

June 20, 2026

Respond, Don't React

June Series: Live What Was Built

Week Focus: Living Above Your Feelings

Scripture – James 1:19–20 - *"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires."*

Devotional Reflection

One of the clearest signs of spiritual maturity is the ability to respond wisely instead of reacting emotionally. Reactions are often immediate, impulsive, and driven by whatever emotion is strongest in the moment. Responses, however, are thoughtful, prayerful, and guided by God's wisdom. James 1:19–20 challenges believers to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. These instructions may sound simple, but they require intentional self-control and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Many of the conflicts and regrets people experience could be avoided if they learned the difference between reacting and responding. A reaction often happens before we fully understand the situation. We speak before listening. We assume before asking questions. We allow frustration to determine our words and actions. In contrast, a Godly response creates space for wisdom. It pauses long enough to seek understanding, consider the consequences, and invite God's guidance into the situation.

The truth is that emotions often demand immediate action. Anger says, "Respond now." Fear says, "Do something quickly." Offense says, "Defend yourself immediately." Yet God's Spirit frequently invites us to slow down. Not because the issue is unimportant, but because wisdom requires perspective. A delayed response often prevents unnecessary damage. What feels urgent emotionally may not be urgent spiritually. Learning to pause can protect relationships, preserve peace, and prevent regret.

James specifically mentions anger because it is one of the emotions most likely to produce harmful reactions. Anger itself is not always sinful, but unmanaged anger can quickly lead to words and actions that do not honor God. Human anger often focuses on proving a point, winning an argument, or defending pride. God's righteousness, however, focuses on restoration, wisdom, and truth. The Spirit helps believers move from emotional reactions to godly responses that reflect Christ's character.

Today, pay attention to how you handle interruptions, frustrations, and disagreements. When emotions begin to rise, resist the urge to react immediately. Pause. Pray. Listen. Ask God for wisdom. Living above your feelings means refusing to let emotions dictate your behavior. The more you learn to respond rather than react, the more visible Christ's character becomes in your life.

Focus for Today

Spiritual maturity is revealed when I choose wise responses over emotional reactions.

Practice

- Before responding to a frustrating situation today, pause for a moment and pray.
 - Practice listening completely before offering your opinion.
 - Identify a recent situation where a slower response would have produced a better outcome.
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to help you demonstrate patience and self-control.
-

Prayer

Father, help me become quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. Teach me to pause before reacting and to seek Your wisdom before responding. Strengthen my self-control and help me reflect Christ in every conversation and situation. Let my words and actions be guided by Your Spirit rather than my emotions. May my responses bring honor to You and peace to those around me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Reflection Question

What situation in your life would look different if you consistently responded with God's wisdom instead of reacting from emotion?