



**Daily God Walk  
Virtues Series**

**Gentleness**

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the New  
International Version (NIV). All other translations used will  
be credited using these abbreviations:

(KJV) – King James Version  
(NKJV) – New King James Version  
(TLB) – The Living Bible  
(TM) – The Message

# Features of the Daily God Walk

## Daily God Walk Online

We are now offering internet access to the Daily God Walk. We are posting the Daily God Walk as an e-book and giving our readers an opportunity to register to receive it monthly. At present we are only offering it in a format for the computer, but we will soon have it available for mobile devices.

## Small Group Study Guide for Daily God Walk

So many people are responding to the messages in our devotional that we have a second page to each devotion to help those who want to use the Daily God Walk for discussions in small groups.

## Tips on Leading a Small Group

We have found that there are many folks who want to lead small groups so now you will also find, in the back of the book each month, tips on using the Daily God Walk as a text for small group discussions as well.

## Small Group Coaching Online

For many years a focus of our ministry has been small group meetings. We have found that spiritual growth takes place when small groups of believers gather to discuss the Scripture, pray together, share the issues of life and fellowship together.

That is our motivation for expanding our ministry to include small group coaching. If you lead a small group, sometimes called cell group, or if you would like to be a leader, I encourage you to check out our small group site: [www.dailygodwalk.org/small-groups.html](http://www.dailygodwalk.org/small-groups.html)

Our hope is that the entire Daily God Walk program will be a blessing to you, a help for spiritual growth and an asset to your ministry.

## **Affirming your faith in Christ:**

**Lord, I -here and now- take my stand of faith in You and say that:**

1. I choose Jesus Christ as my God (He is Almighty, Creator and Ruler)
2. I choose Jesus Christ as my Savior (He died on the Cross for me)
3. I choose Jesus Christ as my Best Friend. (He Eternally Loves me and Accepts me)
4. I choose Jesus Christ as the most important Person in my life (Only He can give real meaning to my life)
5. I choose Jesus Christ as my Lord (to command and control my life)
6. I choose Jesus Christ as my Eternal Teacher (He knows Everything )
7. I choose Jesus Christ as my Only Guide (Only He is Trustworthy)
8. I choose my position in Christ (He has made of me a Child of God)
9. I choose to be Free in Christ (I am under no restriction to be saved)
10. I choose Victory in Christ (I can do all things He wants me to do)

## **Thank God I am Free!**

**Galatians 5:1 – It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.**

**I thank God for what He has provided for me. Through what Jesus Christ did for me on the Cross of Calvary I can claim:**

1. Freedom from my Old Sinful Nature
2. Freedom from all hurts, fears, guilt, and shame of my past.
3. Freedom from ignorance, defeat, resentment and condemnation.
4. Freedom from my self-centeredness, selfishness, self-obsession and egotism.
5. Freedom from the need and desire of all addictive substances.
6. Freedom from all compulsive and unhealthy behavior.
7. Freedom from all codependent relationships.

**As A Consequence of Who I am, What I am and  
Where I am:**

I am enjoying His peace. John 14:27

I am walking in a manner worthy of the Lord. Col. 1:10

I am considered worthy to suffer shame for His Name.  
Acts 5:41

I am authorized to have power over demons Luke 9:1,2

I am filled with power of the Holy Spirit. Acts.1:8

I am being guided by the Holy Spirit of Truth. John  
16:13

I am walking by faith, not by sight. II Cor. 5:7

I am a sweet aroma of the knowledge of Christ. II Cor.  
2:14

I am being transformed into the glory of the Lord. II Cor  
3:18

I am being renewed in the inner man day by day. II Cor.  
4:16

I am blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.  
Eph 1:3

I am not a hireling of the sheep. John 10:13

I am healed by His stripes. Isa. 53:5; I Peter 2:24

Day One

## *Gentleness Is A Fruit Of The Spirit*

The fruit of the Spirit is... gentleness... against such there is no law  
– Galatians 5:22-23

The concept of gentleness, in our language, is closely related to kindness and goodness which are also listed as fruit of the Spirit. Even though they are closely related, each has their own distinctive. In this series of devotions we are looking at gentleness as the featured virtue.

The Greek word translated gentleness is “*chrestotes*.” This word projects the idea of usefulness or being fit for use. It also has connotations of virtuous, mild or pleasant. It can also mean benevolent.

When we put all of this together this particular aspect of spiritual fruit indicates that we are to be humbly prepared to demonstrate the love of God through benevolent service.

I think the reason this virtue is on the list of spiritual fruit is because it runs so counter to our human nature. Our human nature typically motivates us to first take care of our own needs and desires then, if there is anything left in us we can share that with others.

Gentleness calls us to look beyond ourselves to the needs of others. It calls us to quietly, without fanfare or recognition, reach out to others. Gentleness is truly a virtue of the Holy Spirit that is to be pursued by every believer.

Jesus was a good example of this kind of gentleness in Matthew 9:36, "When he saw the crowds he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

How do we become prepared to be gentle in this manner? There are quite a few things we can do develop this characteristic. First we must realize our need for the Holy Spirit to dwell richly in us so that his fruit will be the fruit of our life. Another thing we should do is practice thinking of others first and asking ourselves how we can make their load lighter.

Throughout these next few weeks ask yourself the question: Am I prepared to serve in the kingdom as one who is known to be gentle?

**Prayer:** Lord, I can't be gentle in the context of the definition we have examined. Give me your grace to enable to bear this fruit. Amen.





Day Two

## *A Gentle Answer Turns Away Wrath*

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

– Proverbs 15:1

The boys were upstairs arguing loudly and it sounded like it had gone past the argument stage. I went up to intervene and as I was untangling them I got the typical, “Dad, he did this” followed by the response of my other son, “But dad, he did this first.” Does that sound familiar to anybody?

When I tracked the problem down it was a small infraction that could have been resolved by a soft answer, but instead it was responded to with anger and all at once it was on. Once I got them settled down I told them again, “Boys, a soft answer will turn away wrath but an angry response will only make it worse.”

They had heard that message many times, but as yet they had not grasped the concept. Unfortunately, far too many of us fail to understand that when we respond with the same anger that was projected toward us we are only adding fuel to a fire that quickly grows out of control.

In the Hebrew the word translated “gentle” is “*rak*.” This word literally means tender especially when used with “tender hearted.” The KJV translates this word as “soft.” We could easily paraphrase this verse to say, “a soft and tender hearted response to another’s anger will calm them down.”

What a concept. Responding to another person’s harsh attitude and anger with a soft, tender hearted response can prevent an angry altercation. How does one do that?

