are loved.

***"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" Colossians 3:12.***

***Prayer: Lord, thank you that you give me the capacity to love others well. Thank you that I can come to you to calm myself and lift my spirit so that others around me can see your gentleness in me. Amen.***

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