

## A Gentle and Quiet Spirit

*“But let it be the hidden person of the heart,  
with the imperishable quality of a  
gentle and quiet spirit,  
which is precious in the sight of God.”  
1Peter 3:4.*

A popular attitude now is strength. Yet, Jesus told us “Blessed are the meek”! Without realizing it, we have strayed onto dangerous ground, “sinking sand.” Boisterous and rebellious women are common and accepted. In television sitcoms these women get all the laughs. Meek is now regarded as weak. So when a husband strays from the Truth, you'll hear Christians advise the wife to use the “tough love” approach based on the book *Love Must Be Tough*. In this lesson we will search God's Word to find out the Truth regarding “tough love.” Is it still blessed to be meek, or is the Bible outdated?

### Tough Love

**Love is patient.** God gives us a description of love. See if you can find the word “tough” or any word even remotely similar. “**Love is patient**, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is **not provoked**, **does not take into account a wrong suffered**, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the Truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails....” 1Cor. 13:4-8.

**This I command you.** Another new idea in the church today (along with a title of another popular book) is “love is a choice.” Read with me the following verse to see if God says we can “choose” to love. Or does God command that we do so as followers of Christ? “**This I command you**, that you *love one another*.” John 15:17.

**Love your enemies.** Our friends counsel us to “protect ourselves” and “not love those, who are difficult to love.” Are we to love them or not? “But I say to you who hear, **love your enemies**, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.” Luke 6:27-28.

**If you love those who love you.** In this passage God is even clearer. He even admonishes those who only love the lovable. “But I say to you, **love your enemies**, and pray for those who persecute you...for **if you love those who love you**, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?” Matt. 5:44-46.

**Overcome evil with good.** The book that encourages us to be “tough” with our spouses tells us that we should confront our spouses in order to cause a crisis. In other words, we should take matters into our own hands. Read how we are to leave room for His wrath. What does God instruct us to do? “Rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer. Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not. **Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.** Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if thirsty, give him a drink; for in doing so you will heap burning coals upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but **overcome evil with good.**” Rom. 12:12, 14, 17, 19, 21.

**He uttered no threats.** You may ask yourself “Why do I have to endure such suffering, and not even have the satisfaction of vengeance?” Read God’s explanation for your suffering. “For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps...and while being reviled, **He did not revile in return**; while suffering, **He uttered no threats**, but kept entrusting Himself to Him (God) who judges righteously.” 1Pet. 2:21-23.

**Blessed are the meek.** If you don’t take matters into your own hands and take a “tough stand,” others (even Christians) will tell you that you are a doormat. Let me remind you who Jesus said are blessed. “**Blessed are the meek**, for they shall inherit the earth.” Matt. 5:5.

**The kindness of God.** We have been deceived into believing that confronting, and being unkind and firm, will turn the other person around. If that works, why would God use kindness to draw us to repentance? Sinners do not go down to the altar to accept the Lord because they think that they are going to be criticized or chastised, do they? “Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that **the kindness of God** leads you to repentance?” Rom. 2:4.

**The righteousness of God.** People may even remind you of when Jesus turned over the tables in the Temple. They will use this example to tell you that you have the “right” to be angry with others. God says He is a jealous God; can we then also be jealous? “But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for **the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.**” James 1:19-20.

**That you may not do the things that you please.** When we have an impulse to do or say something to another person that is anything but meek, then we are walking in the flesh and therefore are not walking in the Spirit. “But I say, walk in the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so **that you may not do the things that you please.** ...But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” Gal. 5:16, 17, 22-23. The old saying, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” is based on this Scripture, “And just as you want people to treat you, **treat them in the same way.**” Luke 6:31.

**The error of unprincipled men.** God has warned us that we should not listen to or follow men who tell us something contrary to Scripture. “Be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him...in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of Scripture, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being **carried away by the error of unprincipled men**, you fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2Pet. 3:14-18. If we **know** the Word, we are much less vulnerable to accept error as the Truth.

**You are to be perfect.** Some authors, and even some pastors, have told us that God doesn’t expect us to be perfect. What does God Himself say? “Therefore, **you are to be perfect**, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Matt. 5:48.

**No one will see the Lord.** Another extremely important reason for your peaceful actions toward your husband or others is that we are to let others see Christ in us. “Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which **no one will see the Lord.**” Heb. 12:14.

**The ministry of reconciliation.** We are to be ambassadors for Christ in reconciliation. “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us **the ministry of reconciliation**, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” 2Cor. 5:18-20.

**Lest you too be tempted.** The following Scripture is a warning to us when we are not gentle to others when they have sinned against us. “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, **lest you too be tempted**. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.” Gal. 6:1-2.

**Lest the Lord see it and be displeased.** Many women have been so happy to see their husbands “get what they deserve” when God punishes their husbands with financial difficulties or other trials. Later, things turn around for the better. Why does this happen? “Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; lest the **Lord see it and be displeased**, and *He turn away His anger from him.*” Prov. 24:17.

