



THE
FRUIT
OF THE
SPIRIT

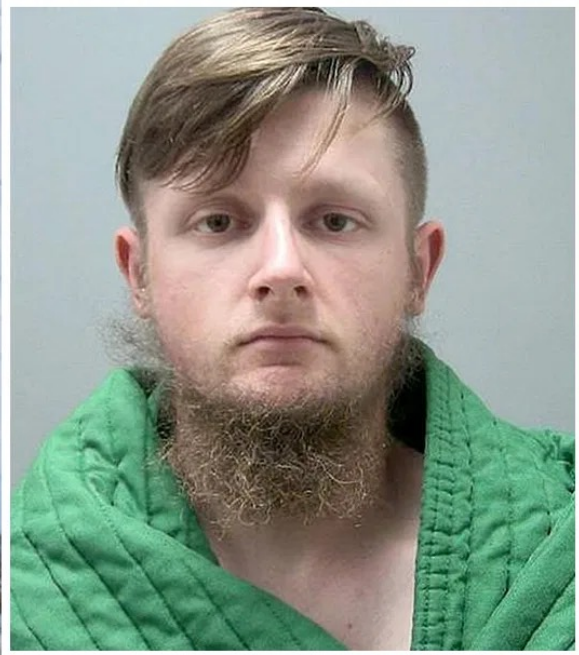
GALATIANS 5

A CULTURE OF VIOLENCE









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BREAKING NEWS

AT LEAST EIGHT KILLED IN INDIANAPOLIS FEDEX SHOOTING

Shooter apparently took his own life, no active threat

LIVE

CNN

SMI ▲ 15.14

CNN NEWSROOM

Theodicy

The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.

Richard Dawkins

“The meek shall inherit the earth” meant nothing to me. The meek were battered in West Baltimore, stomped out at Walbrook Junction, bashed up on Park Heights, and raped in the showers of the city jail. My understanding of the universe was physical, and its moral arc bent toward chaos then concluded in a box. That was the message of the small-eyed boy, untucking the piece—a child bearing the power to body and banish other children to memory. Fear ruled everything around me, and I knew, as all black people do, that this fear was connected to the world out there, to the unworried boys, to pie and pot roast, to the white fences and green lawns nightly beamed into our television sets...

No one - not our fathers, not our police, and not our gods - is coming to save us. The worst really is possible. My aim is to never be caught, as the rappers say, acting like it can't happen...I am an atheist. (I have recently realized this.) I don't believe the arc of the universe bends towards justice. I don't even believe in an arc. I believe in chaos. I believe powerful people who think they can make Utopia out of chaos should be watched closely. I don't know that it all ends badly. But I think it probably does.

Ta-Nehisi Coates

**But if you bite and devour one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another...
Now the works of the flesh are obvious...
hatred, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger,
selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, envy.**

Galatians 5:15, 19

**GENTLENESS IN A
CULTURE OF VIOLENCE**

What is gentleness?

Praus: humility

Ani: humiliation

On that day you will not be put to shame because of everything you have done in rebelling against Me. For then I will remove your proud, arrogant people from among you, and you will never again be haughty on My holy mountain. I will leave a meek and humble people among you, and they will take refuge in the name of Yahweh.

Zephaniah 3:11-12

**Meekness is power restrained &
redirected in service of others**

Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.

Numbers 12:3

Humility is the noble choice to forgo your status, deploy your resources or use your influence for the good of others before yourself. The humble person is marked by a willingness to hold power in service of others. First, humility presupposes your dignity. The one being humble acts from a height, so to speak, as the “lowering” etymology makes clear. True humility assumes the dignity or strength of the one possessing the virtue, which is why it should not be confused with having low self-esteem or being a doormat for others. In fact, I would go so far as to say that it is impossible to be humble in the real sense without a healthy sense of your own worth and abilities...

Second,, humility is willing. It is a choice, Otherwise, it is humiliation. Finally, humility is social. It is not a private act of self-deprecation - banishing proud thoughts, refusing to talk about your achievements and so on. I would call this simple modesty. But humility is about redirecting of your powers, whether physical, intellectual, financial, or structural, for the sake of others.

John Dickson

God is Gentle

Gentle Shepherd

The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

Psalm 23:1-2

He protects His flock like a shepherd; He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them in the fold of His garment. He gently leads those that are nursing.

Isaiah 40:11

Gentle Parent

**As a father has compassion on his children, so
the LORD has compassion on those who fear
Him. For He knows what we are made of,
remembering that we are dust.**

Psalm 103:13-14

**And you saw in the wilderness how the LORD
your God carried you as a man carries his son
all along the way you traveled until you
reached this place.**

Deuteronomy 1:31

**For he does not afflict from his heart or grieve
the children of men.**

Lamentations 3:33

Jesus: Gentle & Lowly of Heart

Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. All of you, take up My yoke and learn from Me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for yourselves. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

In the one place in the Bible where the Son of God pulls back the veil and lets us peer way down into the core of who he is, we are not told that he is “austere and demanding in heart.” We are not even told that he is “joyful and generous in heart.” Letting Jesus set the terms, his surprising claim is that he is “gentle and lowly in heart”...Jesus is not trigger-happy. Not harsh, reactionary, easily exasperated. He sits the most understanding person in the universe. The posture most natural to him is not a pointed finger but open arms.

Dane Ortlund

Examples of Jesus' Gentleness

- His mission as good news for the meek (Luke 4/Isa 61; Matt 5:5)
- Befriending & welcome the vulnerable (Mk 10:14)
- Compassion & healing of crowds (Matt 14:14)
- The Triumphal Entry (Luke 19:28-44)
- Arrest, trial, crucifixion (1 Peter 2:20-23)

GENTLENESS

Take on Jesus' Yoke

Correcting & Restoring Others

Receiving Instructions from Others

Spending Time with the Vulnerable

Witnessing to Others

Confronting Evil & Injustice

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse...Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Try to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes. If possible, on your part, live at peace with everyone. Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for His wrath. For it is written: Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay, says the Lord. But If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. For in so doing you will be heaping fiery coals on his head. Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

Romans 12:17-21



WAKE-UP!
Jim Crow
IS DEAD!

CAN'T
EAT
DON'T
BI



