

## Talking About Listening

### Scripture Reading — James 1:12-27

*Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.*

*James 1:19 —*

It doesn't seem to matter how often we're reminded that God made us with two ears and one mouth. Some folks are just not good at listening! We talk to them, and before our story is half done, they're responding with a better story of their own. How annoying!

When we listen too little and talk too much, we show that we think our ideas are more important than the ideas of others. But James grabs us by the elbow, turns us aside, and warns us, "Everyone should be quick to listen, [and] slow to speak ..."

We may think we've had a wonderful conversation with someone—until we are asked what they've said. If we can't recall, that's probably a danger sign. Someone else may have been a good listener, but we weren't.

James's letter is about applying our faith and making sure that we live out our faith in line with God's will. Words about being saved by grace and not by works are wonderful, but our faith, if it's real, will come to expression in what we say and do. Jesus teaches this in his parables. James applies it to our need to treat people well in all our relationships.

Are we quick to become angry because we haven't bothered to listen carefully? If so, we'd listen better by hearing both the words and the heart of the person who is talking. That takes both ears!

### Prayer

*Hearer of words and hearts, thank you for listening to us always. Teach us from your Word to treat everyone with love and respect in line with your will. In Jesus's name, Amen.*

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