

In our text, we find a trio of graces: "**swift to hear**"; "**slow to speak**"; "**slow to wrath**." In the Greek, they are in the 'imperative' tense which serves as an alert to readers: Attention! Now hear this! James knows that without Christ, we act and react spontaneously most often out of ignorance of God's way coupled with self-centeredness. Now he counsels:

James 1:19: "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger"

- **Grammatical Usage:** "**quick**" or in the Greek, "tachys" meaning, "ready and promptly"; "**hear**" or "akousai" meaning, "perceive; learn"; "**slow**" or "bradys" meaning, "deliberate; unhurried"; "**speak**" or "lalēsai" meaning, "express"; "**anger**" or "orgēn" meaning, "wrong expression".
- **Literal Interpretation:** Dear brothers, let everyone be ready to promptly listen and learn, deliberately slow to express an opinion, deliberately slow to wrongfully lose his temper. (20) For man's temper is never the means of achieving God's true goodness.
- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word. There is a practical holiness in this passage. James is teaching us that true faith is not only what we confess in worship, but how we respond in conversation, in conflict and in correction:

1. SWIFT TO HEAR

Key Aspects of Being "Swift to Hear"

- **Active Listening:** This means fully engaged in conversations, focusing on understanding what others are saying as opposed to what I want to say.
- **Receiving God's Word:** Being swift to hear emphasizes the importance of attentively absorbing the messages found in the Bible...applying them to what I'm hearing.

Importance in Relationships and Spiritual Life

Aspect

Description

Building Relationships

Active listening fosters better communication and understanding among people...especially in avoiding or in the midst of a conflict.

Spiritual Growth

Listening to God's word helps in understanding His teachings and applying them in life. With application comes both discipline and maturing in Christ.

Being "swift to hear" is about cultivating a mindset of attentiveness, which is vital for personal development and nurturing relationships with others and God.

2. SLOW TO SPEAK

Key Aspects of Being "Slow to Speak"

- **Thoughtfulness:** Being slow to speak means taking time to think before responding. This helps prevent misunderstandings leading to conflicts.
- **Listening First:** The emphasis on being quick to listen suggests that understanding others' perspectives is crucial before voicing our own thoughts.

- **Avoiding Anger:** The connection between being slow to speak and being slow to anger highlights that hasty words can lead to emotional reactions and disputes.

Importance in Relationships and Spiritual Life

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Communication	Encourages thoughtful dialogue rather than impulsive reactions.
Conflict Resolution	Helps in managing disagreements by promoting patience and understanding which may lead to agreeing to disagree.
Self-Control	Fosters speech discipline; aligns with the biblical call for wisdom.

Being slow to speak is about the importance of careful communication and self-control, especially in the context of anger and criticism.

3. SLOW TO ANGER

Key aspects of being “slow to anger”

- **Patience:** Being slow to anger involves taking time to respond thoughtfully rather than reacting hastily...especially without context.
- **Compassion:** It reflects a willingness to show grace and understanding, even in challenging situations.
- **Wisdom:** The ability to control one's temper is seen as a sign of wisdom, as noted in **Proverbs 16:32**.

Importance in Relationships and Spiritual Life

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
God's Character	" Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love " (Psalms 103:8)
Emotionally Sensitive	Recognize anger as a signal; channel it into constructive communication instead of deconstructive acting out.
Physical/Spiritual Health	Discipline reduces anxiety which leads to anger. A reasoned approach fosters bridges, stronger relationships and greater life satisfaction

The good news is that the Christ who commands us also empowers us. Jesus was quick to hear the Father, slow to speak in the face of accusation, slow to anger even under suffering, and perfectly receptive to the Father's will. In Him we see the righteousness of God lived out fully. And by His grace, what James commands can begin to become our character.

So let us come before God with open ears, guarded lips, restrained tempers, and humble hearts. Let us receive the implanted Word. Let it sink deep. Let it change us. Let it save us. And let our lives become a living testimony that the Word of God is not merely heard but obeyed. And in obedience we find ourselves one with Christ (**John 17:21; 1 Corinthians 6:17**), reflecting His grace in the moment, love throughout and care one for another always.

➤ **Conclusion:** Will I work to pursue God's way as opposed to my way?