

Baked in the Loaf

Carl H. Stevens Jr. is pastor of Greater Grace World Outreach located in Baltimore, Maryland. Pastor Stevens is also chancellor of Maryland Bible College & Seminary and host of the international Christian radio program "The Grace Hour." This booklet was created from a message preached by Pastor Stevens.

Pastor Stevens can be seen weekly on cable television stations throughout the United States. Call us for information regarding programming in your area.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

In Matthew 28:18, Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” It is all under Jesus Christ. In Philippians 2:10-11, God declared that every knee would bow and every tongue would confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

Jesus Christ, who holds all things together by the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3), is so sweet and so unique in the spirit of gentleness that He doesn’t even break a bruised reed, nor does He quench a smoking flax. Do you understand what that means? It is hard to interpret this unless the Holy Spirit reveals it to your heart: Jesus Christ, God Almighty, will not break the bruised reed.

Peter was an enthusiastic disciple with a very course exterior who was often devastated by his own behavior. Yet, the Lord corrected him with gentleness. Knowing what Peter was like, Jesus said to him, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan

hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat" (Luke 22:31). Then, the Lord took Peter's broken life and made him a vital part of His Body. Peter was baked in the loaf and was used to feed God's sheep (John 21:16-17).

Is it any wonder that King David wrote, "thy gentleness hath made me great" (Psalm 18:35)? What made David great? The gentleness of Jesus Christ. Not judgment. Not negativity. Not God standing over him with a club ready to let him have it. The thing that made David great was the gentleness of Jesus. And that same gentleness hides us, shapes us, and allows us to go into the fire, where we are baked in the loaf, to become a portion of God's life on earth.

Chapter One

WHAT IS GENTLENESS?

“A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust” (Matthew 12:20-21).

This is one of the most unique passages in the Bible because it speaks of something that made Jesus Christ great—His gentleness.

Think with me. He created the universe. In Genesis 17:1, “...the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God.” In Isaiah 45:5, He said, “I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God else beside me.” And in Isaiah 45:21, “...there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.”

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

The wisdom that comes from God applies what it knows. This wisdom is very gentle, very pure, and very peaceable. Second Timothy 2:24-25a helps us understand what gentleness means, as it speaks of the behavior of an officer of the church: "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."

The servant of the Lord must not strive, as that is the opposite of gentleness. He must not strive; but, with meekness and gentleness, he should teach those who oppose themselves.

One of the greatest characteristics of Jesus Christ is, was, and always will be His gentleness. A gentle father will do more for his children than any other type of father. Gentleness does not compromise with sin and neither did Jesus. There is a literal hell, and people who are not saved will go there because gentleness does not compromise with sin. But gentleness knows how to take the worst sinner and minister love and grace in the unusual, divine methods of God until His life takes over a terrible, hardened heart.

Is it any wonder that Paul said that he nourished and cherished Christians with gentleness

even as a “nurse cherisheth her children” (1 Thessalonians 2:7)?

Gentleness Works Today

Even today, it is gentleness that makes people great. The gentle husband, the gentle wife, makes the other partner great. This means that you don't ever have to be anxious to express your self-image. You don't have to be anxious to show your own temperament.

You don't have to pitch in there and force self-expression. There is no need to do that. You can trust God with the Lord's life. You don't have to get excited. You don't have to get crude in your dealings with people. You can be gentle and yet allow gentleness to be the power of love, the power of joy, the power of peace, and the power of longsuffering in your life.

Gentleness, an expression of the character of love, moves and motivates us with meekness. Meekness is a willingness to transfer my rights because I can trust the life of God expressed through gentleness. A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoking flax He will not quench. Why? Because Jesus Christ is gentle.

Galatians 5:22 tells us “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness....”

David, who will be the prince in the Millennial Reign, said that the one thing that made him great was God's gentleness.

Gentleness is never critical. Gentleness does not judge. Gentleness doesn't have to blow its stack. A bruised reed that is ready to break needs gentleness. Through patience and meekness, the one who is gentle transfers his own design and his own temperament to Jesus. He doesn't step back and say, "This is the way I am." No, this one goes to the Cross and says, "This is the way God is." He says, "You can accept Jesus as He is through me."

Gentleness is a ministry of purity, a ministry of peace, a ministry of meekness, and a ministry of power that can control everything, just as man rules over a city (Proverbs 16:32). Gentleness is the very life and love of God acting out His divinity in your humanity.

