

Selfish Conversation

by Mary Wilder Tileston

Effective listening is a vital part of conversation, and religion can help us cultivate this important grace.

Scripture: Proverbs 18:13, Proverbs 21:13, Jeremiah 7:27, Matthew 11:15, James 1:19

Topics: "Effective Communication", "Christian Character"

Description

Mary Wilder Tileston emphasizes the importance of not only speaking kind words but also listening with grace and attention. She highlights the different ways people may struggle with truly listening, such as being distracted, interrupting, or making conversations about themselves. Tileston encourages bringing these challenges under the sweet influences of religion to cultivate a heart of kindness and genuine listening.

Transcript

Thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee.

--JEREMIAH 7:27

HIS eyes were bright with intelligence and trained powers of observation; and they were beautiful with kindness, and with the well-bred habit of giving complete attention to other people and their affairs when he talked with them.

--JULIANA H. EWING

There is a grace of kind listening, as well as a grace of kind speaking. Some men listen with an abstracted air, which shows that their thoughts are elsewhere. Or they seem to listen, but by wide answers and irrelevant questions show that they have been occupied with their own thoughts, as being more interesting, at least in their own estimation, than what you have been saying. Some interrupt, and will not hear you to the end. Some hear you to the end, and then forthwith begin to talk to you about a similar experience which has befallen themselves, making your case only an illustration of their own. Some, meaning to be kind, listen with such a determined, lively, violent attention, that you are at once made uncomfortable, and the charm of conversation is at an end. Many persons, whose manners will stand the test of speaking, break down under the trial of listening. But all these things should be brought under the sweet influences of religion.

--FREDERICK WM. FABER

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