I have found that a large part of the time when a person responds to a minor incident with anger they are responding to what is inside of them more than responding to the person they see as the offender.

When I can see the other person as acting out of their own fears and insecurities rather than just making an unjust attack on me it is much easier to return a soft answer to their tirade. Think about it.

*Prayer:* Lord, it isn’t easy giving a gentle answer to someone who is being offensive. Grant me the grace to display this virtue in the face of anger. Amen.



Day Three

## *The Power Of Gentle Words*

Through patience a ruler can be persuaded and a gentle tongue can break a bone. – Proverbs 25:15

Have you ever heard the quote, “Speak the truth in love?” It is more than a cute saying. Speaking the truth in love opens doors of understanding that would otherwise be closed. It is much easier to use gentle words to explain truth when our objective is helping others understand the truth.

Speaking the truth in love is challenged by our sound-bite world. You just have 10 seconds to make your point or you have already lost your opportunity to be understood. A result of responding to that mind set is sound-bite-truth. It is impossible for a sound-bite-truth to be both gentle and effective so most of us settle for harsh and abrupt. How can you even present a truth in 10 seconds or less?

The first half of this verse states, “through patience a ruler can be persuaded.” If you want to get the truth across in a way that it is properly understood you are going to have to patiently insert very gentle tidbits until the other person begins to grasp the concept and wants to know more.

I once had a newspaper distribution business with 25 carriers. I received a call from a very irate customer who was cursing the paper boy for throwing the paper in a place where it would get wet when the sprinklers came on. I had a problem that I needed to resolve, but I also had a young boy to protect.

In a soft voice I agreed with this customer’s problem, but then I did something he didn’t expect. I asked for his help. I explained that this young boy was being raised in a broken home by a single mom and he was trying but he had a lot of challenges. I asked him if he would speak to the boy about his problem and show him a place to put the paper where it wouldn’t get wet.

An interesting thing happened. This man changed from being an irate customer to being concerned about the paper boy and he became the best tipper on the route. Why did this happen? It was the power of a gentle tongue.

**Prayer:** Lord, it is so easy to quickly give a response that alienates people. Grant me the patience to speak the truth gently. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Four

## *Gently Restore A Fallen Brother*

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

- Galatians 6:1

Years ago we were involved in a ministry that brought people off the streets and provided them with a safe place to live. We had some specific rules for people in the ministry and one of them was that if they were using drugs they would be put out of the program.

Some people would come back after a time and want to try again. Steve was one of those people. We put Steve out of the program four times, and he kept coming back in repentance. We would have been justified to turn him away after the second, or even the third time, but each time he came back he was accepted with a clean slate.

Finally, after being put out four times he got it. He has been faithfully serving the Lord now for over 12 years. If we had been harsh, or hateful to him, he would not be in the faith today. We do not have an option; when a brother has fallen we are mandated to gently restore him.

We have all known good people who have fallen. There are a number of well known ministers who have fallen and there are many more, lesser known folks, local folks, who are no longer in the faith. It hurts me to hear people talk about the fallen as if they were something less than what we are and they deserve whatever bad thing that comes to them.

It is a well worn phrase, but the truth is, "There we are except for the grace of God." We must always remember that all of us are susceptible to sin for sin has no favorite people - sin is an equal opportunity destroyer.

Who do you know that has fallen prey to this vicious destroyer of the faithful? Search them out; go to them with love. Offer them the grace of God. Extend to them mercy and love with kindness and gently lead them to restoration.

**Prayer:** Lord, too often I look at others through judging eyes. Help me to look at the fallen with compassion and love. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Five

## *Be A Gentle Witness*

In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. – 1 Peter 3:15

Many years ago I was visiting a pastor friend. We had gone out to eat after an evening service. As we approached the restaurant we were approached by an obvious homeless man seeking money. My friend stopped to talk with him and the rest of us waited impatiently for a moment then went on in to the restaurant to get a seat.

We were concerned about food and fellowship, but my friend was ready to give an answer concerning his faith. The love of Christ in him would not allow him to just brush past this man with obvious needs. He had to stop and share the gospel in a gentle way that did not disrespect that man.

When we think about this passage we often think of giving an answer to the intellectual who is questioning our doctrine. Or we are thinking of making a presentation before a group. We at least think of sharing our prepared testimony to our fellow workers. This passage is about all that and more.

We are to be prepared to share Christ as the answer in whatever circumstance we find people. Whether they are “up and in” or “down and out” we are to be prepared to share Christ in a way that addresses them and their needs.

I was working the mid-night shift and at 2AM in the break room a fellow worker told me that he wanted to marry his girlfriend but that she wouldn't marry him unless he was a born again Christian. There were a lot of things in his life I could address; drinking, fornicating, and more, but I heard what he was asking; he wanted to know how to be born again.

Later that morning, after we had gotten off work, I led him to receive Jesus as the Christ and his personal savior. When we finished praying he looked at me with a different expression on his face and said, “Wow, I feel different.”

Be ready to give a gentle, respectful answer for your faith.

**Prayer:** Give me eyes to see the chance to give an answer for my faith. Amen.





Day Six

## *Accept The Word With Gentle Humility*

Take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry; for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. – James 1:19-21

How many times have we listened quickly and overheard something that we misunderstood, then, acting upon our misunderstanding, we became angry and quickly spoke a retort that turned out to be an embarrassment to us? It hasn't happened to you? Well, most of the rest of us earthlings have experienced that particular embarrassment all too often.

That is the situation James is trying to help us avoid. The remedy he is offering is to cleanse ourselves of all moral filth that everyone else seems to enjoy and humbly accept instruction from the word of God. The focus point is; "humbly accept."

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament defines the Greek word, *prautes*, which is here translated "humbly," as meaning meekness or gentleness of spirit. The point seems to be that as long as we are living as the world does with our attention given to earthly, evil and yes, immoral things we are going to be driven by those things. But when we humbly, with a gentle and meek spirit, submit to God's will then those things will have no power over us.

Our ego is the driving force that makes it difficult to submit to God with a meek and gentle spirit. Ego says, "Why should you miss out on all the fun." And it continues with, "You're just human." If we continue to listen to our ego we will find ourselves indulging our fleshly desires and contradicting everything that James is trying to teach us.

This is a good day to purpose that you are going to lay aside our ego and give ourselves to God's word and instructions for life. Allow the Holy Spirit to produce a humble and gentle spirit in you.

**Prayer:** Lord, it's not easy to be long on listening, slow on speaking and slow to become angry. I need your grace to humbly accept your will. In your name, amen.



Day Seven

## *Meekly Making A Gentle Appeal*

By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you... that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world.