When Gentleness Takes Over

What happens when gentleness takes over your life? First, God begins to nourish you. His life begins to take care of all the foreign elements in your life. He could point out everything that is wrong, but instead He ministers His life. And His life begins to get into your spiritual blood-

stream, and that life begins to bring so much of God in you that whatever is foreign leaves you restless and without peace. But ultimately, the gentleness of God takes you to the Cross so that you can make things right. One step after another, God's gentleness begins to minister patience and love; and, because it is so wonderful, so consistent, and so steadfast, you become restless until that precious life comes in to change your life.

Next, God's gentleness cherishes. It is one thing to nourish, but it is quite another thing to cherish. Gentleness cherishes every degree of potential you have. It cherishes your eternal soul; it cherishes any possibility you have to be used by God. God *cherishes* you today. Why? Because in you is His eternal life. God cherishes you because you have an opportunity to express a portion of His life on earth. God cherishes you because you have the privilege of expressing the characteristics of the Lord's divinity.

God cherishes you because He has chosen you and ordained you to bring forth fruit (John 15:16). He desires that you become a part of His Body, that you begin to minister His mind. Every one of us has the privilege to minister a portion of the living God, "effectually working

in the measure of every part” of His Body (Ephesians 4:16).

He is going to nurse you along. He will nourish and cherish and love you, and then He will nurse you some more and cherish you some more and love you some more. You may want to say, “God, I don’t deserve it.” But the love continues, the nourishing continues, the cherishing continues, the patience continues, and the peace continues.

You say, “I am a failure,” but God comes back and cherishes you and nourishes you some more. And He loves you and ministers patience to you again. Maybe a few weeks later you fail again, and still He nourishes you and cherishes you. The love continues, the gentleness continues, the peace continues. Why? Because He is gentle.

The Purpose of Gentleness

The purpose of His gentleness is to place you in the Corporate Body as a grain of wheat that is baked in the loaf. What does Jesus Christ do? What does His gentleness want to do? He wants us to be baked in the loaf. Every one of us represents a grain of wheat, and we are to be baked inside the loaf.

What happens if I am a grain of wheat, and God doesn't bake me in the loaf? Then I am outside of the loaf, and Satan sifts me. In Luke 22:31, Jesus said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." He will sift you. But 1 Corinthians 10:17 says "we being many are one bread, and one body." We are one Body, and we are in one loaf.

Chapter Two

BRING FORTH MUCH FRUIT

“Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24).

Do you get the picture? Jesus sees every born-again Christian as a grain of wheat, but that grain must be baked inside of the loaf of the Corporate Body. If you are not, you will be sifted as wheat by the devil. Probably only 25 to 30 percent of all Christians consider what that means. That would leave at least 50 percent available to be sifted. Anyone not baked in the loaf of the Corporate Body will be sifted by Satan.

When you are baked inside the loaf, the god of this world cannot find you because you are hid inside the Lord’s Body. You are a portion of the whole loaf; you contribute your measure as a part of the loaf, and Satan cannot find you. You cannot even be detected because you are just a

grain of wheat hid in the loaf.

Recognizing Jesus As Head

What happened to John the Baptist? There wasn't a greater man born among women, according to Matthew 11:11. Yet, Jesus said He was the least, compared to the Bride of Christ, which is His Body. Why did John get his head cut off? Was it just because he challenged Herod? That was certainly one reason. John the Baptist was a beautiful Christian. He was a moral man. He fulfilled his role just as Isaiah prophesied.

There is, however, a vital principle to be learned from John the Baptist. His disciples were always criticizing Jesus' disciples. They didn't understand oneness. They criticized for one reason or another. They were not one with the others. Why? Because John's disciples still had John as their head instead of Jesus, even though John the Baptist told them to "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

So Jesus said, "If they are going to have John as their head, I will have to let the enemy cut off their head." Jesus allowed the enemy to cut off John's head so John's disciples would have no other head but Jesus. There was no more divi-

sion after that.

What we are saying is that if there is any other head beside Jesus in your life, you can be sure God will cut it off. It may take him a year, three years, or a day, but Jesus Christ will cut off any other head beside His own because, in Ephesians 1:22-23, He is the Head and we are “his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” There is no other head but Jesus. John the Baptist’s followers asked Jesus many things about His disciples. “What’s the story on that?” They had another head. John was a good forerunner and a wonderful man of God. But he wasn’t hid in the Body, even though he played a role outside the Body in introducing the Messiah. He wasn’t in the Body, and his head had to be cut off.

If you don’t get into the Body of Jesus Christ, spiritually speaking, God is going to have to do some cutting—and it isn’t going to be your arm that’s cut. It will be whatever you have established as your head. What do I mean by that? I mean that the thing your mind trusts in, adores, and focuses upon must be Jesus. We must have no other head but Jesus.

