LESSON 29 | Gentleness

Bible Basis: 1 Samuel 25; John 21

Key Verse: Philippians 4:5: "Let everyone know how gentle you are."

Key Question: How do I show thoughtfulness and consideration?

Key Idea: I am thoughtful, considerate, and calm with others.

Resource: Believe Storybook Bible, Chapter 29, “Gentleness”

Master Supplies List

- Believe Storybook Bible (optional)
- One fragile item (breakable figurine or china plate)
- PowerPoint slides or printable posters of illustrations
- Family Page (one per child)

Optional Supplies

You will need the following supplies based on which option(s) you choose in STEP 3 | Explore More:

- OPTION 1: Balloons (one per group, plus extras), stickers, craft gems, glue sticks
- OPTION 2: One balloon
- OPTION 3: One balloon
- OPTION 4: Crayons or markers, Let’s Color! sheet (one per child)
- OPTION 6: Two puppets
STEP 1 | Come Together (10 min)

Supplies: Something fragile for the children to admire, such as a breakable figurine or a china plate

TREASURE
- GATHER the children.
- SAY, Today I want to show you my beautiful treasure.
- SHOW the children the item. Explain to them how this item can break easily because it is fragile.
- ASK the children to come up one at a time to look at and hold the item. Keep reminding them that it is fragile and must be handled with gentleness.

GENTLENESS
- SAY, Gentleness means that we use soft touches and soft voices. When we are gentle, we are careful with people and with things. For example, we cannot just treat my treasure any old way, right? What would happen if I threw it to someone right now? (It might fall and break)
- SAY, That's right. My treasure must be treated in a certain way or it will get damaged or broken. People are a lot like this treasure. People’s feelings are fragile, or sensitive. They can be broken or hurt. God wants us to treat other people with care and gentleness because he loves them.
- ASK, Who has ever had their feelings hurt? (Take responses; share examples)
- EXPLAIN, I think we all know what it feels like to have our feelings hurt by someone. It doesn’t feel good! Showing gentleness to people means that you try to think about their feelings first rather than insisting that you get your way all the time.

LISTENING TO OTHERS
- SAY, Another way to show gentleness is by listening to people when they are upset. When someone is upset, they want to tell someone what is bothering them.
- ASK, When you are upset, how do you want others to treat you? (Take responses)
- SAY, This is how you should treat others even if they seem sad or angry. And though it’s tough to remember in the moment, this is how we should treat others even when we are angry or sad! It is important to listen and be thoughtful of others at all times.
• CONTINUE, God is gentle with us, and that is why we should be gentle with one another.
• SAY, Today we will learn about a woman in the Bible who used great gentleness with the mighty King David.

REVIEW
• SAY, So far today we have learned that gentleness is being thoughtful and considerate of other people’s feelings.

KEY VERSE
• REVIEW this week’s Key Verse. You may want to repeat the verse slowly a few times until the children are able to say it from memory.
• NOTE: You may also choose to review last week’s Key Verse together.

Philippians 4:5
Let everyone know (point to everyone in the room)
how gentle you are. (wrap arms around self and rub softly)

STEP 2 | Hear the Story (15 min)

Supplies: Believe Storybook Bible (optional), PowerPoint slides or printable posters of illustrations

INTRODUCTION
• TELL the children that they will be learning more about gentleness.
• SAY, We already learned that God is gentle with us, so we should be gentle with others.
• CONTINUE, We’ll also learn about people in the Bible who showed gentleness toward others.

READ CHAPTER 29
• READ aloud the story script below or chapter 29, “Gentleness,” from the Believe Storybook Bible.
• SHOW the illustrations included with this curriculum on PowerPoint slides or printable posters.