- 2 Corinthians 10:1-2

The challenge of every leader in the body of Christ is to address issues of the Christian walk in ways that are not offensive to people of faith. Paul had observed certain attitudes and behaviors in the church at Corinth that he was having to deal with and his concern was that his approach would affect the outcome of what he had to say.

He used two words to preface his instruction. They are meekness and gentleness. These two words present two aspects of humility that are sometimes misunderstood. Meekness is often mistaken for weakness and gentleness is often thought to be less than manly; yet, Paul was appealing to those two characteristic of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to guide him.

It isn't hard to see the need for correction in others, but effective correction is often difficult to offer. Too often what we say comes out of our own need to be recognized as being right rather than being motivated to lead others into abundant life in Christ. That's where meekness comes in.

The word used for meekness in the original simply means "with gentleness" or "with humility." If that is true then why repeat the concept with the next word translated, "gentleness?" The answer is that this word translated "gentleness" means "suitable," or "appropriate."

The message that seems to be presented here is that Paul is wanting to bring correction to the church at Corinth, with a meek and humble attitude, and with an approach that is suitable to the circumstance,.

The message we need to hear is that we also must be humble, meek and seek an appropriate, or gentle presentation of the instruction we need to give others. The goal is not to show what we know but to provide an atmosphere of growth for others.

**Prayer:** Lord, Give me a gentle spirit that my instructions to others and my work them will produce the desired results. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Eight

## *A Gentle King Riding A Donkey*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

- Zechariah 9:9

The setting for this writing is that the Jews have returned to Jerusalem and the land of Judah after being exiled to Babylon. Men like Ezra, Nehemiah and Zerubbabel had helped to instill hope that Jerusalem and the temple would be fully restored.

Zechariah is giving prophecies about the future of Jerusalem and surrounding nations and in the middle of his prophecy he begins to talk about a gentle king riding into Jerusalem on a donkey.

We now know that this prophecy was about Jesus and was fulfilled when Jesus made his last journey into Jerusalem on a colt that had never been ridden before. At the time the Jews did not understand a prophecy about a gentle king; they were looking for a king who would conquer the nations and rule with a rod of iron.

Zechariah gives a number of hints to the character and ministry of this gentle king. In verse 10 he writes, "He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth." The Jews of that day were looking for a king who would conquer the world with sword, but Zechariah was prophesying a king who would conquer the world with love and gentleness.

This gentle king will give his own blood to free the prisoners. Read verse 11, "As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit." When Jesus began his earthly ministry at Nazareth and declared that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him to declare freedom for the prisoners (Luke 4:18) they didn't understand his meaning, but now, we know.

This gentle king, riding on a donkey to the altar where he would give his blood to free the prisoners of sin, is still freeing prisoners today. This gentle king can set you free from every bondage the enemy of your soul encumbers you with. Thank God I'm free!

**Prayer:** Help me to be led by the gentle spirit of Christ. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Nine

## *Christ Is A Gentle High Priest*

Every High priest is... appointed to represent [the people] to God. He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray... [Christ] is a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

- Hebrews 5:1-6

When God delivered the law to Moses he set up a system whereby a priest would petition the Lord for the needs of the people and he would offer sacrifices of atonement for their sin. There were many priests between Moses and Christ who performed those duties, but not all of them were gentle.

The writer in our passage today underscores a characteristic of Christ as the high priest that reveals his character. He wrote, "He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray." It is the gentle hand of this great high priest that leads us to the throne of God.

All of us have sinned, but some of us have sinned so grievously that we don't think anyone can help us. We sometimes feel that God is just waiting for the chance to take revenge on us for what we have done. Then we are approached by the gentle high priest.

Over the years it has been the touch of this gentle hand of the Lord that has brought me back from the brink of utter failure in my faith walk. He has seen my ignorance, and sometimes my purely self-willed decisions, yet he is there making intercession for me.

The scripture says, "Because Jesus lives forever he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them" (Hebrews 7:24-25).

Jesus, our gentle high priest, has made the sacrifice that has been atoning sins for 2000 years now. He continues to deal gently with all of us who through our own ignorance have offended heaven. He still calls softly to us and offers us a better way . Thank you Jesus for your gentle touch.

**Prayer:** Lord, I have sinned ignorantly, and sometimes just out of rebellion, and you have always been there to forgive and restore. Thank you for grace.





Day Ten

## *Good News For The Gentle*

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.

- Isaiah 61:1 (KJV)

If this verse sounds familiar it's because it's the passage Jesus reads in Luke 4 when he was making his inaugural appearance at the synagogue in his home town of Nazareth.

Good tidings is another way of saying good news, or simply the gospel. This passage is prophetic of Christ and his ministry. He came to bring good news to the meek. The Hebrew word translated "meek" is a fairly complicated word. It can mean a number of things from one who has been beaten down to one who is gentle in spirit.

The fact that Christ was to bring good tidings to the meek seems to indicate that he has good news for those who are of gentle spirit and who might not otherwise aggressively pursue it on their own.

Very often the world does not look favorably upon those who are inclined to be gentle. The pattern today seems to be aggressive, strongly directed and having very little concern about who is affected by that approach. For that reason, the gentle person is frequently thought to be weak.

Meek and weak are not synonyms. A meek person is one who puts principle and others before himself. The meek are people who are committed to a principle of life that is greater than themselves. Yes, the meek are often taken advantage of, or at least it seems that way. In reality they don't let their ego need override their commitment to a higher principle.

When we were serving in a homeless ministry people would come to us and say, "Those people are taking advantage of you." I would reply by asking, "In what way?" Then they would respond, "They keep taking from you and don't give anything back." I would answer, "They aren't taking from me because I don't have anything. They are only taking from God and that's his problem not mine."

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to deny my own ambition and desires so that I can live out the calling to a higher principle of life. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Eleven

## *Jesus Is A Gentle Yokefellow*

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. – Mat 11:29

In days past, before mechanized farm machinery, animals were used to pull the plow. Small farms had just one mule, or ox to pull a plow, but in larger farms they would use a team to pull a larger plow.

When the farmer had a young animal to train he would put him in the yoke with an older, more mature animal. The young animal was easily distracted and would want to run after whatever caught his attention, but being yoked to the older, more settled animal kept the younger in check.

The younger animal didn't pull much weight at first, but that was OK because the lead animal knew how to pull a load and worked steadily. He wouldn't pull too hard or move too fast, he just kept up a steady pull. The younger animal would pull against the yoke trying to veer off the course, but the old animal held the course. The ambitious young animal would try to go too fast, but the older animal held him back and stayed the course.

