



Wednesday Prayer

15th Sunday after Pentecost – Be quick to listen, slow to speak

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God’s righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

James 1: 19-21

Over this past decade, as my kids have gone through significant life stages – middle school to high school, high school graduation (and one Covid-19 backyard graduation ceremony), college starts and stops and starts again – we’ve been in a decade of adults engaging in some publicly ugly dialogue, cutting each other down, angrily disagreeing, defiling one another. Online exchanges are often the worst. All this in a time of my kids finding their way in this world. And I’m no saint in this context. God’s word is a balm I regularly need to soften my heart and clear my negative thoughts.

And then I think of the young people who don’t have an adult in their life that they feel comfortable and safe talking with. How this creates greater vulnerability as they navigate all the challenges of growing up. We worry about the dangers “out there” when the everyday dangers of how we treat one another is front and center in their lives. As we work with youth, engage with our own children and grandchildren, or those in our churches and communities, I pray that we be quick to listen and slow to speak and that we show by our example a heart open to all.

Last week I provided some questions to engage with the youth in your lives. I hope you’ll take these into your context and take time to truly listen. Young people want to be seen, known and heard. They also need to feel hope in a future where adults speak and act in ways that promote *God’s* righteousness not our own.

God, help us to make room for listening, for respectful conversations, and for engaging with the youth in our lives to hear their stories. As we enter into this new school year, alongside an election year and with all our differences, keep us mindful of the hope you offer through your word. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.

Here is the link to last week’s prayer to refer back to the suggested questions: [Wednesday Prayer - Shoes for the Journey \(mailchi.mp\)](#)

Feel free to forward these on to other adults in your kid’s lives or to your youth leader!