



# SMALL GROUP OUTLINES



# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

These Small Group Outlines are produced by the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview). They are available every month from our website.

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### SESSION ONE:

#### LOVE & KINDNESS

Today we start our series exploring the fruit of the Spirit as we consider the importance of growing love and kindness within and sharing it with others. We'll consider the words of Jesus in Matthew 22 as he commands us to "love our neighbour as ourselves" and think about what that looks like in our everyday lives.

### SESSION TWO:

#### PATIENCE & SELF-CONTROL

In today's session we'll be thinking about what it looks like to grow the fruit of patience and self-control in our lives. We'll take a step back and look at the ways that we contribute to situations, both positively and negatively and consider how the choices we make impact others. The main focus of the session will be asking God to help us grow these essential fruit of the Spirit.

### SESSION THREE:

#### GENTLENESS & JOY

In today's world we enter the world of Mr Men and Little Miss, creating new characters and transporting them into the modern-day world. What does it look like to live out gentleness and joy in our everyday lives? We'll ask God to help us spot the opportunities to show gentleness to those around us and bring joy to the people we meet.

### SESSION FOUR:

#### FAITHFULNESS & PEACE

The final session in this series helps us to consider the fruits of faithfulness and peace. Using the lyrics of two traditional hymns we will think about the way God grows these fruit in our lives.

*Any text in italics represents notes for the leader. It gives more context around the Scripture/activity. You may choose to share verbatim, summarise or not share at all.*

## LOVE & KINDNESS

GALATIANS 5:22-23, MATTHEW 22:37-40, JAMES 1:23-25

Today we start our series exploring the fruit of the Spirit as we consider the importance of growing love and kindness within and sharing it with others. We'll consider the words of Jesus in Matthew 22 as he commands us to "love our neighbour as ourselves" and think about what that looks like in our everyday lives.

### WELCOME

**Leader's notes:** Give the group one minute to write down as many fruits as they can think of (the more unusual the better). This game can be played individually or in teams.

Just in case you need to settle any fruit-based arguments here's the link to the Wikipedia page listing all the fruits in the world.

[https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_fruits](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fruits)

**Say:** In these sessions we will be discovering more about the fruit of the Spirit.

Read Galatians 5:22-23 and watch the "What's in the Bible?" clip to give a foundation for the fruit of the Spirit.

▶ **Watch: The Fruit of the Spirit - What's in the Bible 1:52 min**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZrLDT3k84U>

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Leader's notes:** This song is aimed at a younger age group but is just a bit of fun to start the session.

▶ **Fruit of the Spirit Children's Song 2:44 min**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rezg4jYFoj0&t=72s>

### WORD

**Leader's notes:** The teaching behind today's session is based on two sermons by Matt Chandler. It is not essential for you to watch these clips, but they are provided for additional background if required.

▶ **Love and Knowledge of Self - Matt Chandler 37:58 min**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s02obSPJG28>

▶ **Love of Neighbour - Matt Chandler 50.01 min**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UBhQv4M0To>

**Say:** In today's session we're focusing on love and kindness. In Matthew 22:36 Jesus was asked, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" His answer forms the basis of our session today.

**Read:**

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

— MATTHEW 22:37-40

**Ask:**


🗣️ What do you think Jesus means when he says "Love your neighbour as yourself?"


🗣️ What do you think loving ourselves looks like?

 **Watch: Mirror Mirror Clip 2:33 min**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHDq1ehz\\_cg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHDq1ehz_cg)

**Ask:**


 How do you think the Queen would have reacted if the mirror had named someone else as “the fairest of them all”?

 The Queen almost looks afraid as she waits to hear the mirror’s verdict, why do you think that is?

**Say:**

When we look in a mirror it doesn’t generally talk back to us, but there are many ways that voices let us know whether we are the fairest, smartest, funniest, kindest or friendliest.

**Ask:**

 What kinds of things act as a mirror in our lives, giving us feedback on who we are (either positive or negative)?

**Say:** Many of us struggle with the idea of loving ourselves and according to pastor Matt Chandler we tend to respond in the following ways.

