

“Spirit of Forbearance” By Kirk Hunt

And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Romans 2:3–4 NKJV

Forbearance can be defined as the act of restraining an action, despite right or privilege. The bank can choose not to start foreclosure. The officer can choose not to write a speeding ticket. They choose to restrain their right and capacity to act. Jesus and the adulterous woman (John 7:53-8:11) is a prime example of the spirit of forbearance.

Jesus, sinless, pure and perfect, *could* cast the first stone. The Law said He *ought* to cast the first stone. Instead, He *refused* to condemn her.

Jesus was more concerned about her soul than the opinion of the Pharisees. He had the power to act and the power to restrain Himself. Graciously, He instructed her to give up sin then sent her back to her life.

Jesus held the right, the privilege and capacity to condemn her. By restraining His action, the woman received an opportunity for repentance and restoration. Jesus' forbearance was a strong act of mercy, grace and outreach.

The spirit of forbearance is a sister of [gentleness](#). Forbearance and gentleness only matter where there is the ability to act. Both require you to consider the impact on others, before yourself. Do you choose to act against others at every opportunity? Can you restrain yourself, sometimes?

Think: Forbearance is the power to restrain yourself. Can you?

Pray: “Lord, help me to restrain myself in order to benefit others.”

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