

Friday, September 2, 2016

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

I don't know if you have read stories about the days when organ grinders used to wander the streets with a little monkey to collect pennies. One such entertainer had an especially clever monkey. One day, a big dog, who had been playing with some children, broke away and made a dash for the monkey. Those watching were surprised to see that the monkey didn't seem the least bit frightened. He stood perfectly still, waiting for the dog to come up to him. This confused the dog. They love the chase. But as soon as the dog got close, the funny little monkey courteously tipped its cap. Instantly there was a laugh from the audience. Now the dog was really confused. Its head drooped and its tail dropped between its legs. It looked like a whipped pup and not at all like a fine hunter. The dog turned and ran back home, and even the children couldn't convince it to come back. As for the monkey, he didn't want a confrontation, and he knew instinctively that it took two to fight.

Paul writes in 1 Cor. 4:21 What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?

How easy it is to get sucked into a fight, either physically or verbally. Your best intentions are to remain calm and collected. However, when the adversary is in your face, challenging you to respond, suddenly all resolve seems to fade away. That is when God's provision of gentleness needs to kick in. Walk away. Thank God for the strength He has provided in a gentle spirit. You can often avoid conflict by being the one who refuses to fight. Remember, there is no fight when only one person is present.