In this passage Jesus was saying, "Get connected to me. I'll pull the load and I'll train you to serve in the yoke." Jesus is the author of our faith and he will perfect our faith (Hebrews 12:2), but we have to stay connected to him. When we are connected to him he keeps us going the right direction. We won't be wandering off because we are harnessed in the yoke with him. We won't be taken over by zeal and run far ahead of where we should be because we are harnessed to the one who both started and who will finish.

The most difficult times in my life have been when I decided to step outside the yoke of Christ and try things my way. Every time I have done that I've found that it would have been much easier if I had stayed in the yoke and did it his way. His way may not be the quickest, but it is the surest.

**Prayer:** OK Lord, I know that it isn't easy being yoked to me – I pull and strain to do it my way. Grant me the grace of surrender to your guidance. Amen.



Day Twelve

## *The Meek And Gentle Christ Suffered In Silence*

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent so he did not open his mouth. – Isaiah 53:7

The picture that Isaiah paints of Christ in this chapter is not pretty. He portrays Christ as despised, rejected, beaten and finally sacrificing his life. Why did he endure such humiliation and suffering? It was for us – for you and me.

It is not unusual for a person to suffer, and even to give their life for a just cause, but never has another been so rejected by those he came to serve, yet in silence suffer their scorn. Jesus gives us an entirely new perspective on being meek and gentle. We look at being meek as sacrificing our own desires and ambitions for a greater good, but we don't usually associate it with silently suffering such atrocities.

What is it that would cause one to suffer such horrible agony, and do it in silence? An old song says, "He could have called 10,000 angels to destroy this world and set him free, but he died alone for you and me." Jesus was not only God on earth but he was also a man with a purpose.

My prayer is that we who are the anointed of God, yes, even Christ to the world today, would be so dedicated to the purpose of the anointing that we would do what is necessary to win people to the Lord. If we could only catch the vision that Christ had when he said, "Go and make disciples of all nations." We should not only be driven by the same purpose as Christ but our purpose should be love driven.

The reason Christ could endure such suffering and not even open his mouth in protest is that he knew what would be opened up for all of mankind because of what he was doing. Hebrews 12:2 tells us that he endured the cross because he saw the joy that the cross would bring.

May that kind of meek and gentle spirit be in us.

**Prayer:** Lord, too often my commitment to your call is tempered by the price I will have to pay. Help me to meekly serve as Christ served, Amen.



Day Thirteen

## *Meekness Is Trusting The Justice Of God*

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. – 1 Peter 2:23

At the age of twelve Jesus had become separated from his parents and when they found him he was in the temple discussing Scripture with the teachers. Even at that young age Jesus had some idea of what his life would be.

On that occasion when his parents scolded him for not staying with them he replied, “How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:48 KJV). Jesus knew the purpose for his coming to earth and he would not be deterred from that destiny.

Once when his followers were each trying to become the leaders in this new kingdom that they imagined, Jesus scolded them. He told them, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for the many” (Matthew 20:25-28).

No single life has affected the world like Jesus, the Christ, and that has happened because, “He entrusted himself to him who judges justly.” He was not deterred from his purpose by the insults of others, or by the persecution of the religious community. He came to do a job and as a man he did not allow his personal feelings to come between him and his purpose.

His example is certainly one that we should consider as a model. In fact, the context of this verse is that Peter is instructing believers to submit to those who have authority over them. The model he offers as an example is Christ. We are being called to humbly submit ourselves to the greater call of God and to trust him to be just as we give ourselves for his purposes.

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me a meek and gentle spirit that I might serve you with confidence even when I am misunderstood, insulted and persecuted. Amen.





## *God Speaks Gently*

A great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. – 1 Kings 19:12

I once heard a minister tell the story that he had always wanted to hear God speak in an audible voice. One day as he was driving down the freeway God began to speak to him just as if he were riding in the passenger seat. It shook him up so badly that he stopped the car and shaking said, “God, don’t ever do that again.”

It is common for us to want God to give us some kind of spectacular message that leaves no doubt as to his direction. We want an earthquake or a fire, then we will hear what the Lord is saying. But God came to Elijah with just a whisper. Most of the time it seems that God chooses to speak to us in that small inner voice.

It’s not always easy to hear that gentle voice with everything that is going on around us. We are awakened by an alarm that we have set and that is often connected to a radio which begins to blare out the tragedies of the day. From there it is hurry-scurry to get the day going. Work, kids, appointments, eating, and if we are lucky, a little rest between irritations.

Then the evening comes and we barely have time to speak to our family, let alone the Lord. So much has happened through the day that we are exhausted and finally fall into bed and quickly go to sleep promising God we’ll take time for him tomorrow.

Does that describe your life? Just remember, God will probably not send an earthquake to get your attention, but he is patiently waiting for you to take the time to hear his gentle whisper.

God’s voice doesn’t tear down mountains, but it does speak to our heart in such a way that, if we listen, it will guide us into mountain top experiences with him.

*Prayer:* Lord, I am often too busy with life to settle down and listen for your whisper. Grant me the discipline to stop and listen to you. In Jesus name, amen.



## *God Gently Leads*

The Sovereign Lord comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

– Isaiah 40:10-11

In verse 10 of our passage the Lord's arm is strong and he rules by it; in verse 11 his arm is gentle and he carries the weak ones close to his heart. What an apt description of who God is. He has the power to enforce justice when needed and he gives comfort and support to the needy.

The strong arm of the Lord is demonstrated in the shepherd boy David. While tending his father's sheep a lion came to kill and eat the sheep and David killed the lion. Another time a bear came to destroy the sheep and David killed the bear. His arm was strong to defend the sheep of his pasture. David is a picture of how God protects us from our enemies.

Jesus gives us the gentle side of the shepherd when tells the parable of the good shepherd and the lost sheep. The shepherd had 100 sheep that he took out to the hills and the fields to forage for food every day. He would guard them from wild animals and lead them to safe pastures. On one occasion when he brought them into the shelter for the night he noticed that one was missing.

With the 99 safely put away he went back into the night to find the one that was lost. It was dark, and perhaps the terrain was treacherous, but he continued on without giving thought to his own safety because he knew there was a lamb that needed his strong arm.

When he found the lost sheep the gentle shepherd took him into his arms and held him close to his heart as he carried the weak one to safety.

So it is for each of us. The strong arm of the Lord is there to protect us from the enemy that would destroy us, and the gentle arm of the Lord is there to comfort and support us in our weakness. All of us "like sheep have gone astray" one prophet writes, but the gentle shepherd searches until he finds us.

