

# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT SERIES

## 1 THESSALONIANS 2:1–12

### GENTLENESS

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The word gentleness conjures up wrong images for some people. It may denote a syrupy, self-denying quality. Or a quality which women have but “real men” do not! On the other hand, gentleness may be something we want very much. But we feel discouraged because the whole make-up of our personality is so far from being gentle. The Apostle Paul’s treatment of the Thessalonians provides a model of the gentleness God desires in us.

1. Think of those who have helped you most to grow in Christ. What are some qualities you appreciate in them?
2. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1–12. According to Paul, what are some wrong ways to share Christ with others (vv. 3–6)?
3. Give an example of how we might make an appeal to a non-Christian using tricks or flattery.

How might a Christian minister use his job as a mask for greed?

4. In contrast, what were Paul’s motives for sharing Christ with the Thessalonians?

Why are pure motives so important?

5. How was Paul like a mother to the Thessalonians (vv. 7–9)?
6. In what ways can we share “not only the gospel of God but our lives as well” with those around us?

What might this mean in terms of time, energy and vulnerability?

7. How was Paul also like a father to the Thessalonians (vv. 10–12)?
  
8. Why is it important for gentleness (v. 7) to be tempered with the qualities and goal mentioned in verse 12?
  
9. In what practical ways can we encourage, comfort and urge people to live lives worthy of God?
  
10. Think of those in whose lives you might exercise the kind of ministry demonstrated by Paul. How could gentleness enhance these relationships?

As you relate to others with your own unique personality and style, how can you express gentleness?

11. Ask God to help you be an example of gentleness and sacrificial love to these people.