

Read Prov. 25:11 & Col 4:6.

The final point James makes is to be slow to wrath or anger. When do you have trouble controlling your temper or demonstrating patience? Why do we struggle with not being offended? How can we break these strongholds?

Here is a final key.

"Let the words of MY mouth & meditation of my heart be acceptable in YOUR sight, O Lord, my Rock & my Redeemer.  
Psalms 19:14

Are the words that we express to others pleasing to the Lord?

Think of your most important relationships. What is one thing you can work on this week that will help you communicate more lovingly and effectively in those relationships?

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## **Relationships 101**

*Communication 101*

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### **Make listening a priority.**

Pr 12:15

### **Speak when necessary.**

Pr 12:18

Pr 13:3

### **Take a deep breath.**

Pr15:1

Pr 25:28

Technology has certainly changed how we communicate today. Think about all the ways we can communicate today...social media, texting, cell phone calls, email, etc. How do you feel about our methods of communicating today? Likes or dislikes? What advantages or disadvantages have you found? How are these means of communicating effective or ineffective?

We have probably all taken a speech class or a communication class. Discuss some things we were taught in these classes. Have these methods been effective for you? What do you wish they would have taught? What makes you want to listen to someone else? What makes you not want to listen? How do you think men and women communicate differently? What are some effective ways to communicate?

Read James 1:19. James first tells us to be swift to hear. We were told as kids that "we have 2 ears and 1 mouth for a reason." It seems like people really want to be heard today and are even resorting to demonstrations and protests. Why do you think people today feel like they are not being heard? How can we be good listeners even when we are busy or really don't care to listen? Why should we strive to be good listeners?

An article in Forbes parallels what is said in Phillipians 2:3-4. Read these verses together. Forbes goes on to say that, "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." They suggest thinking dialogue, not monologue when communicating with others. In our busyness we think monologue is more effective for us. What things do we see in the media that suggest monologue is not effective? In the workplace, how is monologue not effective? How can too much dialogue also be ineffective?

Read Prov. 18:2 & 13.

What can we learn here in the Word that we didn't learn in communication class?

The second point James makes in 1:19 is to be slow to speak. The Bible has MUCH to say on the issue of speaking. Matthew says we will give account of every idle word spoken (12:36). Why are our words so important to the Lord? What do you think an "idle word" would be?

Read Eph 4:29. What kind of communication would edify or minister grace to the hearer? What kind of communication would not? What does Paul in Heb. 10:24 encourage us to do? How can we apply this practice to our non-believing friends & co-workers and not turn them off? Why should we endeavor to listen first, then respond with empathy to a broken world that we don't always understand?

"Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks." (Luke 6:45)  
How much is character ( who we are) tied to what we say?  
Where in us do we need to start if we are caustic communicators?

Read 1 Peter 3:8 and Romans 12:15

What do these verse indicate about how we need to view other people? How should we view others even if we disagree with them?

What role do you think compassion and empathy play in communication and how could those practices help us in communication.