

Moderation

“Let your moderation be known to all men: the Lord is near”

Philippians 4:5

Moderation—The Greek word here is *epieikes*. It comes from the word *eikos* (meaning “fair or equitable”) but Paul adds *epi* to the beginning to make the word stronger. With this addition, “moderation” probably does not convey the right mood. Have you ever heard of intense moderation? I don’t think so. *Epieikes* should make us think of being entirely fair, going out of the way to be truthful and equitable. It is not a matter of being calm in the middle or living a dutiful but bland life. Paul was anything but bland. This is a word that calls for real action. It means “make sure that your life stands for justice.” And by the way, let it make such a strong statement that all men know you by your behavior.

This is an imperative. Make this happen. If you believe in fairness, then make sure it shows. Stand up for it. Paul is about to launch into several statements that tell us to give all of our cares into the hands of God, but first he wants us to know that we have an obligation to make God’s justice a reality in our lives.

This is not as easy as it looks. In our society, there are plenty of people clamoring for justice. There are lot of causes that ask for our support because it is the “fair and right” thing to do. But *epieikes* means a lot more than waving banners and protesting. You see, *epieikes* also means “to be lenient, yielding and unassertive.” How can that be? How can I stand up for justice and at the same time be lenient and yielding? The answer is found by asking, “Whose justice are you passionate about?” If my passion for justice is aimed at achieving justice for myself or for my cause, it is motivated by human concerns. That kind of justice is only interested in demands. It is the justice we see on the news every night. But if my passion for justice is to see “thy will be done on earth”, then my efforts are in line with the author of the universe and His justice embraces incredible mercy. Power and patience go together when God is the Judge.

Are you standing for His justice? Does your life show power and patience together?