



First United Methodist Church of Hanford  
*Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.*



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**“...be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger”**

*“You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God’s righteousness.”* James 1:19-20

The book of James have so many great pieces of common sense wisdom and no-nonsense advice. And these two verses are two of my favorites; they are great reminders of how we are to be towards everyone.

“Quick to listen” tells me that I should be doing this first – listening. Here are a few fun facts about listening: people spend 70-80% of their day in some form of communication, and of that 70-80%, 55% of that communication is spent in listening – that’s over half of your time. Most people usually only remember about 17-25% of the things they listen to. I don’t know about you, but one area I am still working on is my listening skills. I am working on hearing what the other person is saying, not getting caught up in my head thinking of something else, thinking of my next question, or thinking of something that relates to what I just heard. All of that “thinking in my head” causes me to actually stop listening, so I miss what the person is really saying to me. Another fun fact about listening is that words only convey about 7% of what a person is trying to say. The other 93% is communicated through facial expressions and the tone of the speaker’s voice. Who knew listening also included our eyes? (1)

“Slow to speak” is a great reminder for me to first make sure what I am hearing is what the other person is really trying to convey, and secondly, do not have an unthinking response to what I just heard – slow down and think first.

“Slow to anger” is another gentle reminder that what I hear, what someone is trying to say to me, may not be what I want to hear or what I agree with, but I cannot react with anger. As the verse continues, anger and God’s righteousness do not go hand in hand. Peace, love and understanding seem to fit better with God’s righteousness.

So, where does that leave us when we are praying, “Lord, what do you want to do through us?” We all hear God differently, we all have our own ideas of how the country should look, and we all have different ideas of what are the priorities should be for our church’s ministry in our community. But let’s all stop for a moment, take James’ advice and be quick to listen to each other, slow to speak to one another, and by all means slow to anger as we move forward and continue to make decisions no just for our own lives and relationship, but, too, for God’s call in to our lives that affect who we are as disciples of Jesus.

Let us pray: Our God, we know that it is sometimes hard to listen to others; it’s hard to remember that there are many different options, possibilities and opinions out there. Please help us to slow down and listen to each other and then build each other up with our speech. In your Son’s holy name, Amen.

1. <https://www.creditdonkey.com/listening-statistics.html> (Access 2/3/21)

“Now I can say I Live a Day” (John Wesley)

Pastor Pablo

February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

## Online Devotionals

To grow in your relationship with God and others, it is important to have some spiritual disciplines in your life. Below are some helpful websites that will lead you to read scripture, pray, and focus on God.

**UPPER ROOM DAILY DEVOTIONAL** <https://www.upperroom.org/devotionals>

A daily devotional including scripture lesson and story.

**UPPER ROOM DAILY REFLECTIONS** <https://upperroombooks.com/neweverymorning/>