AVOID - I don’t really like who I am.

ADAPT - I don’t like who I am so I’ll pretend to be someone else.

ACCEPT - This is just who I am!

**Ask:**

 In what ways do people avoid, adapt or accept themselves?

**Say:**

Matt Chandler suggests that none of these approaches are beneficial for loving ourselves the way God wants us to. When we look at ourselves in the different mirrors we mentioned earlier, we get confused about who we are, and loving ourselves can be difficult. However, James reminds us that if we keep our focus on God, then we can see ourselves as we are. Rather than just accepting ourselves, we can be secure in God’s love and continue to increase our love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

**Read:**

**23 If you hear the message and don’t obey it, you are like people who stare at themselves in a mirror 24 and forget what they look like as soon as they leave. 25 But you must never stop looking at the perfect law that sets you free. God will bless you in everything you do, if you listen and obey, and don’t just hear and forget.**

— (JAMES 1:23-25 CEV)

**Say:**


We don’t have to avoid looking at ourselves.

We don’t have to adapt who we are so that others will love us.

We don’t have to accept that this is who we will be forever.

Instead we can keep our eyes focused on the way God’s sees us and live in the grace he offers us.

**Ask:**

 What do you think of the following quote?

**““Our love for ourselves is not formed by gazing at our awesomeness, our love for self is formed by the affections of God, of Christ meeting us in our weaknesses over and over again.”**


— MATT CHANDLER

### Say:

Now that we have thought carefully about what loving ourselves means from God's perspective, watch the clip and think about what it means to show that love to others.

 **Watch: What does it mean to love your neighbour as yourself? - The Church of England 2:02 min**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofxF-PKTIss>


### Ask:

 What does it mean to love your neighbour as yourself?

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Say:** Loving your neighbour doesn't mean that you have to be a doormat letting people treat you however they want.

### Ask:


 What message do you think Carl Sandburg is trying to get across in the following quote?


“Love your neighbour as yourself but don't take down your fence.”  
— CARL SANDBURG

## WITNESS

**Say:** In recent years there has been an online campaign for people to “be kind.” Unfortunately, at times this has seemed more like a “be kind to those who agree with us” campaign. God calls us to be kind to everyone as we don't always know what struggles they are facing.

### Ask:

 What kind of people do we find difficult to love?

 Why is loving them challenging?

**Leader's notes:** Create a list from the suggestions of the young people. Emphasise that you are not asking for specific names! The aim of the discussion is to be honest about the people we find difficult to love e.g. those who have upset us, those with different political views etc. Your group will lead the discussion but encourage them to explore the challenges of following Jesus' command to love while still maintaining healthy boundaries with those who have hurt us, or reaching out to those who are excluded from our church or society. Consider what it practically looks like to love your neighbour.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 What one way could you love your neighbour, whoever that may be, this week?

## WORSHIP

**Leader's notes:** The group can search for/have access to the lyrics for the song “He Knows My Name” by Francesca Batistelli. Read through the lyrics and discuss the themes within the song. How do they link to Jesus' commandment to love our neighbour as ourselves?

### He Knows my Name - Francesca Batistelli

Spent today in a conversation  
In the mirror face to face with  
Somebody less than perfect  
I wouldn't choose me first if

I was looking for a champion  
In fact I'd understand if  
You picked everyone before me  
But that's just not my story  
True to who You are  
You saw my heart  
And made  
Something out of nothing  
I don't need my name in lights  
I'm famous in my Father's eyes  
Make no mistake  
He knows my name  
I'm not living for applause  
I'm already so adored  
It's all His stage  
He knows my name,  
He knows my name,  
I'm not meant to just stay quiet  
I'm meant to be a lion  
I'll roar beyond a song  
With every moment that I've got  
True to who You are  
You saw my heart  
And made  
Something out of nothing  
*Chorus*  
He calls me chosen, free forgiven, wanted, child of the King  
His forever, held in treasure  
I am loved

**Say:** As you listen to the song, think about your friends and neighbours and the struggle they may have to believe that they are truly loved by God. How could you share the love of God with them? It might be a college friend struggling with their appearance, or a friend who lashes out in anger when they are hurting, or a friend who belittles others to make themselves feel more important. Keep your neighbour at the centre of your mind as you listen to the song and read through the lyrics. Ask God to guide you to pray for your neighbour and jot down any practical ways you can show love and kindness to them over the coming weeks.

