

Gentleness:

Mild, tender, soft
in action or appearance



The Bible doesn't have a simple definition of *gentleness*. Greek words translated to gentleness can also be translated meekness or humility. Jesus often demonstrated gentleness - being tender and mild to those hurting. I think of the story of the woman who had the issue of blood (Luke 8) or the woman caught in adultery (John 8), or how He dealt with Peter after His resurrection. Jesus was gentle because He was humble, because He was meek. Not that He wasn't also strong! One definition of gentleness is strength under control. Jesus certainly was strong, but He was also *gentle*.

Gentleness is necessary for a flourishing marriage. As we exhibit tenderness and are mild toward our spouse, we encourage and build him or her up. Harshness does *not* encourage or build others up. We can address hurt and wrongs done to us and still be gentle. Jesus addressed the sin of the woman caught in adultery, but He didn't do it harshly as the Pharisees had done. Gentleness doesn't come naturally for many of us, but we must realize that it is a *Fruit of the Spirit* and should be a part of our Christian life. It may mean taking a deep breath before responding to our spouse's accidental mistake or a problem that has occurred. It requires walking in Spirit and depending on the Lord, if gentleness is not a natural part of your life.

Are you gentle with your spouse? Do you have a mild, tender, soft appearance about you, even when you respond to problems? Most of us tend to struggle with gentleness and I would venture to say that you could be more gentle with your spouse. It is unfortunate that so many husbands and wives are harsh and even demeaning to the person they claim to love the most. Seek to make gentleness a part of your marriage - respond softly, even if your spouse makes a harsh statement. Demonstrate humility during interactions with your spouse, even when address problems.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

The *Fortified Marriages Manual and Workbook* is a great tool to help couples learn to work together.

Gentleness – It's the Strong Value Your Marriage Needs - encourageyourspouse.com

The One Thing Missing In Many Marriages by Justin Davis - refineus.org