THE STORY OF ABIGAIL
• The Bible says that gentle words turn away anger. Abigail’s gentleness turned away David’s anger when he wanted to kill her husband, Nabal.
• Nabul was a very rich man. He owned lots of land and lots of sheep. But he was rude and mean to his servants and his wife, Abigail.
• When David was running away from King Saul, he stayed near Nabul’s land. David and his men helped Nabul’s shepherds. They kept thieves and wild animals away from the shepherds and their sheep.
• One day, David sent some men to ask Nabul for help. They told Nabul how they had helped his shepherds. Then they asked for food and water. Nabul said, “Who is this David? Why should I give him food?” Nabul did not help David and his men.
• This made David very angry. He planned to kill Nabul. But Nabul’s wife, Abigail, was kind and gentle. She heard how her husband shouted at David’s men. Secretly, Abigail loaded up many donkeys with food and drinks for David and his men.
• Abigail bowed before David. “Please,” she said, “take this food. Forget about Nabul; he is foolish. God will make you a great king one day.” David saw that Abigail was wise. He sent her home in peace. He praised God for her advice. Abigail’s gentle words turned away David’s anger.

THE STORY OF PETER
• God loves when we are gentle with others. The best person to teach us about being gentle is Jesus.
• One of Jesus’ best friends was Peter. But when Jesus was arrested and killed, Peter left him. He ran away and told people he didn’t know Jesus. We can learn about being gentle from the way Jesus spoke to Peter.
• After Jesus died, he came to life again. One day, he saw his disciples out fishing. They had not caught any fish. “Try tossing your net on the other side of the boat,” he called. They tried and they caught so many fish they could hardly drag their net back!
• John realized that the person who called to them must be Jesus! Peter was so excited he jumped into the water and swam to Jesus. Jesus asked him, “Peter, do you love me?”
• “Yes,” said Peter. “You know I love you.”
• “Then feed my lambs,” Jesus said. He was not talking about real lambs, but people who followed him. He wanted Peter to lead his new church.
• Three times Jesus asked Peter if he loved him. Three times Peter said yes. Jesus was not angry with his friend. He was gentle, the way we should be gentle with others. From then on, Peter served Jesus every day of his life.

REVIEW ABIGAIL
• ASK, What did David want? (He wanted Nabal to give his men a little food and water because David had helped Nabal’s shepherds)
• ASK, What did Nabal say? (He said he would not help David because he did not know who he was)
• ASK, How did this make David feel? (This made David angry, and he wanted to attack Nabal and his men)
• ASK, Who showed gentleness to David? (Nabal’s wife, Abigail, was kind and gentle to David; she brought David’s men food and water)

REVIEW PETER AND JESUS
• ASK, What was Peter doing when Jesus appeared? (He was fishing)
• ASK, How did Jesus question Peter? (He questioned him very gently)
• ASK, What did Peter do as a result of Jesus’ gentleness? (From then on, he served Jesus every day of his life)
• PRAY, God, please help us remember to be gentle with others just as you are gentle with us. Help us to remember how fragile our hearts are and to treat them with great care. Amen.

STEP 3 | Explore More
Choose from these activity options, depending on your available time frame, to help the children explore the lesson further.

Option 1: Gentleness Balloon Craft (10 min)

Supplies: Balloons (one per group, plus extras), stickers, craft gems, glue sticks

Teacher Prep: Before class, blow up the balloons and store them in a large trash bag. You may want to blow up extras in case any balloons are accidentally popped. As an option for larger groups, consider dividing children into three or four groups and using slightly larger balloons (one per group) that children can decorate together during class time. Display the balloons
in the classroom. Give each child a smaller, uninflated balloon at the end of class that they can take home to gently decorate with a family member.