**Doers of the Word.** It's important that we learn the Truth and agree with what we see in Scripture, but we must not stop there. “But prove yourselves **doers of the Word**, and not merely hearers who delude themselves...not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.” James 1:22,25 “Therefore, to him who **knows the right thing to do**, and does not do it, to him it is sin.” James 4:17.

## Forgiveness

Many women do not forgive their husbands because they don't fully understand the grave consequences of their lack of forgiveness. Let's search the Scriptures to see what God says about forgiving others:

**The question we often ask ourselves is “Why *should* I forgive?”**

**Because God also has forgiven you.** Because of Christ's death on the cross, God forgave us. “And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in **Christ also has forgiven you.**” Eph. 4:32.

**For forgiveness of sins.** Jesus shed His blood for the forgiveness of all sins. “All things are cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Heb. 9:22. “For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **for forgiveness of sins.**” Matt. 26:28.

**Advantage be taken of us by Satan.** We need to forgive others, so Satan cannot take advantage of us. “For if indeed what I have forgiven,...I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, in order that **no advantage be taken of us by Satan**; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.” 2Cor. 2:10-11.

**Your Father will not forgive your transgressions.** God said that He won't forgive you, if you don't forgive others. “For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive men, then **your Father will not forgive your transgressions.**” Matt. 6:14-

15. Make sure the forgiveness is not just lip service. “So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you do not forgive his brother *from your heart*.” Matt. 18:35. (Read all of Matt. 18: 22-35.)

**Reaffirm your love for him**, to relieve the offender's sorrow. “...You should rather forgive and **comfort him**, lest somehow such a one be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. Wherefore I urge you to **reaffirm your love for him**.” 2Cor. 2:7-8.

**But shouldn't the offender be sorry if I'm to forgive?**

**Father, forgive them.** Those who crucified Jesus neither asked for forgiveness nor expressed sorrow for what they were doing or what they had done. If we are Christians, we are followers of Christ; therefore, we are to follow His example. “**Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing.**” Luke 23:34. When Stephen was being stoned he cried out just before he died, “**Lord, do not hold this sin against them!**” Acts 7:60.

**But how often does God expect me to forgive another?**

**Seventy times seven.** When Peter asked how often he was to forgive his brother, Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to **seventy times seven**.” Matt. 18:22 That's 490 times!

**Remember no more.** Does forgiveness really mean that I forget that sin, even in an argument? “For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will **remember no more.**” Jer. 31:34. “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” Ps. 103:12. “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you *were* called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.” 1Pet. 3:9. You must understand that Satan will try to bring up old transgressions in your mind. When he does, you must forgive again. Many of us who have forgiven our husbands who have been unfaithful to us experience “flashbacks” of the adultery after our husbands have returned home. It's almost like a type of *spiritual* war trauma. We know that we must always walk in a spirit of forgiveness.

**How can I forgive as God has asked me to do in His Word?**

**God alone.** Only God can help you to do it. You must *humble* yourself and ask Him to give you the grace. “*Who can forgive sins* but **God alone**?” Mark 2:7.

**Gives grace to the humble.** How do I get the grace I need? “God is opposed to the proud but **gives grace to the humble**. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you at the proper time.” 1Pet. 5:5-6.

**Humbled your heart.** How can I gain humility? “Because they had rebelled against the Words of God, and spurned the counsel of the Most High. Therefore He **humbled their heart** *with labor*; they stumbled and there was none to help. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses.” Ps. 107:11-13. “**I humbled my soul** *with fasting*; and my *prayer* kept returning to my bosom.” Ps 35:13. We can work, fast and pray to obtain humility. I have found that many times God allows an illness in me or in my children to quiet and humble me.

**When do I need to forgive those who have hurt me?**

**Shouldn't I feel convicted of it first?**

**First be reconciled to your brother.** “If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; **first be reconciled to your brother**, and then come and present your offering.” Matt. 5:23-24. If you have not forgiven another, especially your husband, you need to ask for forgiveness.

**Bitterness.** Not forgiving someone causes bitterness. The definition of bitterness is “poison”! “Let all **bitterness** and wrath and anger...be put away from you.” Eph. 4:31. Not forgiving another is eating at you, not the other person. “The heart knows its own bitterness.” Prov. 14:10. “For He knows the secrets of the heart.” Ps. 44:21.

**A brother offended.** Be sure that you take note of the following Scriptural guidelines when asking for forgiveness. I have heard many who have said that things were actually worse when they did ask for forgiveness or that it did no good. I can speak from experience. At times, when I have asked for another's forgiveness, I have stated it the wrong way and further offended the other person. “A **brother offended** is harder to be won than a strong city.” Prov. 18:19.

**Taking every thought captive.** Take your thoughts captive and look at your offenses as God sees them and from the eyes of the other person. “...we are **taking every thought captive** to the obedience of Christ.” 2Cor. 10:5.

**Men pleasers.** God knows our motives and our heart. “...but the Lord looks at the heart.” 1 Sam. 16:7. “...In the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as **men pleasers**, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.” Eph 6:5-6. “A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind.” Prov. 18:2.

