



# 40.DAY 2023

**40.DAYS 40.VOICES 40.PRAYERS**

## **DAY 9 | JULY 9**

### **With Gentleness and Respect**

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#### **BIBLE READING**

1 PETER 3:15 | “But in your hearts, honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet, do it with gentleness and respect.”

MATTHEW 11:29 | 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.

**T**urning Godward.

If God is understood as all wise, all good, almighty and all loving, then surely most would agree that turning Godward is a good thing. Good, not just for people in church or religion, but good also for a nation and a people of no religion.

How can we in the Church help to turn our nation and ourselves a little more Godward in orientation?

The apostle Peter in the Holy Scripture gives us his answer. We can do so by speaking and acting with gentleness and respect.

1 Peter 3:15 says: “But in your hearts, honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared

to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet, do it with gentleness and respect.”

We live in a world where gentleness and respect are increasingly hard to find.

People hold on to different religious views, different worldviews, different political views and different views on virtually every area of life.

Many turn to war and aggression in the hope of establishing their view as the dominant view in the world.

Some wars involve literal guns and bombs, killing and injuring so many lives.

But many more wars do not employ literal guns or bombs.

We start wars using words and aggressive speech, angry and unkind words.

Words which not only express our disagreements but are spoken in disagreeable and disrespectful ways.

Our spoken and written words detonate like bombs, killing and destroying relationships, crushing the hearts and spirits, not just of those in the heat of combat but also many who are caught in the crossfire.

In contrast, Christ our God and our Lord calls us to “learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart” (MATTHEW 11:29).

I pray that all of us might turn more Godward, that we might learn to be more like Christ, who is gentle and humble in heart, that we might learn to discuss our differences and different hopes with gentleness and respect, that what the apostle Paul in our Scriptures

say may become true for all within our nation, regardless of language, race or religion.

“Let your gentleness be evident to all, for the Lord is near.” (PHILIPPIANS 4:5)

Let us pray: *Our Heavenly Father, hallowed be Your name. We do want to pray for our nation and for ourselves that we may turn Godward, toward You.*

*Despite our differences, may we always speak to one another with gentleness and respect, so that we might be more Godward in our orientation, learning to be like Jesus, our Lord, who said, “I am humble and gentle in heart.”*

*We pray in His name, Amen.*



## REFLECT

- 1 How do the mentioned passages describe what it means to be gentle and respectful?
- 2 Look within: Do you have a spirit of gentleness and respect toward others?
- 3 What is something in you that God wants to change and refine so that you may be more like Christ?



## PRAY

- 1 Pray for love in your heart and in your speech, especially when talking to people who hold differing, and sometimes damaging, opinions about God and His truth, so that even as you stand up for your faith and speak the Truth, you may be a winsome witness for Christ.
- 2 Prayerfully consider Colossians 3:12: “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” Pray from the position of “God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved” – when we find it difficult to be kind, gentle and patient, ask for His enabling.