• SAY, Today we learned about gentleness. Gentleness means we are thoughtful and careful about people’s feelings. We do not want to hurt people with our words or our actions, so we practice being gentle.
• SAY, Being careful with someone’s feelings is similar to the way you need to be careful with a balloon so as not to pop it.
• TAKE one balloon and demonstrate to the children how to handle the balloon with gentleness.
• SAY, This is what happens when you are gentle. The balloon does not pop, and you can enjoy it and play with it.
• TAKE the balloon and demonstrate what will happen when you are not gentle. (Warn them before you pop it so you do not unexpectedly startle the children.) (Pop the balloon)
• SAY, When you are not gentle, the balloon pops and you cannot play with it anymore. This happens when you are not gentle with people too; you hurt their feelings.
• SAY, Today I want you to practice being gentle with this balloon. We are going to decorate this balloon as a class (or these balloons in small groups). While you are decorating it, you will need to be especially careful not to pop it.
• INSTRUCT the children to work together, one at a time, to carefully use the stickers, glue sticks, and craft gems to decorate the balloon. If the balloon pops as the children are working on it, start over and remind them to be gentle.

Option 2: Gentle Balloon Toss (15 min)

Supplies: One balloon

Teacher Prep: Blow up the balloon prior to the children arriving and set it aside in a safe place so it won’t pop. If you chose to complete Option 1, you may reuse the decorated balloon for this option.

• SAY, Gentleness is something we have to practice every day so that we can get better at it.
• CONTINUE, When we practice gentleness, it gets easier to treat people gently. When we treat others gently, they will often begin to treat us more gently too.
• SAY, Today we will play a game that will require practicing gentleness.
• DIVIDE the class into two teams that face each other. Instruct the children to gently toss the balloon back and forth between the teams, making sure to keep it off the floor and keep it from popping.

**Option 3: Balloon Bible Memory Game (10 min)**

**Supplies:** One balloon

**Teacher Prep:** Use this game to help the children memorize this week’s Key Verse. Blow up the balloon prior to the children arriving, and set it aside in a place where it won’t pop.

• SAY, The more we memorize Scripture, the easier it becomes to practice showing gentleness to those around us. Bible verses help remind us how to treat others so that we honor God and his creation.

• REVIEW the Bible verse with the children.

         Philippians 4:5: “Let everyone know how gentle you are.”

• GATHER the children in a circle.

• SAY the verse out loud, together as a class.

• REPEAT the verse several times, and as you do this, have the children gently pass the balloon around the circle. You can even say the verse quietly, in your gentle voices.

**Option 4: Let’s Color! (10 min)**

**Supplies:** Crayons or markers, Let’s Color! sheet (one per child)

**Teacher Prep:** Print and photocopy the Let’s Color! sheet (one per child).

• GIVE each child a Let’s Color! sheet.

• PROVIDE a selection of crayons and/or markers for the children to share.

• DISCUSS this week’s Key Idea as the children color.

**Option 5: Praise and Worship (15 min)**

“Fruit of the Spirit” by Heather Jeffcote, Jules Riding, Marcia Middlemiss
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“Oh Be Careful Little Eyes” by Karen Mitzo Hilderbrand,
Kim Mitzo Thompson
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**Option 6: Act It Out** (10 min)

**Over Easy**

Use two puppets to act out the following short skit.

**Setting:** A farm

**Characters**
- Hillary
- Nealy

**Props:** Two puppets (or junior helpers or volunteers)

**Hillary:** Would you like to help me collect the eggs this morning?

**Nealy:** What do you mean *collect* the eggs? Don’t you mean *buy* the eggs?

**Hillary:** No, here on the farm we collect the eggs from the chickens.

**Nealy:** Oh, okay. Sure!

**Hillary:** You must be very gentle when you collect the eggs.

**Nealy:** So we don’t break the eggs?

**Hillary:** Yes, but also so we don’t scare the chickens. Chickens are a lot like people.

**Nealy:** Really? How?

**Hillary:** Chickens don’t like being handled roughly. They don’t like harsh words or loud sounds either.

**Nealy:** You mean like this? (*clapping and stomping*)

**Hillary:** Yes. Exactly. The chickens won’t like that.

**Nealy:** How is that like people?

**Hillary:** Well, would you like it if someone clapped in your face? (*clapping in NEALY’S face*)

**Nealy:** No! That’s annoying! Stop it! (*pushing HILLARY’S hands away*)

**Hillary:** Just like the chickens, people’s feelings are sensitive and can be hurt easily if someone is too rough with them or if they use harsh words. Chickens are gentle little creatures.

