

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren":

Seeing that ye have purified your souls by obeying the truth of the gospel, and that you are born-again by the incorruptible seed of the Word, and that you are a new creation in Christ!

Because this is all true of you, my beloved brethren, let every one of you be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

Now, it's very easy to look at a passage like this and apply it generally to how we conduct ourselves in our everyday lives. And we should as Christian's desire to be LIKE THIS in our character with our husbands and wives and families, at work, in traffic, in conversation, or when we're being reprov'd or corrected! But what is the context of James' warning?

Remember, (V18), we were begotten by the Word of truth, NOW, James is teaching us that we, as Christians must CONTINUE TO RECEIVE the Word, whether it be by reading it, by hearing it in the ministry of the Word, or by hearing it from a brother or sister in Christ who might be correcting us.

James is teaching us HOW we ought to hear and to receive the Word, but he is also warning us against wrong reactions to it.
2 Timothy 3:16-17

Two different reactions from two different spirits!

1st: Let every man (or every one of you) be swift to hear the Word:

When we come to the Word, we must be "swift" or as it means "ready" to hear it, ready to listen, obey, and hearken to the Word! Ready to be instructed, reprov'd, and corrected by the Word!

If you don't come to the gathering or to your devotions in the Word humbly and with a teachable spirit, you will not learn Christ!

You should know that hearing the Word is oftentimes NOT a comfortable and pleasant thing, especially if we've sinned against God! BUT hearing, receiving, and being corrected by the Word is NEEDFUL and NECESSARY for each of us if we would continue in the faith! Hebrews 3:12-4:2

If you didn't come to the gathering this morning SWIFT TO HEAR what God would command and teach you from His Word, 1st it's highly disrespectful to God, and 2nd you've got sin problems in your heart, and you are in danger of departing from God! If you're not consistently approaching God, then you're departing from God!

How often do we come to the ministry of the Word dull, tired, unready, or even unwilling to hear and heed God's Word?

Matthew 13:11-16

If you were begotten with the Word of God's truth, saith James, you need MORE of God's truth to grow in grace and to continue in the faith of Christ!

Therefore, you should always be ready to hear it again, to read it again, and to be corrected by it again, knowing that you live the Christian life by the Word! Matthew 4:4, Ecclesiastes 5:1, Acts 10:33, 17:11, Hebrews 2:1-3.

"Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given: and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which he seemeth to have".

2nd: Let every man (or every one of you as children of God) be slow to speak:

Once again, in the general sense this is always best as it pertains to speaking. It seems though, that we are often prone to be slow to hear and swift to speak in our daily lives.

But when we are "swift/ready to hear" receive the Word, it should produce in us a carefulness and caution in what and how we speak, knowing that, as children of God, we represent Christ to the world! We are to be Salt/Light! AS RECEIVERS of the WORD, "our speech" should always be seasoned with grace, God's Word ought always to be the centerpiece of our conversation, we ought to know how to speak a good Word in due season.

Isaiah 50:4, Proverbs 25:11

But James is teaching us to be SLOW to speak, to think before we speak! And that is because we have a dangerous little member of our bodies called a tongue!

As children of God, your tongue MUST continue to BE TAMED by learning and practicing the Word by the Spirit of God. But if God doesn't tame your tongue, you can't! It full of untamed fire and there is a world of iniquity in your tongue!

If you have an untamed tongue, you must not stand here: James 3:1: "My brethren, be not many masters", or let not many of you become teachers and preachers, WHY? Because you'll be doing a lot of speaking, and you will be more strictly judged by those who hear you... FOR EVERY WORD that you speak... both in the pulpit, and out of it! Matthew 12:36-37

Proverbs 10:19, 15:2, 17:27, 18:13, Ecclesiastes 5:2

Oh, what great need have all of us as children of God to be swift to hear and to heed God's Word, so that the Spirit of God might form a godly carefulness and wisdom and grace in us in what and how we speak as servants of Christ. Psalms 39:1-3, 141:3, 1 Peter 3:15

3rd: Let every man (or every one of you as children of God) be slow to wrath:

Even here, that which is of greatest importance in being slow to speak, and now slow to wrath, is in how we receive the Word!

We ought to see how important it is for each of us to cultivate and practice the Word, and to hide it in our hearts. Psalms 119:9-11

As we MUST have God to tame our tongues by His power and grace, so we MUST have God to tame our spirits by His power and grace from being "quick or swift to unrighteous and sinful anger"! 1 Timothy 2:8

One of the worst things that could befall us is to have a spirit of sinful anger and wrath in our gathering, and between us as children of God! I am not speaking of a righteous anger against sin and wickedness, but a hastiness in our spirits to be sinfully angry towards any!

How many churches have been destroyed because there was no godly humility or meekness that existed in the hearts of the people. Instead of being ready by love and kindness to cover the faults of their brethren, they were fueled by pride, ready to contend and be angry toward each other.

Proverbs 12:16, 14:29, 15:18, Ecclesiastes 7:9, 1 Samuel 25:21.

It is written that an elder must not be one who is "not soon angry" or prone to anger.

James 1:20: "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God".

There are going to be disagreements between us at times as brethren, but the worse thing that we could ever do is to disagree in anger and with a bitter and wrathful spirit. What a terrible testimony to young Christians, and to the world when "Mature Christians" become hastily and sinfully angry toward each other over questions of truth and doctrine in the Word, or anything for that matter!

Ecclesiastes 9:17

The anger and rage of the scribes and Pharisees against Christ!

James 1:21: Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls."

Receive that which is planted in your hearts and minds by the ministry and instruction of the Word! Study it for yourself, and when you find it FOR YOURSELF to be true, keep it, hide it in your heart!

For it is able to save your souls! But I'm already saved!

Yes, you were every bit saved when you believed Christ, but every day of your Christian life, you are in need of being sanctified by God's truth, conformed to the image of Christ, renewed in the spirit of your minds, and that's why you have a continuing need of receiving the Word with meekness, so that you would endure unto the end and finally be saved!

When you receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your soul! Ephesians 4:25-32

To the lost: Be swift to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ that your soul may live!

Cast aside your pride and rebellion against God and receive the gospel of Jesus Christ with humility and meekness, for

it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes it!