

True Gentleness

Matthew 12:15-2

15 Jesus withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all

16 and ordered them not to make him known.

17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

18 “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

19 He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets;

20 a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench,

until he brings justice to victory;

21 and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

In this passage we see from Matthew, through inspiration, Jesus embodying the prophecy of Isaiah (from hundreds of years before these actions) revealing the heart of His mission and character, the very Spirit of God. Instead of seeking public acclaim or jumping into conflict, He chooses a path of quiet strength and compassion. How much does that tell us about His character? I love how God uses these small moments to show us such big things about Himself. His withdrawal from the crowds is not an act of defeat, but rather a deliberate movement towards fulfilling God’s purpose in a gentle and humble manner.

Consider the imagery of the “bruised reed” and the “smoldering wick.” These symbols remind us of fragility and the overlooked struggles in our lives. A bruised reed is weak and at risk of breaking, while a smoldering wick has potential but is on the verge of extinguishing. Jesus does not come to destroy what is weak; instead, He seeks to restore and rekindle. This is a powerful reminder of how we are to treat the broken and weary in our own lives.

As followers of Christ, we are called to reflect His gentleness and compassion. We are called to reflect the incredibly humble nature that He shows in this passage. In a world that often celebrates strength through dominance, assertion, and conflict, Jesus teaches us the value of quiet perseverance and care. So today are there areas in your life where you can extend grace to others who may feel bruised or extinguished? Are there people who make it difficult for us to show this gentleness? Are there areas we could reflect Jesus’ character better if He filled us with humbleness instead of a spirit of conflict? Today, let us be mindful of those around us who may be struggling. Reach out with a kind word or a simple act of love, remembering that every encounter is an opportunity to reflect the hope we have in Christ.

Note from Don Jacobs
Olympia Church of Christ