 **Watch:** He knows my name - Francesca Batistelli 3:30 min  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Um1e4Vor8IQ>

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Leader's notes:** Give/send each member of the group a **30 Days of Love** Bible verses list (Appendix 1). The first 15 days focus on God's love for us and the rest focus on our love for others. Using the list, the group can reflect on God's love over the coming month. They can spend time considering how we love ourselves and our neighbour in the same way God loves us. If the group has a shared social media page, then a group member could take responsibility for posting them each day.

Day One: Isaiah 54:10

Day Two: Psalm 86:15

Day Three: Zephaniah 3:17

Day Four: 1 John 3:1

Day Five: Deuteronomy 7:9

# SMALL GROUP OUTLINES

## SESSION ONE

*Day Six: Ephesians 3:18-19*

*Day Seven: Psalm 5:11-12*

*Day Eight: Ephesians 1:5-6*

*Day Nine: 1 Chronicles 16:34*

*Day Ten: Psalm 107:8-9*

*Day Eleven: 1 John 4:7-8*

*Day Twelve: Romans 8:31-32*

*Day Thirteen: Psalm 36:7*

*Day Fourteen: Galatians 2:20*

*Day Fifteen: John 3:16*

*Day Sixteen: Ecclesiastes 4:12*

*Day Seventeen: Romans 13:8*

*Day Eighteen: 1 Corinthians 13:4-5*

*Day Nineteen: 1 John 4:12*

*Day Twenty: Ephesians 4:2-3*

*Day Twenty-one: 1 Corinthians 16:14*

*Day Twenty-two: Proverbs 3:3-4*

*Day Twenty-three: 1 Peter 4:8*

*Day Twenty-four: John 15:12*

*Day Twenty-five: Romans 12:10*

*Day Twenty-six: Colossians 3:14*

*Day Twenty-seven: Ephesians 4:32*

*Day Twenty-eight: Proverbs 17:17*

*Day Twenty-nine: Zechariah 7:9*

*Day Thirty: 1 Corinthians 13:13*



## PATIENCE & SELF-CONTROL

GALATIANS 5:22-23, COLOSSIANS 3:12-13,

In today's session we'll be thinking about what it looks like to grow the fruit of patience and self-control in our lives. We'll take a step back and look at the ways that we contribute to situations, both positively and negatively and consider how the choices we make impact others. The main focus of the session will be asking God to help us grow these essential fruit of the Spirit.

### WELCOME

**Leader's notes:** Ask the group the following questions. They can play either individually or in teams. The closest answer gets 5 points, second closest 3 points and third closest 1 point.

1. Antoine Secco from France held the record for largest fruit sticker collection between 1993 and 2004. How many stickers were in the collection? **345000**
2. Hussam Saraf from Australia grafted different fruits onto a tree so that they all grew together. How many different fruits did he manage to produce on the same tree? **Five – plum, apricot, almond, peach and cherry**
3. Three people from India were able to display the highest number of origami citrus fruits in 2019. How many fruits were on display? **6132**
4. Josukutty Elbin of Peermade Idukki, India holds the record for the fastest time to identify ten fruits while blindfolded. What is his record breaking time? **6.85 seconds**
5. Tafzi Ahmed from Germany, holds the record for smashing the most watermelons in one minute using just his head. How many watermelons do you think he smashed? **43**
6. Chahi Ariel holds the record for growing the world's heaviest strawberry in 2021. How much did it weigh? (as a clue, the average medium-sized strawberry weighs 12 grams) **322 grams**

Go through the answers and tot up the scores. The winner receives a fruit-based prize!

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Leader's notes:** Can anyone in the group beat Josukutty Elbin's fruit recognition world record?

