



SPRING-TIME DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

May 18, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

HOW'S MY DRIVING?

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

James 1:19 - 20

READ James 1:19 - 26

"ARRRRGH!" I yelled as the repair truck cut in front of me.

That's when I saw the message: "How's My Driving?" And a phone number. I picked up my phone and dialed. A woman asked me why I was calling, and I vented my frustration. She took down the truck's number. Then she said, wearily, "You know, you can always call to report someone who's driving nicely."

Ouch. Her tired words instantly punctured my smug self-righteousness. Embarrassment flooded me. In my zeal for "justice," I hadn't paused to consider how my rage-filled tone could affect this woman in her difficult job. The disconnect between my faith and my fruitfulness—in that moment—was devastating.

The gap between our actions and our convictions is what the book of James focuses on. In James 1:19–20, we read, "My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires." Later, he adds, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says" (v. 22).

None of us is perfect. Sometimes our "driving" in life needs help, the kind that starts with confession and asks for God's help—trusting Him to keep filing the rough edges of our character.

By Adam R. Holz

PRAY & REFLECT

Father, sometimes my anger wins out and I say hurtful things. Please help me to grow in this area. Amen

Why can words spoken quickly and in anger be problematic? How can you better live out what you truly believe?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The book of James is deeply concerned about justice, especially in the relationships between the rich and poor (2:6; 5:1 - 6). In fact, the Greek word often translated "righteousness" in James 1:20 (*dikaïosynē*) can also be translated "justice," a plausible translation of this verse in the context. Because strained and unjust relationships between rich and poor is such a core issue in this book, some scholars have suggested that in 1:19 - 20 the author feels the need to urgently emphasize that human anger won't result in the justice the poor long for. Instead, James emphasizes being "quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." In James 4:1 - 2, the author again warns against allowing unmet desires to turn into anger and even violence. Believers in Jesus are called to live in humble dependence on God (1:21) and to be devoted to serving others (v. 27). – By **Monica La Rose**

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