

# Gentleness



to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show every courtesy to everyone.

*Titus 3:2* (NRSV)

What kind of energy do you carry when you walk into a room? Do you tend to quietly slip through the door without anyone noticing? Do you make noise when you enter a room, attracting the attention of everyone else? When it comes to difficult conversations, it's important that we ask ourselves what kind of energy we're bringing to the table. Abrasive volume, tense tone, accusatory language, and use of sarcasm will always create conflict and steer people away from us rather than bringing them into community. But a low volume, relaxed tone, curious language, and use of straightforward honesty will break down walls and barriers that tend to separate us from one another in difficult conversations. Jesus, while he had his fair share of flipping tables, brought a gentle spirit into spaces of controversy and conviction. And the Holy Spirit, gentle as a dove and yet powerful enough to raise Jesus from the dead, is living inside each of us. In moments where we're tempted to be abrasive, we can dig deep inside and lean on the gentleness of the Holy Spirit to lead us through these difficult conversations and navigate relationships with people who think differently than we do.

## *action*

Lord, forgive me for the moments I have chosen abrasiveness over gentleness. I want to reflect your image in every context. May I remember the constant presence of your Spirit, and choose a gentle posture when faced with conflict or opposition in conversation.

We can practice gentleness in moments when we feel flustered. Even if you're not actively having a difficult conversation, use random moments throughout your day when you feel annoyed to practice gentleness so that you're better prepared when the next difficult conversation arises.