Ask for a volunteer in the group to attempt Josukutty's world record challenge. You can complete the challenge the same way as Josukutty, with a blindfold and a tray of fruit, or you could put ten fruits into a drawstring bag where they can be felt but not seen.

### WORD

**Say:** In 2017, Taylor Swift released a song called, "Look what you made me do," where she suggested that due to the behaviour of someone else, she had no choice about her response.

**Ask:**

- 🗣️ Do you agree that someone else can make you do something?
- 🗣️ Can someone "make you" retaliate by saying something nasty, or freezing others out?
- 🗣️ How much control do you have over your own actions and decisions?

**Read:**

**<sup>12</sup> You are the people of God; he loved you and chose you for his own. So then, you must clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.**

— (COLOSSIANS 3:12)



**Say:** As followers of Jesus we are invited to clothe ourselves in these characteristics, not in our own strength, but through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.




**Leader's notes:** Show the group a picture of [Pig-Pen](#) from the peanuts cartoon. Explain that wherever Pig-Pen goes he carries a swirl of dirt and dust. On the rare occasions where he is completely clean he is almost unrecognisable and as soon as he steps outside he is immediately covered in dirt and dust again. He takes that dirt and dust into every situation he faces and it impacts the reaction of those around him.

**Say:** Remember this character as we watch a clip from "Present Over Perfect," where the author Shauna Niequest shares her thoughts about Pig-Pen.

 **Watch: Present Over Perfect – (Start 3:12 – Stop 9:23)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewNMGoxVKpA&t=575s>



**Say:** Shauna took a moment to stop and consider the swirling dirt and dust around her life.

**Ask:**

-  What kind of things make us feel like we're out of control?
-  Can you relate to the Pig-Pen illustration? If so, how?
-  In what ways is it hard to acknowledge how our lack of self-control contributes to the situations around us?

**Say:** Shauna noticed that the swirl of chaos followed her everywhere she went and realised that her lack of self-control created a life that made her miserable.


**Ask:**

-  How do you think Shauna's busy, full life impacted those around her?
-  Why is it sometimes difficult to admit where we lack self-control?

**Say:** Whatever your swirl of dirt and dust, God wants to help you grow and develop so that it becomes less of an issue for you. Just as we discovered last week, we don't need to avoid, adjust or accept these parts of ourselves. We can acknowledge who we are with all our strengths and weaknesses and accept God's grace as he helps us to grow the fruit of the Spirit.

**Say:** Last week we discovered that we are called to love God, and love our neighbour as ourselves. (Matthew 22:37-40)

**Ask:**

-  How does self-control play a part in our ability to follow these commandments?



**Say:** It's often a lot easier to identify the Pig-Pen's swirls of others rather than focusing on ourselves, but that's what self-control is all about. We cannot manage someone else's Pig-Pen for them, but God wants to help us become more compassionate, kind, humble, gentle and patient.

**Read:**

**12 So, as God's own chosen people, who are holy [set apart, sanctified for His purpose] and well-beloved [by God Himself], put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience [which has the power to endure whatever injustice or unpleasantness comes, with good temper];**  
— **COLOSSIANS 3:12 (AMP)**

**Say:** The Amplified translation of Colossians 3:12 describes patience as having "the power to endure whatever injustice or unpleasantness comes, with good temper."

**Ask:**

-  Do you find it difficult to be patient with others? If so, why?
-  Do you find it difficult to be patient with yourself? If so, why?

**Say:** God wants us to be patient with each other and the verse straight after Colossians 3:12 shows how our heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience should help us to love others as we love ourselves.

**Read:**

**<sup>12</sup> Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> bearing graciously with one another, and willingly forgiving each other if one has a cause for complaint against another; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so should you forgive.**


— (COLOSSIANS 3:12-13)

**Say:** Self-control and patience are fruit of the Spirit and we are not expected to try harder on our own to achieve them. God wants us to call on His strength so that each day we can demonstrate a little more self-control with ourselves and with those around us.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 **Watch:** Bible Project clip “Slow to Anger.” 5:20 min  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeQ1nq\\_YJD0&t=218s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeQ1nq_YJD0&t=218s)

**Ask:**

 What did you discover about God’s patience and compassion in this clip?

