



Articles and Sermons :: The Rarity of Gentleness

The Rarity of Gentleness - posted by murrcoir (), on: 2012/1/4 18:01

The Rarity of Gentleness by George D. Watson

When God conquers us and takes all the flint out of our nature, and we get deep visions into the Spirit of Jesus, we then see as never before the great rarity of gentleness of spirit in this dark and unheavenly world.

Even apart from the criminality and vileness of man's fallen condition, there is a host of deformities which sin has entailed upon mankind. Among these deformities may be classed roughness, rudeness, curtness, and the painful facility of using stinging, cutting words and manners, and gestures, and looks, and tones of voice, which are almost universally manifested, not only by sinners, but by Christians, and good Christians, and even by many who advocate the higher life.

It is so seldom we find a real gentle spirit, one who is gentle all through, and gentle under all circumstances, that when we meet such an one it seems like a cala lily in a field of briars, or a patch of blooming prairie surrounded by rough deserts.

I am not speaking of that natural grace which some people seem to inherit, for that is not deep enough. One of the worst criminals I ever saw was a perfectly handsome man, with a voice and manner so soft as a lady's. But I speak of divine gentleness which comes in to the soul as a result of having all the nature and faculties perfectly subdued by the Holy Spirit. It is amazing what lack of gentleness there is among the Lord's own people.

Among the reasons why so few Christians are thoroughly gentle in spirit may be the following:

Not Recognizing The Worth Of Gentleness

So few really apprehend the worth of a gentle spirit; they seem to overlook it as a cardinal trait in religion. There are so many Christians who regard real gentleness as a weakness, a soft, sentimentalism, which in some way interferes with thorough righteousness, and boldness, and plain dealing, and a pushing zeal for God. The graces of the Spirit do not settle themselves down upon us by chance, and if we do not discern certain states of grace, and choose them, and in our thoughts nourish them, they never become fastened in our nature of behavior.

Just as rough worldly men look upon experimental salvation as a weak thing, fit only for old women and children, so a great many sturdy, driving Christians, regard perfect gentleness and quietness of spirit as too tame a thing to have much divine power in it. The more we possess a certain grace, the more we see the value of it.

The reason why so few Christians seek perfect humility in everything is because they do not see the infinite worth of humility. The same is true of gentleness; in fact gentleness is the expression of humility, like the odor is to the flower.

There is something about the character of God, and it pervades all His creation, and every branch of His government, which bespeaks the infinite gentleness of His nature. He clothes all the vast and rugged forms of His works with a majestic quietness, and velvet gentleness, which betrays the character of His mind. He drapes the roughest mountain with green shrubbery, or the soft blue air; even storms are edged around with a fringe of delicacy, and none of the stupendous works of God in ocean, earth or air, or flying worlds, have that severe "raw-headed and bloody-bone" appearance, which would have been the case if a creature had made them.

God leaves a trace of Divine refinement on everything He touches. And when we look at His moral government, and even at the outpouring of His wrath, on nation or individuals, there is not a touch of personal revenge, but the highest proofs

Articles and Sermons :: The Rarity of Gentleness

of patience and tender pleading, and He punishes as if He wept while doing it, and His thunderbolts are both preceded and succeeded with pathetic accents, as if tender mercy were the garniture in which His fiery judgments were clothed.

God never does anything in a harsh or uncouth way. He often breaks the hearts of the toughest old sinners with a touch of gentleness, or a soft sweet voice, or the stroke of a motherly hand softer than the down on an angel's wings. Unless we have clear perceptions of the character of God, it is not likely that we will have a positive thirst for that character. Vision precedes action. We must see with our spiritual eye the graces of the Spirit, before we live them out in our experience. The words, "Behold the Lamb of God," must always precede the words, "Who taketh away the sin of the world."