**Prayer:** Lord, like the one sheep who became lost, I tend to wander. Gentle shepherd, carry me close to your heart. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Sixteen

## *The Lord Teaches The Meek And Humble His Way*

He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant. – Psalm 25:9-10

Why would one want to know the way of the Lord? It seems that his way is always in conflict with my way and it seems such bondage to be trying to be something I'm not just to impress the one who is trying to suppress me. Has that argument ever come up in your thought processes? If it has you are just a normal human being.

So, why would someone want to know the way of the Lord? Because his ways are better than our ways; his ways lead to peace and life – our ways lead to chaos and death. What seems like a path to freedom to us is all too often the road to bondage and despair, but his way always leads to peace.

There are some interesting concepts introduced in this short passage. The first is that when we humbly commit ourselves to follow him he will guide us into righteousness. The second is that the ways of the Lord reflect his love for us and reveal his truth. The third is that our faithfulness to his ways opens the door of God's blessing and grace for us.

The humble, or meek (KJV) person is one who has learned the lesson that going our way does not bring the fulfillment we are trying to find. A song of a few years ago spoke about "looking for love in all the wrong places." It is also true that we are all too often looking for peace and satisfaction in life in all the wrong places.

The one who realizes God's ways will give him the peace and security he seeks, and who will humbly seek God's ways, will be led by God into the paths of righteousness. It is following the path, or the way, that God leads that will release the blessings of heaven upon us.

Do you seek your way or God's way? You get to choose – and you are responsible for the outcome. Think about it.

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me the humility to seek your will, the wisdom to recognize it when I see it, and the strength to follow where you guide. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Seventeen

## *The Lord Beautifies The Meek With Salvation*

The Lord taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation. – Psalm 149:4 (KJV)

This ancient praise first rendered by Israel speaks the heart of God like no other. His pleasure is his people and the reflection of his pleasure is the beauty with which he embellishes the meek and gentle who trust him.

Three Hebrew words make up this message. They are:

**raw-tsaw'**– This word is translated “taketh pleasure” in the KJV and in the NIV it is translated, “delights.” It is used in the sense of satisfying a debt, which seems to be a direct connection to Christ. It also means finding favor with, or giving great delight.

**paw-ar'** – Translated “beautify” in the KJV and “crowns” in the NIV. There are a number of connotations to this word but the ones that seem to be most pertinent to this passage are: cause to gleam, or shine; to embellish, or to crown with glory. The message here is that God decorates us with his glory.

**aw-nawv'** – Translated “meek” in the KJV and “humble” in the NIV. This word carries the meaning of being gentle minded. It is variously translated, humble, meek, lowly and poor. The message is that God is especially concerned with those who are gentle, humble and non-imposing.

The Lord delights in his people. What a concept! The joy of the Lord is the people who are called by his name. He decorates his people with his glory, embellishing them with crowns. Who are these blessed people? They are the humble, gentle, meek and lowly who will simply come to him.

He doesn't expect us to be superhuman, or super good; he only calls us to be gentle minded and to humbly seek him. There is no magic formula and there is no difficult set of hoops we must jump through to get his favor. He is simply looking for a few meek and gentle people in whom he can take pleasure. Are you one of those people?

**Prayer:** God, it is a joy to know that you delight in the glory you have given me; thank you for making me one of your people. Amen.





Day Eighteen

## *The Branch Justifies The Meek*

He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.

– Isaiah 11:3-4 (KJV)

Isaiah begins this chapter with, “There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots” (KJV). Most scholars see this as a prophecy of Christ. When we look at this passage from that perspective we can see strong evidence for the grace of God.

“He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.” Is this passage saying that God is going to look past the failures of men and see something else? Does it mean that he will not look at the sin of the people but will look at the effect of the Branch that comes from the stem of Jesse?

The Message puts this passage in modern terminology:

A green shoot will sprout from Jesse’s stump, from his roots a budding Branch. The life-giving Spirit of God will hover over him, the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding, the Spirit that gives direction and builds strength, the Spirit that instills knowledge and Fear-of-God,

Fear-of-God will be all his joy and delight. He won’t judge by appearances, won’t decide on the basis of hearsay. He’ll judge the needy by what is right, render decisions on earth’s poor with justice. His words will bring everyone to awed attention. – The Message Isaiah 11:1-4.

The Lord seems to be telling Israel, and by extension, all who will believe on Christ, that he doesn’t care what we have done in the past, he is giving us hope for a future in Christ. In Christ he shows us mercy. In Christ he shows us the fear of the Lord. In Christ he shows us righteousness. And in Christ he justifies the meek.

We are judged not by what we have done but by how we have responded to what Christ has done. God, through Christ, the branch, justifies the meek.

**Prayer:** Thank you father for looking past my sin and seeing Christ. Thank you for the wisdom to trust Christ. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Nineteen

## *The Holy One Of Israel Gives Joy To the Meek*

In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. – Isaiah 29:18-19 (KJV)

In the book of Isaiah the Lord gives us a prophetic panorama that spans time from about 700 years before Christ all the way to a time of peace on earth in a millennial reign at the end of this age. This prophecy concerns the time when Christ, the Holy One of Israel brings light to the earth.

For many of us there was a time when we were blind to the gospel, and deaf to the message of Christ; then, something happened. It was like a light turned on and our ears were opened. We could see clearly and hear plainly the message of life and redemption.

One of my favorite old movies is Sergeant York. Gary Cooper plays Alvin York who became one of the most decorated soldiers in WW1. In the movie York as a young man is a drunken terror. In one scene he shoots his initials into a tree outside the church while the service is going on. My favorite scene is his conversion.

I won't tell the whole story, you'll have to rent the movie, but my point is that this rowdy, drunken young man did not have regard for man or God. Then something happened. He had a "Damascus road" kind of experience and all at once his eyes were opened. From that day forward he patterned his life after the teachings of Christ.

We were all like Alvin York. We couldn't hear the gospel or see its truth. Then the Holy One of Israel began to reveal himself to us. From that time we, who were followers of our own will, found a better way. Humbly we came to him and he gave us a gentle and meek spirit. Now, filled with his meekness we have the joy of the Lord.

How can one be meek and a warrior at the same time? The one who takes a stand for what is right, even in the face of mortal opposition, will discover true meekness.

The Holy One of Israel increases the joy of the meek.

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me the gift of humility and meekness that my joy might increase. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Twenty

## *Gentleness Is A Mark Of Spiritual Leaders*

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be...not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

- 1 Timothy 3:1-3

Some have said that spiritual leaders should be held to a higher standard, and I think I know what they mean, but the statement is not accurate. The standard is the same for everyone - but the level of accountability to that standard is different according to levels of responsibility.