### WITNESS

**Leader’s notes:** Give each member of the group a copy of the Self-control & Patience Handout. Talk through each aspect of the handout and either give the group time to fill it in during the session or take it away with them to review over the coming week.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Ask:**

 What is your response to the following quote?


**“Patience is part of true Christlikeness, something we so often admire in others without demanding it of ourselves.”**

— BILLY GRAHAM

### WORSHIP

**Say:** Sometimes we wish God would swoop in and take away the areas of our lives where self-control is challenging. Often, in the waiting, God is helping us to develop the characteristics that we long for.

**Ask:**

 What prayers are you waiting for God to answer?

You don’t need to share with the whole group. Spend some time in prayer asking God for patience as you wait for His answer.

**Leader's notes:** Read Morgan Harper Nichols' poem to bring this time of reflection to a close.

“One day,  
you will see  
God had a purpose  
for all the waiting,  
and not only of the future,  
but also for the present,  
where you would gather  
all the strength and courage you needed  
to prepare for the days to come.”

— MORGAN HARPER NICHOLS

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Say:** Reflect on the words of the song, “Do it again,” as you pray for a relationship that needs to improve, a repeated loss of self-control that you can't seem to stop or a prayer request that God hasn't answered. All these circumstances require the patience that only the Holy Spirit can fill give.

 **Watch: Do it again - Elevation Worship (6:35)**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0B\\_InQITxU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0B_InQITxU)

# SELF-CONTROL & PATIENCE

HEAVENLY FATHER,  
I need your help to  
remain patient in the  
following areas:

Scriptures to guide me

Prayer

Dear Jesus,  
Help me to follow your  
example showing self-  
control even when it's  
difficult.

Guide me in the  
following areas:

Music for reflection or quotes to  
think about

Holy Spirit, fill me with your power over  
the coming week as I face the following  
circumstances

## GENTLENESS & JOY

MATTHEW 5:5, MATTHEW 11:28-29

In today's world we enter the world of Mr Men and Little Miss, creating new characters and transporting them into the modern-day world. What does it look like to live out gentleness and joy in our everyday lives? We'll ask God to help us spot the opportunities to show gentleness to those around us and bring joy to the people we meet.

### WELCOME

**Leader's notes:** Find images of the following fruit and invite the group to match the fruit names to the pictures. Discuss if they have tried any of these fruits.

Durian	Kiwano (Horned Melon)
Jackfruit	Passion fruit
Dragon Fruit	Tamarillo (Tree Tomato)
Cherimoya	Mulberries

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY


**Leader's notes:** This song is aimed at a younger age group but is just a bit of fun to start the session.

 **Watch: 'The Fruit' – Seed Family Worship (3 mins 01 secs)**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTR7i\\_mbdaw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTR7i_mbdaw)

### WORD

**Say:** A few years ago, Mr Men and Little Miss celebrated their 50th birthday. To mark the occasion, the creators came up with an idea for five new characters: Little Miss Kind, Mr Calm, Little Miss Energy, Mr Brilliant and Little Miss Brave. A vote was held to decide which new Mr Men and Little Miss books would win and be published.

**Ask:**


 Which character would you choose as the winner? Why?

**Say:** When the votes were in and counted, Matt Lucas announced that Little Miss Brave and Mr Calm were the winners.

Today we are going to explore the theme of gentleness and create our own Mr Men or Little Miss character. Rather than living in lovely, colourful Mr Men / Little Miss Land, our character will live in the same world as us, have a social media account, attend school, college or go to work, and generally live a similar life to us. Your character is a Christian Mr Men / Little Miss, trying to live a life of gentleness just as Jesus did.

As with any Mr Men / Little Miss character, we need to explore their main characteristic.

**Ask:**

 How would you define gentleness?

**Say:** A dictionary definition of gentleness is:

1. the quality of being kind, tender, or mild-mannered.
2. softness of action or effect; lightness.