**Nealy:** What about the eggs?
Hillary: The eggs are fragile, too. They break really easily. They need soft touches and soft voices when we collect them. Have you ever seen someone crack an egg or drop an egg on the ground?

Nealy: Yeah, my mom cracks eggs in the morning and when she bakes cakes and cookies. Yum! Cakes and cookies! (getting excited and starting to clap slightly wildly) I love it when I see my mom get out those eggs because it means she might be making some dessert or something yummy!

Hillary: Okay, okay. I can see that we’re going to have to calm down and stop talking about dessert before I take you into the chicken coop so you don’t scare the chickens off. Let’s count to ten, put on our gentle faces, and then go in. You ready?

Nealy: Yes, I’m ready!

HILLARY and NEALY start counting to ten slowly and quietly.

## STEP 4 | Going Home (5 min)

**Supplies:** Family Page (one per child)

**Teacher Prep:** Print and photocopy the Family Page (one per child).

- GIVE each child a copy of this week’s Family Page.
- SAY, Give this page to your family when they pick you up. It will remind you to tell your family what you learned today about gentleness.
- HAVE the children practice telling you the story of Abigail.
- REVIEW this week’s Key Verse as well as today’s story and Key Idea from the Believe Storybook Bible as you wait for the children to get picked up.
- MAKE sure each child remembers to take home any activity sheets or craft projects and the Family Page.
Let’s Color!
Name: ____________________________
FAMILY PAGE | Lesson 29: Gentleness

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Key Question: How do I show thoughtfulness and consideration?
Key Idea: I am thoughtful, considerate, and calm with others.
Resource: Believe Storybook Bible, Chapter 29, “Gentleness”

How to Use This Page
This week, your family can either read the story from the Believe Storybook Bible or read the Bible Basis passages from your Bible to help your child remember the lesson. Use the Table Talk questions below to start a discussion around the dinner table, while driving in the car, or just about anywhere. The Living Faith activity is designed to remind your child of the Bible lesson through a drama or other engaging activity. The Extra Mile idea provides interactive ways for your child to connect with the story.

Table Talk
1. What is gentleness? (Gentleness is being thoughtful and careful with other people’s feelings, using soft touches and soft voices)
2. What are some things in life that need us to be gentle? (Chickens, eggs, babies, people, etc.)
3. How can you show gentleness with other people? (You think about your words before you say them to make sure they will not hurt people’s feelings)
4. What happens when we do not use gentleness? (We hurt other people’s feelings; we say mean things)

Living Faith
Option 1
You and your child can reenact the story of David and Abigail to reinforce what your child learned this week. Allow your child to collect food items and
jugs of water in order to pretend to be either Abigail presenting food to David or David receiving food from Abigail. Remind your child to be gentle in their interaction.

Option 2

Play a game that requires gentleness. Games such as water balloon toss or moving a cotton ball on a spoon can help teach your child the physical act of gentleness. You can easily relate physical gentleness to emotional or spiritual gentleness. Playing games like this can provide opportunities for family discussion of gentleness and how to better practice gentleness in our lives.

Extra Mile

• Many families face challenges with speaking gently to one another. To help your family become more aware of how you speak to one another, you can call for a “Whisper Day.” Instruct your family to go an entire day speaking to each other only in whispers. Being aware of how we speak to one another is a great step toward treating one another more gently in general.

• Coming up with more gentle words to replace the harsh words that your family members normally use when feeling frustrated can help create a spirit of gentleness in your home. Create a list of harsh words that are usually used in your home, and brainstorm as a family more gentle words to be used in place of these. For instance, the words “Shut up!” could be substituted with “Shh” or “Be quiet, please.”

• During family prayer time this week, mention the importance of showing gentleness toward others. As a family, discuss times when others have been thoughtful or sensitive to your feelings. Pray that God will teach your family to be sensitive to others and sensitive to the Holy Spirit.