**Every idle word.** Every word you say must be carefully chosen. Prepare your *every word*. “**Every idle word** that men shall speak they *shall give an account* thereof in the day of judgment.” Matt. 12:36. Begin by writing down what **you** are going to say. Then read out loud what you wrote, putting yourself in the other person's shoes and hearing it from his point of view. Does it sound accusing? Ask God to put the right words in your mouth.

**Many words.** “When there are **many words**, transgression is unavoidable.” Prov. 10:19. “A babbling fool will be thrown down.” Prov. 10:10. Only say what **you** did; don't set the stage with something like, “When you did this, and such and such, well then I...”

**He uttered no threats.** “Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him....” Matt. 5:25 KJV. If the other person starts to lash out at you, do not open your mouth except to agree. “And while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering **He uttered no threats**....” 1Pet. 2:23.

**I am no longer worthy.** The prodigal son prepared his words after his decision to return home and spoke them humbly: “I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; **I am no longer worthy** to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.’” Luke 15:18-19. God *will* raise up those who are bowed down!

**Sweet to the soul.** Make your words sweet and kind. “Sweetness of speech adds persuasiveness.” Prov. 16:21. “Pleasant words are a honeycomb, **sweet to the soul** and healing to the bones.” Prov. 16:24.

## Practice These Things

“For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all **diligence**, in your **faith** apply **virtue**, and to your **virtue** apply **knowledge**; and in your **knowledge**, **self-control**, and in your **self-control**, **perseverance**, and in your **perseverance**, **godliness**; and in your **godliness**, **brotherly kindness**, and in your **brotherly kindness**, **love**. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful...For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins...for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble.” 2Pet. 1:4-10.

## Apply All Diligence

“He who **diligently** seeks good, seeks favor.” Prov. 11:27.

“Be **diligent** to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of Truth.” 2Tim 2:15.

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being **diligent** to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Eph 4:1-3.

## In Your Faith

“**Faith** comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ.” Rom. 10:17.

“Be on the alert, stand firm in the **faith**.” 1Cor. 16:13.

“In addition to all, taking up the shield of **faith** with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one.” Eph. 6:16.

“For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also **faith** without works is dead.” James 2:26.

## Add Virtue

“Who can find a **virtuous** woman? For her price is far above rubies. For the heart of her husband does safely trust in her and he will have no lack of gain.” Prov. 31:10-11.

“Many daughters have done **virtuously**, but you excel them all...a woman who fears the Lord she shall be praised.” Prov. 31:29-30.

“Finally brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good report; if there is any **virtue** and if there is any praise, think on these things.” Phil 4:8.

## Apply Knowledge

“Take my instruction and not silver, and **knowledge** rather than choicest gold.” Prov. 8:10.

“A wise man is strong, and a man of **knowledge** increases power. For by wise guidance you will wage war and in the abundance of counselors there is *victory* (or *safety* in KJV).” Prov. 24:5-6.

“For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the **knowledge** of Truth.” 2Tim 3:6-7.

## Then Self Control

“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he **who rules his spirit**, than he who captures a city.” Prov. 16:32.

“I will **guard my ways**, that I may not sin with my tongue; I will guard my mouth as with a muzzle, while the wicked are in my presence.” Ps. 31:1. “He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself, and he who reproveth a wicked man gets insults for himself. Do not reprove a scoffer, lest he hate you. Reprove a wise man and he will love you.” Prov. 9:7-9.

“Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has **no control** over his spirit.” Prov. 25:28.

## Then Endurance

“Knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**.” James 1:3.

“And you will be hated by *all* on account of My name, but it is the one who has **endured** to the end who will be saved.” Matt. 10:22.

“But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you **endured** a great conflict of suffering.” Heb. 10:32.

## Then Godliness

“But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the contrary, discipline yourself for the purpose of **godliness**; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but **godliness** is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also life to come.” 1Tim. 4:7-8.

“But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, **godliness**, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.” 1Tim 6:11.

“Instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and **godly** in the present age.” Titus 2:12.

### And in Godliness, Brotherly Kindness

“To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, **brotherly**, kindhearted and humble in spirit.” 1Pet. 3:8.

“She opens her mouth in wisdom and the teaching of **kindness** is on her tongue.” Prov. 31:26.

“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, **kindness**, humility, gentleness, and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on **love**, which is the perfect bond of unity.” Col. 3:12-14.

### And Finally Love

“**Love** covers a multitude of sins.” 1Pet 4:8.

“**Love** your enemies.” Matt. 5:44.

“...to **love** their husbands.” Titus 2:4.

“A new *commandment* I give to you, that you **love** one another, even as I have loved you, that you **love** one another.” John 13:34.

“**Love** is patient, **love** is kind, and is not jealous; **love** does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the Truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

“**Love** never fails....” 1Cor 13:4-8.

### Yes, They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love!

**Personal commitment: To desire and strive to be gentle and quiet.** “Based on what I have learned in Scripture, I commit to do everything I have learned to be quick to hear and slow to speak. I will forgive those who have offended me and do what I can to reconcile with those I have offended.”

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_