Galatians 5:22-23; Ex. 34:4-7; Matt. 11:28-30
Series – Forward to Maturity
Message – Faithfulness & Gentleness: The Display of Christ's Heart
November 8, 2026
Fifth Reformed Church
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"Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity" (Hebrews 6:1a).

Faithfulness

- Proverbs 20:6
- Exodus 34:6

- That God is faithful means that God _____ in reliability, trustworthiness, and truth.

- 2 Timothy 2:11,13
- Psalm 36:5; Psalm 119:90

Gentleness

- "My dad pointed out to me something that Charles Spurgeon pointed out to him. In the four Gospel accounts given us in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – eighty-nine chapters of biblical text – there's only one place where Jesus tells us about his own heart" (Dane Ortlund, Gentle and Lowly, p.17).

- Gentle – the positive moral quality of dealing with people in a kind manner, with _____ and consideration (NIV Exhaustive Concordance Dictionary).

- "Be pitiful, for every man is fighting a hard battle." – Ian MacLaren
- "[Jesus] is the most understanding person in the universe. The posture most natural to him is not a pointed finger but _____ arms" (Dane Ortlund, Gentle and Lowly, p.19).

The Dawning of a New Age

- Matthew 21:5

- In Jesus a new age of gentleness has _____.

"Gentleness is despised in the political systems of every nation where powerful posturing seems to be the most critical element of statecraft. But gentleness is not the absence of power; it is the proper use of it – not to crush or destroy or dismay, but to protect and build up" (Jonathan Landry Cruse, The Character of Christ. P.126).

- Gentleness is the _____ use of power.

- God is shaping you into a person who uses power properly – not to crush of destroy or dismay, but to _____ and build up.

Reflection Questions

1. Is there someone in your life you would consider faithful? What did/does that person do to make you say this?
2. Read 2 Timothy 2:11-13 aloud. If God's faithfulness to us is not dependent upon our faithfulness to him, what does that mean for how we might live?
3. How have you experienced the gentleness of God in your life?
4. Is your natural default to see God with a pointed finger or open arms? Why do you think that is?
5. Recall a time in the past when you misused your power. Are you able to excavate the situation to determine why you acted as you did? What might have been a more Christlike response?
6. What was the most challenging part of this message for you?
7. How is God getting your attention?
8. What might God be saying to you?
9. What is your next faithful step?