This passage in 1 Timothy 3 is one often used to determine qualifications to serve as pastor or some other position of authority and responsibility in the body of Christ. However, when we look at each issue that is mentioned here it can be clearly seen that this should be the norm for all believers.

Throughout the New Testament the writers encourage believers to be temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, teachable, and etc. All of these traits should be active in the life of those who claim Christ as Lord, and they should especially be reflected in the lives of those who are to be considered leaders in the body.

Gentleness is a concept that is often misunderstood and sometimes is thought to be weakness. We have all known people in the faith who felt that the most important thing for them to do was to verbally "present the gospel" and they did so in such a confrontational manner and were so argumentative that they did more damage than good. These people feel that speaking the truth in love is addressing people with the gospel in a rude and obtrusive manner.

We are called to live in such a manner that our gentle nature itself will open doors of witness. We will not convince others of the gentleness of Christ if we who claim to know him as Lord are not characteristically gentle. When Christ was dealing with the sinner he always showed his gentle side. Remember the woman taken in adultery? He simply said, "I don't accuse you. Go and sin no more." His gentle approach gave her hope. Do others see you as gentle?

**Prayer:** Lord, I am by nature direct and somewhat confrontational. I need your grace to give me a gentle spirit. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Twenty One

## *Jeremiah Was A Meek Prophet*

Then Jeremiah said to all the officials and all the people: The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the things you have heard. Reform your ways... then the Lord will not bring the disaster... against you. As for me, I am in your hands; do with me whatever you think is good and right. – Jeremiah 26:12-14

Jeremiah is a good example of a meek prophet. He prophesied in a direct manner, gave a way of repentance for the people, and put himself at risk in the process. His message was not one that was received with joy; he spoke of the failure of leaders in the government as well as the religious leaders.

People were not much different in Jeremiah's time than they are now. When leaders are confronted publicly with their error there is a tendency to destroy the one that made the expose' rather than take responsibility for their own failures.

A characteristic of meekness is the willingness to commit to a higher purpose without regard to one's own comfort or safety. Jeremiah was being threatened with death by those who were offended at his proclamation of impending doom. His response was, "I am in your hands; do with me whatever you think is good and right."

God needs men and women today who will declare the word of the Lord, without fear or favor. He needs people who will not consider the cost of declaring the truth greater than the benefit of keeping things on an even keel. God is looking for meek and gentle prophets who will demonstrate the love of God, yet who will not pull back from the truth of God's word.

Are you willing to be a Jeremiah? Have you seen the inconsistencies among believers and wondered what could be done? Have you seen sin in the camp but didn't say anything because you were afraid of the consequences? God is looking for men and women willing to commit to his truth regardless of the cost.

Has God found that person in you?

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me the grace to submit to the higher purpose of your calling without regard to how that affects me. In Jesus name, amen.





Day Twenty Two

## *Peter Was A Gentle Apostle*

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “feed my lambs.”

- John 21:15-16

Peter is the disciple who is remembered for more things than any of the others in the original 12. It was to Peter that Jesus gave the keys to the kingdom; it was Peter who attacked the soldier who came to take Jesus; It was Peter who just a few hours later denied Christ three times; and it was Peter who was first to stand on the day of Pentecost and declare Christ to all who would listen.

It was just a few days after Peter denied Christ, not long after the resurrection, when he said to the other disciples, “I’m going fishing,” and the others followed him to the lake. They fished through the night, casting their nets first here, then there, but they caught nothing.

Left with empty nets and troubling thoughts, Peter was weary. All at once there was a voice from the shore calling, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find [fish]” (verse 6). They did and caught so many fish that they couldn’t bring them all in.

Squinting into the early morning Sun Peter tried to make out who it was that hailed them. Suddenly one of the disciples declared, “It is the Lord!” Peter, ever the zealous one, dropped his outer garment, jumped into the water and swam to where Jesus was.

Then Jesus challenged Peter; “Do you love me?” Not once, or twice, but three times he asks. Totally humbled Peter replies, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” All of his failures and impetuous acts flashed before his eyes as he considered the question himself - did he really love Jesus?

Peter never failed again. Beginning at Pentecost he became a voice boldly declaring the works of God and the gift of salvation through Christ. Peter had finally learned that meekness is more than bold declarations and acts, but meekness is being committed and submitted to a higher principle.

**Prayer:** Lord, I, like Peter have failed you in many ways, yet, I know that I love you. Grant me grace to meekly submit my will to you. In Jesus name, amen.

## *Peter Was A Gentle Apostle*

**Message:** Bold leaders need humbling experiences to remind them that bold declarations must be backed by a meekness which comes from being committed to a higher principle.

**Affirmation:** I am challenged by the question Jesus asked Peter, "Do you truly love me more than these?" Because of that I temper boldness with meekness as I present Christ.

**Reflection:** Jesus challenged Peter three times, the same number of times he denied Christ, with, "Do you love me." It was not until Pentecost that Peter's bold and impetuous nature was tempered by the Holy Spirit that his witness became effective. What is needed for your witness to be effective?

**My Thoughts:**

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Day Twenty Three

## *Paul Offers Reproof With A Gentle Spirit*

The kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a whip, or in love and with a gentle spirit? - 2 Corinthians 4:20-21

Apostle Paul was an interesting character. As a young man he was zealous for the faith he had been taught. In fact, he was zealous to the point of persecuting those who believed in Jesus as the Christ. Apparently he was not soft spoken, or even slow to speak, but he was a man who said and did what he thought was right. That was the man Jesus arrested on the road to Damascus.

From the time of his Christ encounter Paul was a changed man. He was still zealous, and still spoke what he believed to be truth, but another quality had been added to his life. He had not only become a believer in Jesus as the Christ, but he had become a committed follower.

After his conversion, Paul was as committed to sharing the news of Jesus the Christ as he was to persecuting believers before his conversion. A difference in his approach now was that instead of putting people behind bars and beating them into submission he offered the love of God with a gentle and meek spirit.

He was trying to convey the message of gentle persuasion through love to the Corinthians. They were accustomed to leaders who harassed and cajoled them into capitulating to their wishes. Paul was trying to school them in the art of leading and being led by the love of God.

Just a few verses above this passage he reminds them that they have many teachers, but few fathers in the faith. Then he said, "I became your father through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you to imitate me" (verses 15-16).

If we are to imitate Paul we must learn to love without reserve, instruct with a meek spirit and correct with a gentle hand.

**Prayer:** Lord, one of the problems I have is the tendency to act first then try to correct what I messed up. Grant me the grace to love first and act in a meek and gentle manner. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Twenty Four

## The Apostles Were Gentle Among Believers

As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.