**Say:** In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus shared all the attitudes blessed by God. In verse 5, the meek (or gentle) get a mention.

**Read:**

**Blessed [inwardly peaceful, spiritually secure, worthy of respect] are the gentle [the kind-hearted, the sweet-spirited, the self-controlled], for they will inherit the earth.**

— (MATTHEW 5:5 AMP)

**Say:** In our society gentleness, or meekness, is often seen as weakness. The original Greek word for meek is 'praus', which means 'strength under control'.

**Ask:** Does the definition 'strength under control' change your understanding of gentleness/meekness? If so, how?

**Say:** For the next section you can either work as a whole group or divide into smaller groups and feedback at the end. You will need the Mr Men / Little Miss handout (Appendix 3).

Let's discover more about how the Bible describes gentleness. Read each Bible verse and suggest a possible scenario Mr Gentle or Little Miss Gentle may face linked to that Scripture, and jot down how they might respond.

**Leader's notes:** Give the group time to complete the activity and then ask them to share their Mr Gentle or Little Miss Gentle ideas with the group as you review each Scripture. They could even have a go at drawing their character if they have time.

Once the activity is completed discuss the following questions:

- 💬 What have you discovered about gentleness as you have created your character?
- 💬 What, for you, is the most challenging part of living a life of gentleness?

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

📺 **Watch: Choose Joy Devotions – Day 1 (3:34)**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBQc4w2g\\_X0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBQc4w2g_X0)

**Ask:**

- 💬 How does Kay Warren's definition change your understanding of joy?

“Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be all right, and the determined choice to praise God in all things.”

— KAY WARREN

## WITNESS

**Say:** We spent time today creating a Mr Men / Little Miss Gentle character and explored the different scenarios they faced throughout the week. Now it's time to make it more personal. Using the Gentleness handout (Appendix 3) reflect on the same Bible verses. Over the coming week, either fill in the sheet sharing situations where you demonstrated the spiritual fruit of gentleness, or jot down opportunities that were missed and how you could have responded differently. Gentleness is not a natural human trait, and so, with the Holy Spirit's guidance, we need to practise.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Say:** It's so easy for us to remain focused on our own state of mind and how joyful we feel and forget the joy we bring to others.

**Ask:**

- 💬 In what ways could you bring joy to others over the next week?

### WORSHIP

**Say:** As we discovered from our own Mr Men/ Little Miss character today, living a life of gentleness and joy is not always easy and it's impossible to do it in our own strength. Jesus models for us how to live out the fruit of the Spirit. God, through the Holy Spirit, enables us to live a life of gentleness and joy.

**Read:**

**Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Accept my teachings and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit, and you will find rest for your lives.**

— (MATTHEW 11:28-29 NCV)

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Leader's notes:** Listen to the following song to bring the session to a close.

 **Watch: Let Your Word Sink Deep – Phil Laeger (3:25)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=De2WdDZUYqs>

# MR MEN / LITTLE MISS HANDOUT

**Character Name:**

Bible Verse	Scenario	Response
<p>A gentle answer will calm a person's anger, but an unkind answer will cause more anger.</p> <p>(Proverbs 15:1 NCV)</p>		
<p>When they tell evil lies about us, we speak nice words about them. Even today, we are treated as though we were the garbage of the world – the filth of the earth.</p> <p>(1 Corinthians 4:13 NCV)</p>		
<p>With patience you can convince a ruler, and a gentle word can get through to the hard-headed.</p> <p>(Proverbs 25:15 NCV)</p>		
<p>The wise are known for their understanding. Their pleasant words make them better teachers.</p> <p>(Proverbs 16:21 NCV)</p>		
<p>No, your beauty should come from within you – the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit that will never be destroyed and is very precious to God.</p> <p>(1 Peter 3:4 NCV)</p>		
<p>But respect Christ as the holy Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to answer everyone who asks you to explain about the hope you have, but answer in a gentle way and with respect. Keep a clear conscience so that those who speak evil of your good life in Christ will be made ashamed.</p> <p>(1 Peter 3:15-16 NCV)</p>		
<p>Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Accept my teachings and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit, and you will find rest for your lives.</p> <p>(Matthew 11:28-29 NCV)</p>		



