

Racing to Listen

Ready:

"My dearly loved brothers, understand this: everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger." –James 1:19

Set

I heard a baseball coach give instructions to his player on base, telling him the same thing at least three times. Finally, the coach said in a sarcastic tone, "Do you understand what I mean?" His player acted as if he never heard his coach. An important skill in being a great competitor and successful in life is the ability to be teachable. We can't be teachable if we think we know it all.

In James 1:19, the word "quick" can be used to illustrate a runner racing as fast as he can to the finish line before his opponent. This runner is racing so fiercely, he places his complete focus on the finish line, pressing forward, pushing everything else out of his mind. James says to set our focus on becoming good listeners, doing it with all our ability.

Listening is not easy, as there are many things that grab at our attention and distract us. Listening takes effort and work, just like competing in a race.

Here's a training tip: To make sure you heard the point being made, stop and repeat the conversation to the person speaking. Ask, "Is this what you're trying to tell me?" Take time to train; take time to listen!

Go

1. During conversations, what tends to be a distraction in your life?
2. Which is easier: acting or reacting? Why?
3. How can anger result from not listening?

Workout

Proverbs 12:15; 17:27

Overtime

Heavenly Father I know there are times I have not listened to You. Forgive me for my laziness and for not listening to You and my family. Help me to sharpen my skills of listening that I may be able to minister to others in need. Thank You Lord! Amen.

Bible Reference:

James 1



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