

## Sticks and Stones Is A Lie!

### A Study of Gentleness

<sup>NLT</sup> **James 3:2** Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way. <sup>3</sup> We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. <sup>4</sup> And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. <sup>5</sup> In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. <sup>6</sup> And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself. <sup>7</sup> People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, <sup>8</sup> but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup> Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. <sup>10</sup> And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! <sup>11</sup> Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? <sup>12</sup> Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty spring. <sup>13</sup> If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility (gentleness) that comes from wisdom.

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# For Reflection and Discussion

For help with abusive or domestic violence situations, please contact Caleb Mitchell in the church office. 602-866-0889, ext 107

## Tips to Change

- Pray- What does Galatians 5:22 say about getting gentleness?
- Memorize Scripture- (**Psalm 119:11** I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.)
- Accountability- significant change rarely happens alone. Ask a friend to help you or participate in Life Groups.
- Get help- If harshness is a recurring struggle, seek the perspective of a pastor or counselor. Most of us are chronically harsh for reasons we cannot identify without an outside perspective.

1. Did you grow up hearing “Stick and stones can break my bones but words can never hurt me.”? Did that work? Can you see that philosophy in how you live today?
2. What is your gut reaction to those who easily get their feelings hurt? How can you communicate differently with these people?
3. Has anyone ever told you your words hurt their feelings? How did that make you feel? What did you do about it?
4. On the gentleness continuum, are you closer to the gentle side or abusive side? Why did you answer that way? Would those close to you answer the same way?
5. How did you feel the last time you witnessed someone belittle or use sarcasm against another person? Did you speak up or say anything?
6. List your five closest relationships. Ask these 5 people to grade your tone, belittling, sarcasm, threats, yelling and anger. Do you agree with their assessments?

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