- 1 Thessalonians 2:6-7

As we rise in position it is only human nature for our attitude to change toward those of lesser position. We tend to think of ourselves as needing to be served by others because our position demands so much of us. That is not sinister, or particularly evil, it is just human nature.

The opposite seems to have been true among the apostles. In passing, Paul makes reference to the importance of his position as an apostle. As a valued leader in the faith, he could have asked more of the people by way of personal support, but he chose not to.

We who are believers in the Christ must be careful lest we begin to think of our position in Christ as one that elevates us above others. When we begin to think that way we start to look at others differently. We look at the unbeliever as having less value and we begin to look at other believers as people who should be like we are. Paul is giving us an example of the attitude we should have toward others. He compares the attitude of the apostles to that of a mother caring for her little children. Though a mother's position is certainly one of greater responsibility than her children, she knows that her children come first. She nurtures and cares for her children at the expense of her own comfort, and often at the expense of her own health.

If we are to affect the world as the apostles affected the world we are going to have to adopt the same meek and gentle attitude as the apostles. We were attracted to the Lord by the Christ we saw in others and the world must see that same Christ in us if they are going to be attracted to the Lord.

Here is a challenge. Ask yourself this question, "Who do I know that would say I am a meek and gentle person?" Hint: your mother doesn't count.

**Prayer:** Lord, I tend to be just a bit judgmental of others. Help me to be gentle with those I am called to serve. In Jesus name, amen.



Day Twenty Five

## *The Disciple Who Learned Meekness*

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother... and the disciple whom he loved...He said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. – John 19:25-26

Several times in the Bible John is called the disciple Jesus loved, and that is the picture that most of us have of him, but it wasn't always that way. John learned to love the Lord and in learning to love Jesus he learned to deny himself and commit to a greater purpose. He learned meekness.

In Mark the disciples are being named and among them are James and John, brothers who are fisherman. Apparently they were known for their rowdiness because Jesus named them Boanerges which means "sons of thunder."

There is an incident in Luke 9 that gives a little more insight into the nature of John. The disciples were preparing for Jesus to enter Jerusalem but the people were not receiving them. When John saw what was going on he said, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" (v54).

That certainly doesn't sound like the one who wrote, "Anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen," (1 John 4:29). What happened to change John from being a son of thunder who wanted to call down fire from heaven on people to being such a preacher of love?

No one in the entire Bible has devoted as much writing to love as John. In the book of 1 John some form of the word love is used over 40 times and there are only five chapters. Somewhere between wanting to call down fire from heaven and his later writings, John learned the value of meekness.

John spent time with Jesus and spending time with Jesus exposes one to the truest sense of meekness and gentleness.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to learn meekness as John learned meekness. Grant me the grace of being able to submit my will to yours. In Jesus name, amen.





Day Twenty Six

## *God Called Moses The meekest Man*

Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. – Numbers 12:3 (KJV)

It is hard to imagine the man who had to flee to the desert after killing an Egyptian soldier as the meekest man on earth. Something surely transpired in the 40 years between fleeing to the desert and the time God appeared to him in the burning bush.

Time and experience, when handled appropriately, will work patience and humility in us. Many years of herding sheep in the wilderness helped the brash young Moses mature into a meek and humble man that could be used of God to bring Israel out of Egypt.

There was more to the change in Moses than time and experience though. Something happened in him at the burning bush. There before the Lord, barefoot and spiritually naked, Moses went through a transformation.

When God spoke to him of his purpose for him Moses replied, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” God’s answer, in so many words, was that it wasn’t about Moses – it was about God and the children of Israel. God had been preparing Moses for this job since he was born and now he was revealing himself to him.

God said to Moses, “I will go with you.” Then Moses asked, “Who will I say sent me?” God replied, “I AM who I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: “I AM has sent me to you.” It was this meeting with the great I AM that forever changed Moses.

Humility and meekness is not measured by ability or achievement. These character traits cannot be measured by standards men use to measure success.

They are shown in the life of men and women who are committed to the purposes of God. These are people who have stood before the great I AM with their own burning bush experience.

Is God calling you to take off your shoes and stand before him?

**Prayer:** Lord, I have heard your call, but I have been slow to respond. It is not easy to surrender my ambitions for your purposes. Help me to do that. Amen.



Day Twenty Seven

## *David Knew The Secret Of Being Meek And Gentle*

My son, who is of my own flesh, is trying to take my life. How much more, then, this Benjamite! Leave him alone; let him curse, for the Lord has told him to. It may be that the Lord will see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving today.

- 2 Samuel 16:11-12

David was certainly a rare breed. His son, Absalom, had worked a coup and had taken the throne, now he is being cursed by one of his subjects, yet he did not respond and granted grace. It is hard to believe that this is the same man who slew Goliath and led many campaigns against the Philistines, but now, he runs from his own son.

Most men would have quickly put down the rebellion, and would certainly have executed a man who would come at him throwing rocks and cursing him, but David was not most men. Rather than respond with pride and seeking vindication for his ego, he granted grace. He was truly a meek man.

What was David's hope in this? "May be that the Lord will see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving today." David knew that when he was following the Lord, though the circumstances would appear otherwise, God will repay faithfulness.

When we are trying to do God's work our way it is very difficult to take the humble path. All too often we interpret our ambition as God's purpose and allow our ego to drive us rather than to surrender to God and wait for his timing. David knew the value of allowing God to fight his battles and he was not going to fight his own son for the kingdom.

How often have we, in matters of much less consequence, insisted upon our rights only in the end to discover that the outcome would have been better if we had allowed God to take care of the issue in his own way and in his time?

David is a model for us to follow. The way we respond to being unfairly assailed with false accusations, will demonstrate what we are on the inside.

**Prayer:** Lord, I don't think I could be as gracious as David was. I need your help to respond to unfairness with love and grace. In Jesus name, amen.



## *Stephen Was A Meek Martyr*

While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.

– Acts 7:60

Stephen was not an apostle; he was not a prophet; he was simply a young man who was passionate about God. He was among the seven chosen to serve the body of believers so the apostles could be free to pray and minister the word of the Lord.

The first mention of Stephen is in Acts 6:5 when he was mentioned as one of the seven. His introduction is simply, “They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.”

Wouldn't it be a good thing if when we were mentioned it would be as a person full of faith and of the Holy Spirit? God honored the sincere heart of this young man by confirming his preaching with “great wonders and miraculous signs” (Acts 6:8). Stephen held nothing in reserve but gave himself entirely for the gospel.

