

Apply This Biblical Principle When Responding to Social Media Posts

In this day and age of social media comments and text messages, it is often difficult to understand the voice and tone in which a message was meant to be conveyed. It would be wise to use the following Scripture in James as a guideline of response:

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger” (James 1:19, MEV).

As email and text messages are sent and social media comments are posted, do we take the time to discern the intent of the original message before responding?

When people are in a hurry, they tend to simply respond and post without much thought, not always concocting the most eloquent way to convey the true intent of their heart. I know that I have read many posts where a person will correct themselves and say, “I didn’t mean it that way.”

What if we took the time to discern a text message, email or social media post before responding? Would it be wise to apply the biblical principle of “be slow to speak”? When we are slow to speak, we give the rational part of our brain a chance to respond with peace, joy, love and right emotions.

How many times do we respond in a reactionary mode? The reptilian part of our brain responds in anger or with reactions that can have negative consequences. Do we make circumstances worse when we respond without thinking and discerning? Most definitely! And, sometimes, the person we end up upsetting and hurting is ourselves because of the reaction and response of the other person.

The Bible instructs us that we will give an account of every idle word: *“But I say to you that for every idle word that men speak, they will give an account on the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words, you will be condemned”* (Matt. 12:36-37).

Words that don't need to be spoken can be idle words. In this day and age of electronic technology, sometimes we need to sit back and discern whether our response needs to be sent by text or email or if we need to respond in what seems to be the old-fashioned way of picking up the phone and making a personal phone call. We need to discern and be slow to speak, meditating on whether or not the words need to be spoken.

Discern instead of respond. Did you ever think that the “slow to speak” Scripture applies to social media and text messages? Instead of instantly responding to a text or social media post, why not pause and discern? These are two of the easiest places to misunderstand the true intentions of a person's heart, and the context of the message or post.

Being uncomfortable with silence or being quick to respond instantly to a question will thrust us into responding without discerning the intentions and the motives of a person's heart. When we are slow to speak and provide our input, we can prevent hurt from entering into another person's heart.

Our intentions should be to exude love in all situations. Love should be our primary pursuit. When love is our goal, we will be slow to speak and can apply these biblical principles not only to social media, text messages and emails but, to every part of our lives. {eoa}

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