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3 Secrets to a Joyful Marriage

Deep in James Chapter 1 are 3 secrets that can benefit any relationship. I present it here as an amazing instruction that can be used within marriage to improve communication, lower emotional intensity and create a more peaceful environment.

I am speaking of James 1:19 that says in part: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry...

1. **Quick to Listen.** Marriage conflict is often fueled by too little listening. When even one person listens, the tone of the conversation becomes more calm and relaxed. One person reflecting back what the other is saying, is a catalyst that begins a process of understanding rather than debating or arguing.

2. **Slow to Speak.** The posture of being “slow to speak” communicates that “I am more interested in hearing what you have to say than in getting you to understand what I have to say”. This is the exact opposite of a normal disagreement in which two people are talking, and no one is listening. Being willing to wait until the other person has been heard is a powerful communication of your love and respect for them.

3. **Slow to become Angry.** Anger has a necessary place in our lives. It was given to protect and to respond to injustice. However, in the back and forth of marriage, it is often a destructive intruder if it is accompanied by an escalation of emotion evidenced in yelling, put downs, sarcasm, and angry physical expression.

If we focus on self control in these areas, by submitting ourselves to Christ, and to our spouse, to the extent that we are “quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, we will experience a happier and less damaging conflictual marriage.