

Tenderhearted

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Eph 4:31-32

What is it?

- A. **Tenderhearted.** Having a tender heart; easily moved by fear, pity, sorrow, or love; timid; pitiful, compassionate; loving; impressionable. **Tender.** Delicacy of feeling or susceptibility to the gentle emotions; kind, loving, gentle, mild, affectionate.
- B. If we compare spiritual things with spiritual (I Cor 2:13), the Spirit’s other use of the word helps: a young man is tenderhearted, before troubles harden him to be less sensitive (II Chr 13:7; Judg 8:20).
- C. If we further consider “tender,” we find it used in the Bible to describe the heart that we seek.
 - 1. A delicate person that is always gentle and kind to their friends and family (Deut 28:54-56).
 - 2. Josiah had a tender heart, for he was convicted by Scripture and humbled himself (II Kgs 22:19).
 - 3. God is tender and pitiful (Psalm 25:6; 40:11; 51:1; 69:16; 103:4; 145:9; Luke 1:78; James 5:11).
 - 4. The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, contrary to the righteous even with beasts (Pr 12:10).
 - 5. God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs (Daniel 1:9).
- D. Let us call it a selfless and sensitive heart of loving service that always puts others first, empathetically feels their needs, and generously responds with cheerful liberality.
- E. It is the pitiful affection God shows for us as a Father to children (Psalm 103:13-14; Luke 11:11-13).
- F. The Lord Jesus Christ is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” to help us (Heb 2:17; 4:15).
- G. Are your bowels of compassion moved for the fear, hurt, or lack of others? Good! (Mat 9:36; 14:14).
- H. It is showing hospitality without grudging, which allows for no selfish thoughts at all (I Peter 4:9).
- I. It is showing mercy with cheerfulness, which allows no begrudging resentment at all (Romans 12:8).
- J. It is the spirit of giving that feels no grudges or necessities, but is cheerfully excited (II Cor 9:7).
- K. It is the empathy of putting yourself in another’s situation and feeling deeply for them (Heb 13:3).
- L. Consider some of the indirect provisions and examples of Scripture that teach us God’s tender heart.
 - 1. Though God wanted the firstborn of animals, He allowed seven days with momma (Ex 22:30).
 - 2. God prohibited the taking of the mother with young birds or eggs for a blessing (Deut 22:6-7).
 - 3. God prohibited boiling a kid in its own mother’s milk for the same reasons (Ex 23:19; 34:26).
 - 4. When killing animals, God did allow Israel to kill a mother with her young (Leviticus 22:28).
 - 5. Whether paying frequently or leaving amounts for the poor, God’s law is tender (Deut 24:15,19).

How do we show it?

- A. A righteous man considers the cause of the poor – he thinks about them; but a wicked man does not even regard to know it – has no interest in even learning their hardship (Pr 29:7).
- B. The way we look at helping the poor and our degree of generosity shows our hearts (Deut 15:7-11).
 - 1. It is a command not to harden your heart, which is to shut down feelings of compassion and pity.
 - 2. It is a command not to shut up your hand, which is to hold on to what you have and give miserly.
 - 3. It is a command to open your hand wide and give him all that he needs for whatever he lacks.
 - 4. Beware that you do not think of any factor that might lead to you not getting your funds returned.
 - 5. Beware that you do not think any evil thought about the poor or his request by evil surmising.
 - 6. If you can help a poor person, and you do nothing, and they cry to the Lord, it will be your sin!
 - 7. Because God blesses giving, it should be your great joy to give; grieving over it is sin again.
 - 8. There will always be poor to help, and therefore there are always opportunities to be tender.
- C. Show kind affection to others with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another (Rom 12:10).

- D. Strong men naturally despise weak men; but strong Christian men help bear the weaknesses of weak Christian men; strong Christian men are not selfish to protect time, money, or habits; they do what they can to please and help a Christian neighbour for his good to Christian progress (Rom 15:1-3).
- E. You must get rid of yourself and any reputation or goals, to humbly consider others more important than yourself in your own thoughts. You must look after the things of others. It is so easy to detect the presence or lack of this grace, by whom you end up talking about in a conversation (Phil 2:3-4).
- F. The Christian life is a selfless one, of being most concerned about the wealth of others (I Cor 10:24).
- G. It is much more than talking about helping another; it is doing something (Pr 21:13; James 2:15-17).
- H. A man should start with his wife, with whom he is often not tender (Ep 5:25-29; Col 3:19; I Pet 3:7).
- I. A woman should start with her husband, with whom she can be bitter and insensitive (I Cor 7:1-5).
- J. Parents should start with their children, with whom we often have higher standards than for others!
- K. A hard heart starts thinking about revenge after a few offences, like Peter reasoned (Matt 18:21-35).
- L. You are very sensitive and tender about your needs, so merely practice the golden rule (Luke 6:31).
- M. There is a two-step process to begin being more tenderhearted than you have been in the sinful past.
 1. You first must consider others by thinking about them to identify needs that you could satisfy.
 2. You then must do something about what you have identified in the life of another as a need.
- N. Human nature is inherently selfish, which is totally contrary to tenderheartedness; most people are not sensitive to the situations and needs of others, and they do not make the effort to consider them.
- O. The second commandment is to love others as ourselves, for good reason: we are very sensitive to our own needs, but we need to have that same sensitivity to the desires and necessities of others.

How do we grow it?

1. You must first get rid of all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking, and malice (Eph 4:31), for these things only exist in a hardhearted person. Bitterness is the death knell of tenderheartedness.
2. Learn God's compassion, lovingkindnesses, and tender mercies by reading your Bible meditatively.
3. Learn David and Paul's compassion and mercy and Solomon's wisdom about mercy to follow God.
4. Walk in the Holy Spirit, by confessing sins and following David's routine, to bear His divine nature.
5. Simply start by doing it. Communicate, give, or serve someone that is in need. It will grow on you!
6. Set a goal of writing a person a day, showing hospitality once a week, and/or giving once a month.
7. Consider the consequences of selfishness and the blessings of selflessness (Deut 15:7-11; Pr 11:17).
8. We remember that our religion is love of neighbour and the danger of not doing so (Gal 5:13-15).
9. You get ahead spiritually and financially by giving money cheerfully (Pr 11:24-26; 22:9; Luk 6:38)?
10. The proof of eternal life is letting your bowels freely feel for your poor brother (I John 3:14-19).
11. Do it to show your children an example of Christian charity, for they will follow parental practices.

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "[Am I My Brother's Keeper?](#)" which teaches the Bible emphasis on loving and serving the brethren.
2. The sermon outline, "[The Purpose of the Church,](#)" is to remember the reason for a congregation and their assemblies.
3. The sermon outline, "[Blood Is Thicker than Blood,](#)" points out the tight relationship we have in Christ Jesus.
4. The sermon outline, "[Brotherly Love,](#)" reminds of the nature and emphasis on brother love in the New Testament.