

The following is an article I wrote four years ago. I thought of it recently as I continue to hear harsh words in political discourse, social media, etc. This article has a timeless message, so I want to share it with you today. Let us learn, “soft words”.

Last Wednesday morning was a rough morning even though it began well. My 5-year-old daughter got up when she was supposed to in order to get ready for kindergarten. She came downstairs and ate breakfast and then went upstairs to get ready. We were on schedule to beat the traffic out of Orting, WA so I could get her to campus on time. The trouble came with the “getting dressed” part of the routine. For some strange reason, my daughter had a meltdown about what she had picked out to wear the night before. A raging tantrum ensued which in turn increased my anxiety. You see, I am a stickler about being on time, almost to a fault. As my daughter continued to have a tantrum; putting our departure time at risk, I became more and more anxious. Eventually I made the bad decision to try to force the issue by putting clothes on her while she kicked and screamed and kicked and screamed some more. Anxiety continued to increase for everyone involved. I eventually walked away and resigned myself to getting her to campus late.

Long story short, my daughter eventually got dressed and I barely got her to campus on time. Once there, she said to me, “*Daddy, my tummy feels sick, like I am going to throw up.*” I knew right then and there that she wasn’t sick, but rather that I participated in getting her all worked up about being late. I spoke to her teacher; telling her we had a bad morning. Mrs. Chavez got down to my daughter’s level and said, “*My friend, we have bad mornings in our house too. We’ll just drink lots of water and keep an eye on things.*” With that “soft answer”, my daughter gave me a BIG HUG and skipped away to her table with a big smile on her face. Her tummy seemed to be miraculously healed.

Proverbs 15:1, “***A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.***”

As I left campus, I began to think of this scripture. I can only imagine how the morning would have gone if I had thought of this verse earlier. I give thanks to God that my daughter’s teacher lived this wisdom through a “soft answer”. Imagine how our days might go if this verse was how we lived. Yet, many people resort to harsh words; trying to force the issue. Nothing good comes from harsh words. Even when we are dealing with an evil or an injustice or sin or anything

of the sort. A soft answer speaks volumes; harsh words inflame the situation. A soft answer shows love, but harsh words builds walls. A soft answer draws people in while harsh words pushes them away. Our world needs more “soft answers”. Oh God, teach me “soft words” that I may point others to You. Amen.