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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

James 3:1-12
Lesson #14
Slow to Speak
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John Dye

Roma Downey

Della Reese

11 Emmy Nominations

CBS 1994-2003

NOTE how these “angels” operated in nearly every episode:

1. They were **messengers** not surrogates or changers of external circumstances.

“Angel” comes from the Greek word “angelo” meaning **“to deliver a message.”**

2

2. They were **life coaches**, renewing the minds of people in challenging circumstances.

They countered the darkness with its **evil seeds of deception** like:

- Our problems and the solutions are the **EXTERNAL** circumstances.
- Our hope lies in **GOD CHANGING OUR EXTERNAL WORLD** not our response to it.

3

James Kingdom Living in a Broken World

3:1-12 The dark side of the tongue

This is what we should know	This is what we should do		
Life's trials contain hidden blessings. 1:1-18	“quick to hear” “Listen up” 1:19-2:13	“slow to speak” “Shut up” 2:14-3:18	“slow to anger” “Cool it” 4:1-5:20

Transition verse

James 1:19

“But everyone must be **quick to hear, slow to speak** and **slow to anger**;

4

Be slow to speak #1

knowing it will expose OUR HEART.

Matthew 12

“34...**For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.** 35 The good man out of his good treasure brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth what is evil. 36 And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.”

5

Romans 12:2

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,”



Worldliness is a way of thinking, seeing, hoping, and longing that leads to a way of feeling, doing, & **speaking**.

6

“A sharp tongue and a dull mind are often found in the same head.”



Anonymous

7

Be slow to speak #1
knowing it will expose **OUR HEART**.

James 3

“1 Let not many of you become **teachers**, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. 2 For we all stumble in many *ways*. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.”

8

All talkers are teachers in some general sense!



9

Be slow to speak #1
knowing it will expose **OUR HEART**.

- **People in authority** (parents, pastors, politicians) are especially vulnerable.
- A **“Perfect man”** - one who is mature, fully developed. (1:4).
- **“Stricter judgment”** will come from both God and man.

Thick skin is the armor that all in authority must possess and wear.

10

“If you don’t have a thick skin, pray that you heal fast.”

Trevor Noah
(T.V. host)



11

Develop “thick skin” and “quick healing”

Give yourself

Forget yourself

Accept yourself

Know yourself

12

Be slow to speak #1 knowing it exposes OUR HEART.

- **The Final Judgment** may involve our words as much as our works.

Matthew 12:37

“For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

- **The believer’s words and deeds will be exposed in the end** with tears of sorrow and joy for what the Cross and Spirit have done.

13

Be slow to speak #2 knowing it affects US and OTHERS.

James 3

“3 Now if we put the bits into the horses’ mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well. 4 Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. 5 So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire, the *very* world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of *our* life, and is set on fire by hell.”

14

The way we talk to ourselves matters.



15

“Be careful about what you say because your heart is listening.”

“The worst lies are the ones we tell to ourselves about ourselves.”

16

“Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.”

Mother Teresa

17

Be slow to speak #2
knowing it affects US and OTHERS.

- **bit / horse** - Our words can shape our's and others's responses to life.
- **rudder / ship** - Our words can use / manage our environment.
- **flame / forest** - Our words can alter our life and that of others.

18

Paul's letters consist of words.

What Christ has done *for* us.

Our *position* in Christ by grace through faith

What Christ is doing *in* and *through* us.

Our *behavior* in Christ by grace through discipline

Paul's letters put hearing, seeing, & believing before feeling and doing.

19

Ephesians 1

"17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you **a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.** 18 **I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened,** so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His **inheritance in the saints**, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe."

Starting on the right path involves:

Recognizing that we need more than orthodox doctrine.

We also need spiritual insight.

- Paul does not only teach *but also PRAYS that God's Spirit would open their eyes to see.*
- *It's not so much about changing circumstances as knowing who we are "in Christ".*

20

Be slow to speak #2
knowing it affects US and OTHERS.

Proverbs 18:21

"The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit."

Ephesians 4:15

"but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into him who is the head; even Christ."

21

How do you respond to the ideas and feelings of others?



Yes if.



No because.

22

Be slow to speak #3
knowing that the tongue is UNSTABLE.

James 3

"7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed (subdue) by the human race. 8 But no one can tame the tongue; *it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.* 9 **With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse (wish evil against) men, who have been made in the likeness of God;** 10 from the same mouth come *both* blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening *both* fresh and bitter *water*? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor *can* salt water produce fresh."

23

**How do we “curse”
those made in God’s Image?**

- By speaking to and of them disrespectfully - name calling, wishing evil on, withdrawing from.

Many people are pious before God while being prejudiced toward other people **and not ashamed of it.**

Referring to “them” (as opposed to “us”)

Romans 12:14

“Bless those who persecute you;
bless and do not curse.”

24

**Be slow to speak #3
knowing your words are a great risk.**

James 3

“7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed (subdued) by the human race. 8 But no one can tame the tongue; *it is* a restless evil *and* full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless *our* Lord and Father, and with it we curse (wish evil against) men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come *both* blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening *both* fresh and bitter *water*? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor *can* salt water produce fresh.”

25

The Point

“Be slow to speak”

- #1 knowing it exposes **OUR HEART.**
- #2 knowing it affects **US and OTHERS.**
- #3 knowing it involves a great **RISK.**



NOTE: We should expect to be in need of humility for a lot of what comes from our mouth.

26

“A wise man
once said
nothing.”

Proverbs 21:23

“Whosoever keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from trouble.”

27

Four ways to mess up.

- Make promises **when you are high.**
- Make decisions **when you are low.**
- Speak out **when you are angry.**
- Shut up **when you are thankful.**

28

Before you speak.

THINK

Is it True?

Is it Helpful?

Is it Inspiring?

Is it Necessary?

Is it Kind?

30