



## Patience

*Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city. Proverbs 16:32*

The person who rules their spirit is better than the person who *conquers* a city! Wow. Take a moment and *meditate* on that... There is a reason for that comparison and why we are *called* to be *slow* to anger and *rule* our spirit.

Taking a city is a *huge* undertaking and takes wisdom, action, persistence, patience, a steady hand, and good judgment. For those who cannot *rule* their *spirit* and/or who are *quick* to *anger* — those who are **not** patient — they typically are *scoffers*, and God has much to say about scoffers...

Scoffers can show these characteristics: strife, quarreling, abuse, condemnation, punishment, hate correction, not seek wisdom, arrogant, haughty, proud, folly, bold, willful, mocker, grumbler, malcontent, boaster, showing favoritism, loudmouthed, deceitful, liars... is this where impatience leads? Proverbs 14:29b? And would the *Sermon on the Mount* point to those of us who are *not that* bad but just a *little* bad?

A lack of patience can come from selfishness and unreasonable expectation — we want our way and considering any other way is not in our best interest. Yet consider God... His patience is loooooong suffering with you and me! He is patient with us in our sin day after day while we grow and learn to be more Christ like because He loves us... He cares for us... He won't let us perish. Are we that invested in others? In our team? Our family? Our spouse? Or is it all about me? Or you?

Author Steven Covey put it well. "*Seek first to understand then to be understood.*" (Maybe he reworded it from *James 1:19*?)

*Good leadership* dictates that we listen first, gain the wisdom we need for the situation, then speak. It's not all about us — it's about others. Whoever restrains his words has knowledge and he who has a cool spirit has understanding (*Proverbs 17:27*). Stop yelling at the guy in the car who just cut you off. Stop interrupting/hijacking someone else's conversation. Stop thinking of yourself first (*Philippians 2:3-4*). Speak last and it can be most efficacious. *Rule* your spirit and so *rule* your life (*Proverbs 25:28*).

**Pray:** *Lord, open my eyes to my impatience and help me put others first; help me rule my spirit so I can show myself made in your image!*