



◆ STEP FIVE

Listening Like Jesus

"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."

JAMES 1:19 · ANCHOR VERSE - READ THIS ALOUD TOGETHER TO OPEN

Key Points

READ TOGETHER

- ◆ Listen before you speak.
- ◆ Try to understand another person's thoughts and feelings.
- ◆ Ask questions before making assumptions.
- ◆ Show respect by giving others your full attention.
- ◆ Remember that listening is one of the greatest ways to show love.

Story One: Grace and the Lost Bracelet

AGES 6-10

READ TOGETHER

Grace loved the silver bracelet her grandmother had given her for her eighth birthday. She wore it everywhere - to church, school, soccer practice, and even while reading before bed.

One afternoon after school, Grace noticed it was missing.

She searched her room, looked through her backpack, and even checked under the couch cushions. It was nowhere to be found.

Just then, her younger brother, Owen, walked into the living room.

Without thinking, Grace pointed at him. "You took it!"

Owen's eyes grew wide. "I didn't!"

"You're always touching my stuff!"

Tears filled Owen's eyes as he ran to his room.

A few minutes later, Dad came home and found Grace sitting on the couch with her arms crossed.

"What happened?"

Grace explained everything. Dad listened carefully before asking one simple question.

"Did you ask Owen if he'd seen your bracelet?"

"I already know he took it."

Dad gently shook his head. “Knowing and assuming aren’t the same thing.”

Together they went upstairs. Dad knocked on Owen’s door.

“Owen, can you tell us what happened?”

Owen sniffled. “I never touched it. But... I did see it in the bathroom this morning.”

Grace hurried into the bathroom. There, hanging on a towel hook, was her bracelet.

She slowly picked it up. Her cheeks turned bright red.

She walked back to Owen. “I’m sorry,” she whispered. “I didn’t listen.”

Owen smiled. “It’s okay.”

That evening Dad reminded both children, “When we stop to understand before accusing, we protect our relationships.”

Grace never forgot that lesson.

Story Two: Ethan and the Rumor

AGES 10–14

READ TOGETHER

Ethan walked into school Monday morning and immediately noticed something was wrong.

His best friend, Caleb, barely looked at him. During lunch, Caleb sat with another group of students. By the end of the day Ethan was convinced. Caleb didn’t want to be friends anymore.

On the bus ride home, another student leaned over. “I heard Caleb’s been talking about you.”

That made Ethan furious. He decided he wasn’t going to speak to Caleb again.

That evening his father noticed Ethan unusually quiet. After hearing the story, Dad asked, “Did Caleb actually say those things to you?”

“No.”

“Did anyone you trust hear him say them?”

“No.”

“So where did the information come from?”

Ethan hesitated. “I guess... just rumors.”

Dad nodded. “Son, one of the easiest ways to destroy a friendship is believing half the story.”

The next day Ethan found Caleb after school.

“Can I ask you something?”

“Sure.”

“I heard you’ve been upset with me.”

Caleb looked confused. “Upset? No.”

“Then why weren’t you talking to me yesterday?”

Caleb sighed. “My grandfather had a heart attack Sunday. I just wasn’t myself.”

Ethan’s stomach sank. He realized he had almost ended one of his closest friendships because he never stopped to understand.

Instead of arguing, Ethan put his arm around Caleb. “I’m really sorry. How’s your grandfather?”

For the next several weeks Ethan prayed for Caleb’s family and helped him catch up on schoolwork.

Years later Ethan would remember that conversation. Listening first had saved a friendship.

Jesus' Example

READ TOGETHER

Throughout His ministry, Jesus was surrounded by people who wanted something from Him. Instead of rushing people away, He listened.

When blind Bartimaeus cried out for help, Jesus stopped. Instead of assuming what Bartimaeus needed, Jesus asked, “*What do you want me to do for you?*”

Jesus already knew the answer. But He wanted Bartimaeus to be heard.

Again and again, Jesus listened before He spoke. He listened to children. He listened to sinners. He listened to the hurting. He listened to people everyone else ignored.

When we truly listen, we begin to love people the way Jesus loved them.

Why This Matters

READ TOGETHER

Many arguments begin because people stop listening.

Sometimes we're so busy thinking about what we're going to say next that we never hear what the other person is trying to say.

Listening takes patience. Listening takes humility. Listening takes love.

When we listen first, misunderstandings become conversations. Arguments become opportunities. Friendships grow stronger. Families become closer.

God gave us two ears and one mouth. Maybe that's His reminder that listening should happen twice as much as talking.

Bible Verses

READ TOGETHER

James 1:19 - “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.”

Proverbs 18:13 - “To answer before listening - that is folly and shame.”

Proverbs 15:1 - “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Philippians 2:4 - “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Luke 6:31 - “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

Discussion Questions

PARENT LEADS

1. Have you ever blamed someone before knowing the whole story?

2. Why is it difficult to listen when we're upset?

3. How did Grace's assumptions hurt Owen?
4. What could have happened if Ethan never talked to Caleb?
5. Why do you think Jesus often asked people questions instead of immediately giving answers?
6. How can listening help us become better friends and better followers of Christ?
7. Parent's turn: tell about a time you misjudged a situation because you didn't have the whole story - what did you learn?

Vocabulary Words

READ TOGETHER

Listening: Paying close attention to what someone is saying because you care about understanding them. *Example: Looking at your teacher, making eye contact, and thinking about their words instead of planning your response.*

Understanding: Learning why someone thinks, feels, or acts the way they do before forming an opinion. *Example: Asking a friend why they're upset before assuming they're angry with you.*

Assumption: Believing something is true without knowing all the facts. *Example: Thinking someone ignored your text on purpose when they never received it.*

Empathy: Trying to understand and care about how another person feels. *Example: Comforting a classmate who is sad after losing a pet.*

Compassion: Caring enough about someone's pain that you want to help them. *Example: Sitting with a new student who is eating lunch alone.*

Patience: Staying calm while waiting or giving someone time to explain themselves. *Example: Listening to your younger sibling tell a long story without interrupting.*

Respect: Showing others they have value by the way you speak, listen, and act toward them. *Example: Waiting your turn to speak instead of interrupting.*

Faith Builder

YOUR MOVE

This week, practice becoming a **"Super Listener."**

Choose one conversation each day - with a parent, sibling, teacher, or friend - and focus on listening before speaking.

Try these three steps:

1. Listen without interrupting.
2. Ask one question to better understand.
3. Repeat back what you heard before sharing your thoughts.

At the end of the week, write down:

- Who you listened to.

- What you learned that surprised you.
- How the conversation changed because you listened first.
- How you think this habit helps you become more like Jesus.

Closing Prayer

READ TOGETHER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for always hearing me when I pray. Teach me to give that same gift to others. Help me to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. When I'm tempted to assume the worst about someone, remind me to ask questions and to seek the whole story first. Thank You for Jesus, who stopped for people everyone else ignored and asked what they needed. Make me a listener like Him - at home with my family, at school with my friends, and in my quiet moments with You.

In Jesus' name, Amen.