When Jesus is your Lord and Master, you are just a portion or a grain of wheat baked in the loaf. You don’t try to be seen. You have never

heard a grain of wheat say, "Wait a minute! I want to get out and announce that I am here before you eat me." You have never heard a grain of wheat say, "Hold it! Before you bake me, let everyone know I am in the loaf and tell them what I look like." A grain of wheat would never say that. We, as spiritual grains of wheat, are put into the loaf, stirred up, baked, and nobody knows who is who because we are all baked in the loaf.

Chapter Three
BECOMING ONE

God wants to take His Body members and make them one. He will bake us in the oven of trials so we can nourish and cherish people with the gentleness of Christ, which will make them great. Jesus prayed five times in John 17 that His people would be one as He is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Why? “That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me” (John 17:23).

What God wants is oneness inside the loaf. He wants the love of the Father, Son, and Spirit to be revealed. He wants that loaf to be the same as the Trinity. He wants it to cook the same, to taste the same, to look the same. He wants that loaf to be one.

Jesus Christ is building His Body, and He wants His Body to be one—one with His plan, one with His purpose, one with His power, one with His goals, one with His unity, and one with

His love. He wants His Body to be so one that it will have no other personality but His, no other priorities but His. He wants it to be so one that from one member to another, with all the diversity of individual expressions of His person, it is Jesus. One speaks, it is Christ. Another works, it is Christ. It is all Christ.

Made One with Him

Jesus is trying to bake you into one loaf and make you one so you will stand as one. You pray with the Lord's burden as one. You share the Lord's portion as one. You sing the Lord's song as one. You give as unto the Lord as one. You sacrifice with the Lord's Cross as one. You share as one. You testify as one. You love as one. You are together on earth in the oneness of the Trinity, and the kingdom of God is manifested through the Body, and that Body becomes experientially one new man (Ephesians 2:15).

So many people don't want to be baked inside the loaf. To be baked inside the loaf, you must lay down your life to become one with God's life. This whole thing is just to share the Lord's life, to be the Lord's portion, to have the Lord's burden, and to enter into the Lord's edification. The whole thing is just sharing the Lord.

That's all it is.

When anything foreign gets into a healthy human body, the body begins to deal with it. The circulatory system and the cells go to work to reveal the foreign element. Fever comes so you will know something is wrong. The body detects the infection and then the individual parts of the body begin working together to resist the infection. If you obey the laws of your body, your body will, for the most part, take care of itself. That is, until it's time for you to go home with God.

When Christ's Body is one with the life and love of God, it will take care of foreign elements. You don't have to push the panic button. Gentleness will do the job. Meekness will do it. Joy will do it. Grace will do it because it will reveal the foreign element. Life will penetrate death, the light will take over the darkness, and the foreign element will be defeated through the life of the Lord in the Body.

The Lord's life will heal in a situation where you would rebuke. It will recover what you see as lost. The Lord's life will build up. The Lord's life will edify. The Lord's life will be an ointment. It will be oil to a wound. It will be something beautiful.

The bruised reed Jesus will not break, and the smoking flax He will not quench. He will just let His life flow. That is what He wants from His Body—to get His life flowing. And as it does, His gentleness make others great.

The Fruit

What will God's gentleness do to you? I will show you what it will do. David arranged a murder, he was married several times, and he lived a wicked life in many instances. Still, Jesus Christ's gentleness made him great (Psalm 18:35). Why and how? Acts 13:34 speaks of "the sure mercies of David." According to Romans 4:6-8, David was blessed, God did not charge David with iniquity, and God did not impute sin to him.

What changed David? God's love and patience forgave, restored, healed, and brought him into repentance (Psalm 51). He was divinely corrected in the healing ointment of gentleness so that he could once again live in oneness with God through the Holy Spirit. God's gentleness brought David to repentance. Love and gentleness healed him and made him great, and David will be great throughout eternity.

CONCLUSION

God wants to approach us through one portion of His character—His gentleness. He wants to nourish, cherish, edify, and build up His Body. He wants us to get to know Him as a gentle God.

The bruised reed He will not break, and the smoking flax He will not quench. He wants to put you inside the loaf and bake you so that you are hid in the Body. As a measure of God's life, you can share your portion inside the loaf. In this way, we all can minister a portion of the Lord's life, which results in His fullness—a manifestation of all that God is. When we meet as a Body, we get built up. You share your portion, I share mine, and we get built up in the measure of every part contributing. We minister Jesus Christ and nothing else, and we manifest the message of the glorious Gospel.