

28: STEADY STEPS, RULED SPIRIT – POWER ON THE CLIMB

By [John Leavy](#)

In [Week 6: Character Under Pressure](#)

3 Min read



“Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.” — Proverbs 16:32

How many times have you felt your anger surge when someone cuts in front of you on your way to work? You hit the brakes, tension rises, adrenaline spikes, and the expletives follow: “Jerk.” “What are you thinking?” “Seriously?” Or worse. The quiet start to your day is suddenly disrupted by the driver who cuts you off.

This struggle is not unique. Proverbs 16:32 turns our definition of strength upside down. It says the man who is slow to anger is better than the mighty. The one who rules his spirit outranks the conqueror of cities. That’s not a weakness. That’s a disciplined force.

This kind of strength starts from within. What shows on the outside is always ruled by what governs the heart. When Jesus rules the heart, the inner life comes under His authority. When He doesn't, sin takes command.

Here's what often goes unsaid: many men don't struggle with a lack of strength. They struggle with unmanaged strength. Intensity without patience. Conviction without gentleness. Drive without restraint. We excuse it because it gets results. But victories won through uncontrolled emotion leave quiet damage in their wake—strained marriages, intimidated children, fractured friendships.

Real strength, then, is not loud or reckless. It is restrained and deliberate. On the trail, the man who leads well isn't the one who charges ahead the fastest but the one who knows the terrain, keeps his footing, and brings the whole group safely through. Hikers respect a leader who knows the terrain, sets the pace, speaks clearly, protects the group, and leads by example.

APPLICATION

Ruling your spirit requires a self-awareness that most men avoid. To rule your spirit means recognizing and managing your inner impulses—such as your temper, sarcasm, or sharp tone—instead of excusing them as simply “who I am.” These are forms of strength beyond control. Proverbs does not praise the man who explodes and then later apologizes. It honors the steady man who never lets his emotions or impulses dictate his actions.

There is often an unspoken tension: some worry that gentleness might be mistaken for weakness. It is easy to assume that quick reactions and volume convey strength. A Christ-centered approach, however, emphasizes response over reaction, clarity over volume, and steadiness over spectacle.

Ask yourself what situations trigger those negative responses. Is it in traffic? At the dinner table? In leadership meetings? Those moments reveal whether you rule your spirit or your spirit rules you.

This kind of control is developed gradually by the Spirit. Think of the Spirit as a guide who, through prayer, confession, and honest accountability, helps you gain greater control over your impulses, tightening the reins on your reactions. Over time, your presence becomes less volatile and more anchored. People notice this—not because you overpower others, but because you bring stability to the room.

LIVE IT OUT

This week, notice where your intensity rises. Instead of suppressing it, surrender it. Pause before speaking. Lower your voice. Slow your pace. Ask God to harness your strength rather than remove it. Let Proverbs 16:32 redefine power on your trail as a disciplined, steady, controlled force.

PRAY THIS..

“Holy Spirit, reveal where my responses wound the people around me, and teach me to place my anger under Your authority.

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Practice builds the man.***

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