

*"And **be ye kind** one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32 KJV*



Our interpretation of dialogue is generally self centered. It's only natural to fall into this mindset when everything does relate to us one way or another. However, when dealing with other people, we need to remember that others' worlds do not revolve around us. A short answer to a completely civil question is not necessarily personal. Someone may just be having a really bad day. Instead of assuming the worst, realize that people suffer emotional trauma almost constantly. *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."* Rather than jumping on the bandwagon of condemnation, let the Blessed Holy Spirit guide our thoughts, so we can discern and extend comfort to hurting individuals. *"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other BETTER than themselves."* Christ forgave the woman caught in adultery and gave her a second chance. *"Go and sin no more!"* He reminded those who stood in judgment they, too, were in need of forgiveness. *"Let him who is without sin...cast the first stone."* Fore-give means to give before, ahead of time. Forgiveness defines your character, not the offender's. We must be ready to forgive offenses, but only when forgiveness is sought. God only forgives those who repent and ask, but never turns anyone away. Jesus said, *"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* We must be kind and tenderhearted towards other believers who offend us. *"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."* The Apostle said, *"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."* Kindness does not preclude tolerance of sin. Always hate sin. It cost Jesus His Life! Be kind, yes, but never condone sin. And don't be kind as a vengeance maneuver, but sincerely, from the heart. We can only do this if we submit to the Word of God, because of our love for God; knowing the agony He suffered on our behalf was far more than we have or will endure at the hands of others. Only God can make our heart tender under repeated abuse and only if we meditate in God's Word DAY AND NIGHT! Peter was told to forgive *"seventy time seven."* Seven is the number of completeness. Jesus was telling Peter, "Forgive completely." Until you say them, words belong to you. Afterwards, they belong to whoever chooses to use them. Do you forget unkind words? Unkind words live on in the minds of those to whom we speak them. They will never be forgotten, perhaps forgiven, but never forgotten.

Tenderhearted, forgiving, kind,  
Should always be our state of mind,  
Our words should follow Christ's command,  
Allowing Truth to ever stand. ~CGP

We should remember to keep silent rather than say an unkind word. *"Be not deceived: evil communications (gossip, tale bearing, fault finding, and etc.) corrupt good manners. Put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."* Ask yourself three questions before speaking. Is it necessary? Is it true? Is it kind? If words do not pass all three tests, they are better left unsaid. Better a sore tongue than a sore friend. The forgiving heart is never bitter or vengeful. While in the most terrible agony ever endured, our LORD said, *"Father, forgive them!"*

*"Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Colossians. 4:6 KJV*