

## For Our Information

Bill Venable is to enter the hospital on Dec 19 for a heart valve shock. Joyce Venable is still suffering from weather related pains.

Ruben Keisler is still dealing with knee pain. The specialist does not think it was caused by the piece of metal, but by arthritis and cartilage movement.

Betty Ragsdale has not been feeling well lately. She has had some back pain also.

Keep our brothers & sisters in mind

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

## Right in Front of Us

- 1 Sometimes we have things that might hinder understanding that are so much a part of our usual activity
- 2 that we don't really notice that they are in the way.
- 3 Most of us have spent our life reading from Bibles with divisions in the text
- 4 and we sometimes let those divisions interfere with our understanding of the message.

Let me suggest a different approach to your next Bible reading plan. The last few years have brought a 'reader's version' to most of the major translations. Chapter and verse divisions are gone in these editions. Read section by section. Read entire books or letters. Read without the distraction that might come with the arbitrary divisions that have been added for reference purposes. They can help but don't let them get in the way.

## Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about our work in the Lord's Kingdom.

### Church of Christ

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# Seeking His Righteousness

Tanner St Bulletin Volume 5 Number 50

December 2016

## Swift To Hear

Mike Johnson

In **James 1:19**, James addresses his "beloved brethren" and gives a very important admonition. The verse says, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

Contextually, this exhortation seems to refer particularly to our disposition toward God's Word (**1:18,21,22**). We are to be swift (quick/speedy) to listen to God's Word. God's Word is to be heard with



*Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

**Proverbs  
29:20**



## Meet With Us

### Worship Services

Sunday 10:20 am & 5:00 pm

### Bible Classes

Sunday 9:30 AM

Wednesday 7:00 PM

1512 Tanner St. Malvern, AR

TannerSt.com

eagerness; we are to listen to it with an attentive mind. We are also to be slow to speak, i.e., slow to begin speaking. We are not to speak back or show displeasure at the teaching of God's Word. Further, it is hard for anyone to learn while they are talking. The text also says that we are to be slow to wrath. A person whose disposition is characterized by anger is generally not very receptive to the truth, and it is hard for a person to listen to God when he is full of wrath and bitterness. So we are to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath with regard to hearing God's Word.

The principles of **James 1:19** about hearing and speaking would also apply in a more general way. Have you ever engaged in a conversation with a person who would hardly let you get a word in, and when you did say something you would get the feeling that the person was not listening? I am sure that this has happened to almost everyone. Perhaps we have been guilty ourselves of being quick to speak and slow to listen, instead of being quick to listen and slow to speak. It is very important for us to be good listeners so we can gain knowledge and wisdom.

There have been many maxims in different societies which express the idea of being slow to speak and quick to hear. In ancient times, for example, it was said, "Men have two ears, and one tongue, that they should hear more than they speak." Another ancient expression was, "The ears are always open, every ready to receive instruction, but the tongue is surrounded with a double row of teeth, to hedge it in, and to keep it within proper bounds." A

## Store In My Heart

### Acts 20:28

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

The instruction Paul gave to these men was a reminder of the duty that had been given to them as leaders of God's People. They were responsible for the wellbeing of those who had been placed in their care.

It also reminds that God is the one to whom the flock belongs. He is owner of the Church. Bought not with trinkets from this world, but with the precious blood of His Own Son. We need to heed the authority such ownership demands.

God is Ruler over the Church.

person named Xenocrates was once reproached by others, and he met their reproach with a profound silence. Someone asked him why he was silent, he replied, "I have sometimes had occasion to regret that I have spoken, never that I was silent." A maxim that many are probably familiar with says, "Speech is silver, silence is golden."

There are various Bible passages which speak of the tongue in a similar way as **James 1:19**. **Proverbs 10:19** says, "*In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*" **Proverbs 17:28**, says, "*Even a fool when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise ....*" **Proverbs 29:20** has these words of wisdom: "*Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than of him.*"

Today, in all areas we must be slow to wrath. Anger itself is not wrong (**Ephesians 4:26**). The real question is how we handle our anger. Do we let anger stay with us, and does our anger lead to other sins? We certainly should not be quick to anger; we should not go around ready to "explode." **Proverbs 16:32** says, "*He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*"

We need to make sure that we follow the commandment of **James 1:19** and be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath.

(Control is needed in all parts of life. Listening requires control just as much as anger and speech. We must learn to control self if we hope to please God with our actions. DLH)