

# Quick to Hear, Slow to Speak

Question: “What does it mean to be slow to speak?”

**Text:** James 1:19

## Discussion

### I. “Quick to Hear”

- A. Quickness to listen implies willingness, readiness, and giving priority to listening OVER speaking.
  - 1. When we are listening, we won’t be speaking
  - 2. NASB: “*be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger*”
  - 3. NIV: “*Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.*”
  
- B. Opposite: “Slow to hear”.
  - 1. To speak **before** we have listened and given proper attention to understanding and discernment.
  - 2. Prov. 18:13: “*He who answers a matter \_\_\_\_\_ he \_\_\_\_\_ it, it is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to him.*”
  - 3. To only be concerned with what we want to say without truly listening.
  - 4. To be slow to hear and quick to speak is to lack understanding and discernment.

### II. “Slow to Speak”

- A. James has much to say about our speech:
  - 1. James 1:26: A bridled tongue is essential to true and undefiled religion.
    - a. Bridled: controlled, as a bridle controls a horse.
    - b. Learn to avoid speaking impulsive, compulsively, or rashly.
    - c. To avoid the many words of the fool.

2. James 3:1-8: There is great power in the tongue.
3. James 3:9-12: We cannot use our tongue to bless God and curse our brothers.
4. Great care must be given to our words.

B. Prov. 17:27: *“He who has knowledge \_\_\_\_\_ his words, and a man of understanding is of a \_\_\_\_\_ spirit.”*

1. Prov. 10:19: *“In the multitude of words \_\_\_\_\_ is not \_\_\_\_\_.”*
2. Prov. 21:23: *“Whoever \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ keeps his soul from \_\_\_\_\_.”*
3. Eccl. 5:2: *“Do not be \_\_\_\_\_ with your \_\_\_\_\_, and let not your heart utter anything \_\_\_\_\_ before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore, let your words be few.”*

C. Prov. 15:28: *“The heart of the righteous \_\_\_\_\_ how to \_\_\_\_\_, but the mouth of the wicked \_\_\_\_\_ evil.”*

D. “Idle words”: words spoken carelessly or with little thought.

1. Matt 12:36: *“But I say to you that for every \_\_\_\_\_ word men may speak, they will give \_\_\_\_\_ of it in the day of \_\_\_\_\_.”*
2. GK: *argos*, “lazy, free from labor, useless, unemployed” (Strong’s).
3. NASB: “careless word.” NIV: “empty word.”
4. Context: Matt. 12:24-28, 31-32: Jesus used this expression to admonish the Jews who were about to blaspheme the Holy Spirit by accusing Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub.
  - a. Had they spoken these words outload to the people, their careless, thoughtless words would have brought condemnation upon themselves.

- b. When we speak rashly in this manner to justify self, win an argument, or simply defeat an opponent in an argument, we will be brought into judgment for our idle words.
- c. Words spoken rashly.

### III. “Slow to Wrath”

- A. Or slow to become angry. Not easily or quickly angered.
- B. Prov. 14:17, 29: *“A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated”. “He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly.”*
- C. Prov. 16:32: *“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”*
- D. Read also: Prov. 17:14; 19:11, 19; 25:28; Eccl. 7:8-9; Matt. 5:22.