

## Listen more than you speak

James 1:19

### Introduction:

1. Series Recap – Watch your Mouth
2. Big Idea – **Be quick to listen, slow to speak.**
3. This goes against our culture and natural response.
  - You ask someone's name, and immediately as they speak it, you have forgotten it
  - You are in an argument with your spouse or someone else, and you aren't listening to their response, you are already thinking about what you intend to say.
  - We talk over people all of the time – kids coming to you when they are upset at one another
  - We speak before we think at times.
4. **James 1:19 – Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:**
5. Quick to listen, slow to speak.

### How?

#### **I. Value other people above yourself**

1. James elevates listening over speaking. In fact, this is the theme throughout Scripture:
  - **Proverbs 15:31** – The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.
  - **Proverbs 12:15** – The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise. James is saying that there is wisdom in listening. In fact, listening is the wise thing to do

and speaking without listening is the foolish thing to do.

2. Listening values other people – **Proverbs 18:13** – He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. We all have opinions, and we all believe that our opinions are right, but we must recognize that our opinions are not more valuable than other people. Biblical wisdom is seeing yourself clearly and valuing others opinions above your own. **Philippians 2:3** – Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves. Wisdom elevates others before us. Wisdom is understanding that you don't have to fight to be right in every conversation or to prove your point.

#### **II. Think before you speak**

1. Not listening is one kind of sinful response that James warns us about. The second one is how we talk.
2. **Illus:** mouth getting me into trouble
3. **Proverbs 10:19** – In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise. Sin is not lacking for a mouth that speaks too much.
4. The point is that we need to have control of our words.
5. **Titus 3:1-2** – Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no

man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

6. **Ephesians 4:31** – Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.
7. **II Corinthians 12:20** – For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults.
  - **Kindness** – Don't say mean things about others
  - **Gossip** – Don't say anything that gives a person a bad impression of the one not there
  - **Lying** – not being truthful
  - **Slander** – hurting someone's reputation
  - **Divisiveness** – using words that create division.
  - **Disrespect** – talking in a way that diminishes others
  - **Clamour** – verbal assault (hateful speech)
  - **Boasting** – Prideful arrogant speech
8. Christian, these things ought not to be.
9. **Which issue do you struggle with?**
10. Think before you speak. Think before you post.

### **III. Live in obedience to the Word of God**

1. What food is to the physical man, the Word of God is to our spiritual man.
2. Obedience to the Word is an outward demonstration of what has happened inwardly in you.
3. James says let's put this to the test:

- **The Gospel empowers us to have self control over our words**
  - **The Gospel empowers us to speak kindly about people**
  - **The Gospel empowers us to not get angry with others.**
4. Go deeper in your understanding of the Gospel, and your tongue will follow.

Conclusion:

1. **James 1:20 – For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.** In other words, our anger because we talk more than we speak does not produce the righteousness of God. In fact, James is saying that speaking more than we listen and responding with our words in anger does not bring glory to God.
2. The problem with us is that we want to be right at one another, but God wants us to be right with one another. He did not come so that we can convince people that we are right. He came so that we can be reconciled to Him and when we are reconciled to Him, we can be reconciled with one another.
3. Recap
4. Pray and let the Spirit lead