

FULLY CLOTHED 4 – Clothed with the Unfading Beauty of a Gentle & Quiet Spirit

GENTLE (praus) = MILDNESS OF DISPOSITION, GENTLENESS OF SPIRIT, MEEKNESS (1 Pet 3:3-4, 1 Tim 6:11).

QUIET (hesuchios) = TRANQUIL, CALM, PEACEFUL, UNDISTURBED (1 Pet 3:3-4, 1 Tim 2:2).

Peter described these two qualities as PRECIOUS and having an UNFADING BEAUTY.

→ How do you personally do with gentleness? In what kind of scenarios does it sometimes break down?

→ What does the expression 'quiet spirit' mean to you? How do each of these words tie into the idea of possessing a 'quiet spirit:' Tranquil, peaceful, mellow, mild, meek, calm, composed, undisturbed?

→ Why are these two attributes so attractive? Why do they have such spiritual power? Why are they perhaps rare in the modern world?

4 CHARACTERISTICS of a GENTLE Spirit

- a) Gentle people take EXTRA CARE not to WOUND.
- b) Gentle people critique GENTLY & encourage FIERCELY.
- c) Gentle people prefer to be KIND than to be RIGHT.
- d) Gentle people DISARM with love & mercy, then apply TRUTH with grace & wisdom.

→ Explain how each of these work? Any you need to work on?

Any additional characteristics you'd like to add to the list?

7 CHARACTERISTICS of a QUIET Spirit

- a) A quiet spirit DISEMPOWERS angst, because it exudes CALMNESS & CERTAINTY (John 14:27).
- b) QS inspires FAITH, because it so clearly TRUSTS in God (Isa 26:3, 30:15).
- c) QS exercises CONTROL over its thoughts, words & emotions, so while flesh is STILLED, the voice of Holy Spirit can RISE ABOVE (Rom 8:6, Prov 29:11.)
- d) QS shines humility, because has NO DESIRE to SHOUT (1 Pet 5:6).
- e) QS doesn't PROVOKE or ANTAGONISE, leaving the door open to PEACE & UNITY (Prov 15:1, Eph 4:2-3).
- f) QS doesn't NEED to strive, because it's entirely CONTENT with the sufficiency of Lord (Phil 4:11, Psalm 131:2).
- g) QS doesn't need to hear its OWN voice, so it AVOIDS idle chatter, gossip, waffle & instead WAITS for the WISDOM of God (2 Tim 2:16, Ecc 9:17).

→ Work your way through each of these, explaining what the quiet spirit does, how it is able to do it & what fruits / outcomes it produces.

INVENTORY / Self-Evaluation Questions

1. Are people SAFE with you?
 - * Not always NICE, not necessarily without CHALLENGE, but always with GENTLENESS.
 - * Because they can TRUST you won't overreact, judge or belittle; instead, you'll patiently LOVE, extend GRACE upon GRACE & PROTECT their VULNERABLE heart.

→ What makes a person 'safe?' What characteristics make you feel 'unsafe?'

→ Safe doesn't always mean 'nice.' Discuss!

→ What is the connection between safety & trust?

→ "Do people know where you stand? Do they know what you stand for? Do they know how you're going to take that stand when you do?" Why is this important for 'safety?' Do you think you could answer each of those in the affirmative? (Think of family members, friends, work colleagues)

WHY is that important?

- a) People are far more likely to OPEN UP to you.
- b) They won't feel the need to be DEFENSIVE around you.
- c) Much less likely to inadvertently TRAMPLE on people's FEELINGS.

→ How do people behave around you when/if you're 'safe?' What changes if they believe you're 'not safe?' Anyone you'd like to commend for being your safe place?

2. When people come to you, do they get the CHARACTER of JESUS or is it NOISE, OPINION & AGENDA?

- * How much better to leave an imprint of INTEGRITY, the FRAGRANCE of Christ, WISDOM that stands out in the melee.
- * Personality, diversity, extrovert & introvert GOOD; Carnality, flesh, clumsiness, immaturity BAD.
- * If it's a rough edge it needs to be SMOOTHED, not EXCUSED, TRIVIALISED or JUSTIFIED.
- * That Gentle & Quiet Spirit SHOUTS LOUD, without you even needing to SAY A WORD.

→ What are the dangers of 'too much noise?' What might that 'noise' comprise? What, potentially, does that 'noise' communicate & what should one be communicating instead?

→ What do you want people to 'get' from their interactions with you? Do they? How often? What do you think needs to change for that to go up a notch: frame of mind, attitude, approach, preparation?

→ "If it's a rough edge it needs to be smoothed, not excused, trivialised or justified." Discuss!

→ "That Gentle & Quiet Spirit shouts loud, without you even needing to say a word." Discuss!