

127. CHARACTER FRUITS - TUESDAY - MAY 19, 2026

Good morning, Grace Harbor – it's Dan. I hope your Tuesday's off to a great start!

It ended up raining most of yesterday, including all afternoon and evening after school and work. It was so gray and dreary outside, the only thing we really felt like doing was reading.

It helped that my wife had swung by the library and picked up a few books we had on hold. Mrs. Rodriguez, the librarian, had recommended a new chapter book series for our daughter, but it was so popular that we had to wait over a month to get to the top of the list!

It must've been a hit because our daughter spent all of dinner telling us all about the characters and the world and the story so far. She then spent her after-dinner free time reading even more! I guess it's time to place a hold on the next couple of books in the series!

I think the thing she likes the most is that the main character is a girl right around her age. She can easily imagine that they're friends going on an adventure together.

When I was growing up, one of my favorite characters was Superman. I liked him because he wasn't just strong and could fly and looked cool. I liked that he was kind.

Do you have any favorite characters? Someone from a book,

movie, TV show, or podcast? What are they like, and why are they your favorite? Take a few moments to share with each other. If you need more time, you can pause the podcast, and I'll be right here when you get back.

[PAUSE]

What I find interesting is that the most loved characters aren't just loved for what they do, but we love them for who they are. And because of that, we'll watch them do practically anything!

I think of a character like Mickey Mouse. We've watched cartoons where he's a detective solving a mystery, an astronaut meeting aliens on another planet, a pirate sailing the high seas, and helping Minnie Mouse run a bakery.

That actually points us to another way we can use the word "character." We've been talking about characters like the people in a story. But character can also describe who we are and the values that guide us no matter what we're doing. So with Mickey, he can show up in very different kinds of stories, but he's always positive, upbeat, ready for fun, and determined to meet whatever challenge comes his way.

As we continue our series on the Fruit of the Spirit, which is the good stuff God wants to grow in our lives, we've been grouping them together in threes. We had the inner fruits – love, joy, and peace – that grow directly out of our relationship with God. Last week, we looked at the

outer fruits – patience, kindness, and goodness – which tend to show up in our relationships with others.

This week, our final three are what we're going to call the character fruits. They express themselves in how we act, no matter what situations we find ourselves in.

We started yesterday with faithfulness, which was about God and others being able to count on us. This is a really important part of our character because it means that we don't just make good choices when it's easy. We try our best to do what God would want us to do, even when it's challenging, or we're tired, or we just don't want to.

Today's fruit is gentleness. What do you think of when you hear the word gentle? Maybe you think of something soft or slow or quiet. Or maybe you think of a time when you slammed a door or were playing a little rough and an adult said, "Whoah – gentle, please."

You see, some of us may not think of ourselves as gentle because we have lots of energy or we're naturally loud and rambunctious. That's how God made some of us, and it's also pretty common at certain ages. But the fruit of gentleness helps us know how to dial some of that back when necessary.

I told you yesterday that this week, I'm doing extra training with our dog, Luke. He's a young golden retriever, and he has **so** much energy and is excited about **everything.** He also **really** loves people. And that means if you visited my house, he might knock you over –

out of love, of course.

We love that he loves people. But we're trying to teach him how to be gentle. How to show us he's excited in a way that's safe and fun for everyone.

And, of course, that's something we **all** need to learn. If we can recognize when gentleness is needed and can choose to control our energy, words, and actions, we can better love each other.

Ok, let's close in prayer. If you want to, you can close your eyes and fold your hands.

Dear God, there is no one more powerful than you. You made the entire universe, and you also designed the tiniest of flowers that grow in the cracks of the sidewalk. We thank you that you lit the fires of all the suns in every galaxy, but you also know how to sit with us and comfort us when we need you. Teach us how to show this same kind of gentleness to the people around us, too. Amen.

Ok, Grace Harbor, have a great Tuesday, and I'll be back tomorrow, buzzing with excitement!

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