When the elders of the synagogue heard of his following they questioned him and when they could not dispute what he was teaching they got false witnesses to tell lies on him.

The entire chapter seven of Acts records the message Stephen spoke and the charge he laid against the leaders of Judaism. It was his charge that they had murdered the Christ that angered them to the point that they took him outside the city and stoned him, thus Stephen became the first martyr of the faith.

It was when Stephen was being stoned that we learn just how meek he really was. As they were stoning him he fell on his knees and prayed, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” He was not angry and he did not ask God to avenge him against these evil people. He was more concerned about how their actions would affect their relationship with God than he was about what they were doing to him. Stephen meekly endured stoning and still had compassion for others.

**Prayer:** Lord, Stephen is a hard model to follow. Grant me the passion and conviction to proclaim your word even in the face of opposition. Amen.



Day Twenty Nine

## *Let Others See Your Meek And Gentle Side*

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. – Philippians 4:4-5

The context of this passage includes an incident where there were two women who were in disagreement. They were Euodia and Syntyche. Paul is asking the people of Philippi to help bring these two women together.

Apparently these two women were preachers, or at least apologists of the faith because Paul said that they “have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel.” It seems that these two powerful women of God were in broken relationship over some issue between them and Paul is calling upon other believers to help restore them.

It is in the context of calling the believers to be peacemakers that Paul tells them to rejoice. Perhaps this whole thing had caused such a stink that it was affecting the attitude of the believers. Maybe some of them were even beginning to doubt their faith. In the middle of this trying time Paul says, “Rejoice.” It is not always easy to rejoice, but the result is worth the effort.

Then he tells them to, “Let your gentleness be evident to all.” The process of restoring others requires a gentle touch. We have to present the facts to the offended in such a way that greater offense does not develop. Sometimes that means that we have to accept people in relationship even when they are not willing to admit their error.

I have learned along the way that in order to restore relationships we must focus on the relationship and not on the issues that caused the breach. What I mean by that is this; you may have two people who are convinced that their side of an issue is right and they are not willing to concede to the other. The issue itself may not ever be resolved, but the relationship must be restored.

We must always remember that when we are endeavoring to help others mend relationships that we must use a gentle hand, just as we would want others to use a gentle had with us.

**Prayer:** Lord, I need grace in my own relationships as well as in helping others in broken relationships. Grant me that grace. In Jesus name, amen.





Day Thirty

## *Seek To Be Humble*

Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger. – Zephaniah 2:3

Israel is a microcosm of the whole human race in their relationship with God. God had called the people of Israel to follow him and even gave them very specific instructions as to how they should live and how they should worship. Israel, like people today, kept trying to do it their way.

God had been more than patient with Israel. They had not gone far from Egypt when they worshipped the golden calf. They had not been long in the land of promise before they began to worship the gods of the people they had conquered. Why would they do that? Because they were trying to do it their way.

People are no different today. Many of those who claim to believe in Christ center their life around the comforts of this world and spend most of their life working to pay for their comforts. There is nothing wrong with having comforts in this life, but when we are focused on the comforts rather than our walk with the Lord we are setting ourselves up for a breakdown in our faith.

Zephaniah lived in a time when the Jews were given to serving themselves rather than serving the Lord. He is making prophecies against them and predicting calamity, but in the midst of this gloom and doom he gives hope. He calls the people to seek humility and to turn back to God. He offers the hope that God will see their humility and give mercy to the penitent.

Many feel today that we are facing a time of impending judgment upon our nation. Many others feel that we can hold back the hand of God by turning our hearts to him and seeking his face. I am convinced that God is calling his people again to seek humility and to turn from following their own ways and turn to living for his purposes rather than their own.

**Prayer:** Lord, I am trying, but too often I find myself trying to do it my way instead of trusting you. Grant me the faith to trust you instead of myself. Amen.



Day Thirty One

## *Pursue Gentleness*

But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. – 1Timothy 6:11-12

When we come to Christ we are not automatically transformed into the exact image of Christ in the world today. Our faith has opened the door to right relationship with God, but from the point of justification forward we must passionately pursue the Lord if we are to become mature believers.

Paul addresses the fruit, or evidence, of the Spirit working in us in Galatians 5. Peter instructs us that if we are going to be productive in our walk we must add to our faith (2 Peter 1). And in this passage Paul instructs Timothy, his son in the gospel, to pursue a mature faith.

Throughout these 31 days we have looked at three words that have similar meaning. They are gentleness, humility and meekness. Some have judged those traits to be signs of weakness, but we have learned that they are really a reflection of strength and conviction.

How do we balance gentleness with fighting the good fight? How can we be gentle yet be in a fighting posture? A key to understanding that is to realize our fight is not against flesh and blood but against principalities, and powers and spiritual forces of darkness in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12). The reason we cannot fight the good fight of faith without the virtues we have discussed is because without the Holy Spirit working in us we have no power in the spirit realm.

I challenge you to seek the face of God until he reveals his heart, then continue to seek him for wisdom and direction for your faith walk. Just as Paul was instructing Timothy to pursue the virtues of righteousness we are being challenged to do the same.

Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to stay focused on our enemy and not to deal with people on the human level as I would in the spirit realm. In Jesus name, amen.



## Tips On Leading A Small Group

One of the purposes of the Study Guide Edition of the Daily God Walk is to provide a tool for leading small groups.

At the end of each day's devotion there are four additional sections: Principle, Affirmation, Reflection, and My Thoughts. below is an explanation of how to use each of them in a small group discussion.

***Principle:*** This is a principle pulled out of the devotion for the day. Ask the group to express how they can see this principle in the devotion then use that to kick off the discussion.

***Affirmation:*** The affirmation is an example of how we can begin to internalize the principle of the devotion. We can repeat the affirmation in a prayer making it personal. We can also just repeat it throughout the day while giving thought to the principle.

***Reflection:*** These statements and questions are designed to help guide discussion and make application of the devotion in the daily life of the participant.

***My Thoughts:*** This section is just blank lines. Encourage your group to "Journal" their thoughts on the devotion each day. By writing out the thoughts that come from the devotion and the discussion on the devotion the individuals will find that their walk of faith is enhanced.

My experience is that we usually only make it through one or two of the daily devotions at one group setting, but it is good to encourage the group to work through the principle, affirmation, reflection and my thoughts section for each daily devotion at home.

For more information on using the Daily God Walk for small groups, go online at:

[www.dailygodwalk.org/small-groups](http://www.dailygodwalk.org/small-groups)

We value your comments on the Daily God Walk. It would be a blessing if you sent us an email with your comments about our program. Email us at: [paul@nhmresources.org](mailto:paul@nhmresources.org)