# GENTLENESS HANDOUT

## Gentleness

Bible Verse	Scenario	Response
<p>A gentle answer will calm a person's anger, but an unkind answer will cause more anger.</p> <p>(Proverbs 15:1 NCV)</p>		
<p>When they tell evil lies about us, we speak nice words about them. Even today, we are treated as though we were the garbage of the world – the filth of the earth.</p> <p>(1 Corinthians 4:13 NCV)</p>		
<p>With patience you can convince a ruler, and a gentle word can get through to the hard-headed.</p> <p>(Proverbs 25:15 NCV)</p>		
<p>The wise are known for their understanding. Their pleasant words make them better teachers.</p> <p>(Proverbs 16:21 NCV)</p>		
<p>No, your beauty should come from within you – the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit that will never be destroyed and is very precious to God.</p> <p>(1 Peter 3:4 NCV)</p>		
<p>But respect Christ as the holy Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to answer everyone who asks you to explain about the hope you have, but answer in a gentle way and with respect. Keep a clear conscience so that those who speak evil of your good life in Christ will be made ashamed.</p> <p>(1 Peter 3:15-16 NCV)</p>		
<p>Come to me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Accept my teachings and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit, and you will find rest for your lives.</p> <p>(Matthew 11:28-29 NCV)</p>		

## FAITHFULNESS & PEACE

GALATIANS 5:22-23, LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23, 2 TIMOTHY 2:13, PSALM 33:4, 1 JOHN 1:9, PSALM 91:4, HEBREWS 10:23, ROMANS 8:6

The final session in this series helps us to consider the fruits of faithfulness and peace. Using the lyrics of two traditional hymns we will think about the way God grows these fruit in our lives.

### WELCOME

**Leader's notes:** Ask the group to name the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23.

**Say:** We're going to use Miranda as inspiration for our fruit themed starter today.

 **Watch: Miranda's Fruit Friends (1:08)**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_yc3iZuLDhA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_yc3iZuLDhA)

**Leader's notes:** Ask the group to create their own fruit friend based on a fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. There are different options for this activity depending on the resources you have available. You may want to use real fruit and give the group craft supplies, or they could simply draw a cartoon version of their fruit. They might create a fruit friend representing love out of a red apple or draw a joyful bunch of grapes!

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

This song is aimed at a younger age group but is just a bit of fun to start the session.

 **Watch: Fruit of the Spirit Song for Kids – Starskills (3:13)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-hrxEjWxkE>

### WORD

**Say:** Thomas Chisholm was born in Franklin, Kentucky, in 1866. He became a school teacher at the age of 16 (can you imagine if that happened now?) and later an ordained minister. Due to ill health he had to give up his role as a pastor and took a job as an insurance agent. He lived a pretty ordinary life.

Despite the ordinary nature of his day to day life, Thomas Chisholm had a passion for poetry and would express his faith through the written word. In 1923 he sent a collection of poems to his musician friend William Runyan. The end result was a song that speaks of God's faithfulness which today is sung across the globe.

**Leader's notes:** Read through the words of 'Great is thy faithfulness' and discuss their meaning.

**'Great is thy faithfulness' No 26 SASB**

**1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with thee;  
Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;  
As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.**

*Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed thy hand hath provided;  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

**2 Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.**

**3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!**

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866-1960)

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**Say:** Thomas Chisholm's song is based on Scripture.

**Read:**

**<sup>22</sup> How enduring is God's loyal love; the Eternal has inexhaustible compassion.**

**<sup>23</sup> Here they are, every morning, new!**

**Your faithfulness, God, is as broad as the day.**

**— (LAMENTATION 3:22-23 VOICE)**

**Say:** God remains faithful no matter what, but we sometimes find it difficult to reflect his faithfulness in our own relationships. We're going to read through some Scripture verses and consider what it would look like if we tried to live out God's example of faithfulness.

**Leader notes:** *Allocate the following Bible verses to members of the group, giving them the reference to find and read out. Consider each verse as a group and summarise the characteristic of faithfulness it describes. Add each one to the flip chart.*

Examples for discussion are listed underneath each Bible verse.

