

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

March 13

2022

Be Swift To Hear, Slow To Speak

James penned, *“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God”* (James 1:19-20).

Here, James instructs all of his beloved brethren to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, and he goes on to explain why it is important to be slow to wrath when he informs that the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

So, my beloved brethren, it is certainly important that we all strive to be one who is slow to wrath, but also remember, it is just as important that we all strive to be one who is swift to hear, and slow to speak.

Now, this is a forgotten principal for many today. Unfortunately, there are many today who are more prone to be swift to speak, and slow to hear, rather than being one who is swift to hear, and slow to speak. However, if we truly want to be one who pleases God, one who is re-

spected by others, and one who seeks to learn and increase in knowledge, we must be one who is swift to hear, and slow to speak.


You see, if we insist on being swift to speak and are one who does all of the talking, we will not be following the instruction of God’s word, we will not gain the respect of others, and we will be one who only knows what we already know, due to not paying attention to what others may have to say on the matter.

So, let’s be one who is swift to hear, and slow to speak, let’s obey God’s instruction, let’s pay attention to the things being said, and let’s be one who listens to the profitable advice and instruction that is given to us by others (Proverbs 13:1; 15:32).

So, with those thoughts in mind, I now want to share these words I once read with you...

“A wise old owl sat in an oak
The more he heard the less he spoke
The less he spoke the more he heard.
Let’s all be like this wise old bird.”

I do not know who wrote those words, but I venture to say, the writer of the lines above must have read James 1:19; after all, it teaches the very same principal. So, once more, my beloved brethren, I encourage us all to be one who is “swift to hear, slow to speak.”

 Brad Phillips

Sin Is Sad

Psalm 38 is one of my favorite Psalms. It is an incredibly sad Psalm, but one worthy of our deepest reflection and personal application. As well as any Psalm, the thirty eighth Psalm describes the only type of conscience (i.e. state of mind, attitude, mindset) that is acceptable in God's sight. David expresses a conscience deeply aware and wounded by his own sin. Many believe David's sin in this case was the incident over Bathsheba and Uriah.

However, we do not know that for sure and it really does not matter. Sin, any sin, my sin, your sin, all sin, is deeply offensive to God and should cause the sinner to experience the deep shame, guilt, and turmoil of the soul David so eloquently expresses here. I am not the Judge, and I thank God for that. However, personal experience has taught me the contrite, remorseful, and repentant spirit expressed by David is an exceedingly rare thing. In the beatitudes Jesus describes such a conscience like this: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted." (Matt. 5:3-4)

Until our conscience can be pricked by the guilt of our sin God cannot and will not forgive us. Without this contrite spirit we are doomed to remain in the prison of sin and suffer misery of soul. We must all come to the realization we are spiritually bankrupt (Matt. 5:3; Rom. 3:23) and without God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ we are doomed to eternal separation from God and all that is good. We must have a mindset that "mourn[s]" over our sins; a deep mourning that motivates us to have an insatiable and abiding desire for God's righteousness in our lives (Rom. 1:16-17). A conscience that motivates us to "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Matt. 5:6). Without such a conscience, attitude, or spirit; sin will ultimately poison our soul. Many live in misery because of their sins. They try their best to suppress any thought of sin, but nonetheless their sin is like a corrosive acid eating away at their inner self day after day after day. We see the results of that in our society today. All the lawlessness, all the misery, all the lies, all the violence, all the chaos comes

from one source: from souls tormented by sin. As David said: 3 "There is no soundness in my flesh Because of Your anger, Nor any health in my bones Because of my sin. 4 For my iniquities have gone over my head; Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. 5 My wounds are foul and festering Because of my foolishness." (vv. 3-5)

Sadly, the vast majority continually wallow in their sin and fail to perceive, understand or reject the cure for all their misery. Jesus put it simply but profoundly: 28 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30)

The cure for the misery of the human condition is squarely and clearly before us. But we must take the first step. What will be your response to the Savior's wonderful offer?

✍ Craig Thomas

Gospel Meeting: April 3-8

Guest Speaker: Lanny Smith from Fishers, IN.

Meeting Times: Sunday: 9:30am, 10:30am, and 4pm

Monday-Friday 7pm

Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

www.bellevillechurch.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

Brad Phillips..... (765) 720-2816