**If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny who he is.**

**— (2 TIMOTHY 2:13 NLT)**

God's faithfulness is not dependent on the actions of others. He is faithful regardless of how many times we let him down.

**For the word of the Lord holds true, and we can trust everything he does.**

**— (PSALM 33:4 NLT)**

God's word can be trusted. He does what he says he's going to do.

**But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.**

**— (1 JOHN 1:9 NLT)**

God forgives our sins when we come to him and are sorry for the actions we have taken.

**He will cover you with his feathers.**

**He will shelter you with his wings.**

**His faithful promises are your armour and protection.**

**— (PSALM 91:4 NLT)**


God protects those he loves, sheltering them and keeping them safe.

**Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.**

**— (HEBREWS 10:23 NLT)**

God keeps his promises.

**Ask:** Look at the characteristics of God's faithfulness written on the flip chart.

 How can we reflect those characteristics in our own lives?

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Say:** Have another look at the lyrics for 'Great is thy Faithfulness'. Some of the language in this song seems old-fashioned. Choose a verse and rewrite it in today's language – or even better, create your own poem to share what you have discovered about God's faithfulness.

### WITNESS

**Read:**

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,  
<sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.  
— (GALATIANS 5:22-23)

**Leader's notes:** Ask the group to think back through the four sessions where they have explored the fruit of the Spirit.

- 🗣️ What one thing will you take away from these sessions?
- 🗣️ How has your understanding of the fruit of the Spirit changed?
- 🗣️ Which fruit of the Spirit will you focus on over the coming month?

Jot down the fruit of the Spirit you have chosen and write three practical ways you will ask the Holy Spirit to help you grow in this area.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Say:** Find a way to share your new learning about the fruit of the Spirit with the rest of your church. You could record a short video, write a blog or share your learning in another creative way.

### WORSHIP

**Leader's notes:** This video contains themes of grief and loss which may be difficult for some members of the group.

**Say:** To discover more about God's faithfulness, we looked at the hymn 'Great is thy faithfulness' written by Thomas Chisholm. Our final fruit of the Spirit is peace, and one of the most popular songs linked to this theme is 'It is well'. Just like songwriters today, Horatio Spafford used his own experience to write the following words which have become another classic hymn of the Church.

**Read:**

**'It is Well' (No 741 SASB)**

1. When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll,  
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to know  
It is well, it is well with my soul,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.

— HORATIO GATES SPAFFORD (1828-1888)

**Say:** Only peace, gifted by the Holy Spirit, could help Horatio and his wife Anna, endure all they faced.

▶ **Watch:** The Story Behind It is Well with my Soul, Hymns of Note  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gx0pJb0lcXw>

**Say:** Horatio and Anna experienced difficulties that many of us can hardly imagine, and yet we all know what it's like to face hard times.

**Ask:**

- 🗣️ What can we learn from the way that the Spaffords relied on God's peace?

**Say:** The Spaffords made a conscious decision to trust in God's faithfulness and claim his peace, and their legacy lives on in this beautiful song and the many lives they improved through their influence.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

**Say:** When we are struggling to find peace, we often search for our own solutions and try to second guess what will happen next. Romans 8:6 suggests a different pathway that leads to peace.

**‘For the sense and reason of the flesh is death, but the mind-set controlled by the Spirit finds life and peace.’**

— (ROMANS 8:6 TPT)

**Say:** The kind of peace mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 is discovered when we focus on the power of the Holy Spirit to grow the fruit of peace in our hearts and minds. As you listen to the song ‘It is well’, consider the following questions:

- 🗨️ What practical steps can you take to shift from using your own sense and reason to finding peace through a mindset guided by the Spirit?
- 🗨️ How can you help your Christian friends to do the same when they are sharing their concerns with you?

**Leader’s notes:** Listen to the song ‘It is Well’ to bring the session to a close.

📺 **Watch: It Is Well With My Soul – Audrey Assad (4:10)**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zY5o9mP22V0>