A Resolution to esteem others with my time, concern, and full attention

Day 1

The Gift

“The greatest gift you can ever give to someone is the gift of your own time.”

This gift can never be returned or retracted. The opportunity to listen to someone probably comes up more than we realize. We need to keep an eye out and when the time come focus our full attention on the other person to give them this gift of ourselves, our time.

The gift of listening.

When was the last time somebody really listened to you?

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You may not be able to easily recall a recent moment when you felt that someone was all there, all yours, intent on hearing what you had to say.

How does someone just putting life on hold and listening to you make you feel?

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When if the last time you really listened to someone else without distraction?

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Most of the time we’re so focused on ourselves and preoccupied with our own feelings, every conversation becomes ultimately about us and how we’re being affected. Or we try to fix whatever the problem is instead of just listening.

**What else do we do or others do while supposedly listening that is distracting?**

When someone talks to us we want them to know that we will be all there; it reflects how we honor and esteem them. Don’t the people in your life deserve this blessing? To feel strengthen and encouraged just by being around you, even without us trying to fix their problems.

Jesus knew the power of this blessing. He made a habit of bestowing it on the most insignificant, unnoticed people of His day.

**Find an example in the bible and share with the group.**

We should hardly be surprised. This is so consistent with His character.

**Do you find it difficult to put aside the distractions long enough to listen?**

We choose to listen. Resist the urge to criticize, insult, laugh, or make sarcastic remarks. Just lean in, quietly, emphatically, purposefully and listen.

**Who are the people in your life who would benefit the most if you took the time to listen to them?**
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Day 2

Shhhhh

Wisdom: (1) knowing what to say. (2) not saying it.
Wisdom is often revealed in silence.

Most people heard from their moms phrases like; silence is golden.
if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all,
Think before you speak,
and you don't have to say everything that pops into your head!

Even the bible has this one:

Too much talk leads to sin, Be sensible and keep your mouth shut.
(Proverbs 10:39 NLT)

Think back a time where silence may have been much better than what you said. A time when being quiet would have spared us all kinds of hurt, embarrassment and regret.

Have you seen that always speaking you opinion, or constantly correcting people just to prove you were right hurts your relationships?

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In your opinion; Is it always necessary to say everything you feel or think?

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Silence is our friend and our strength.

This is not saying that we should never speak up or should change our core personalities. This chapter is on understanding the wisdom and power of silence.

Silence is our way of growing deep, of discovering maturity, of exercising the kind of influence God has created us to have on others, as opposed to the destructive, discouraging alternative.
Do you sometimes just dig a hole if you keep on talking; especially when upset?

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Or do you see this happen with people when they are complaining to you?
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“Knowing what to say” and “not saying it” at an inappropriate time puts us in a position where - when the time is right for expressing ourselves - our words can yield an extremely positive blessing.

   *A woman who is quick to listen is one who gathers up all the information before releasing her reaction. When she speaks, her advice and assessments are sensible and sober. Prudent and purposeful. These words nourish, edify, and benefit others.*

Do you have trouble just listening?
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Do you find when you have some time to think on a problem that has been brought to you; you can formulate a better response? _________________

Or is your initial response usually right on? ________________

*The tongue of the righteous is choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is of little value.*
*(Proverbs 10:20 NIV)*

In your own words paraphrase the above scripture
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Day 3

Shhhhhh Continued

We know that there are those exceptional kind of people. Women of uncommon wisdom and dignity. They do not get tangled up in pointless gossip, they hold their opinions, knowing that the incessant chatter of “foolish lips will be destroyed”

*The wise are glad to be instructed, but babbling fools fall flat on their faces.*
*(Proverbs 10:8 NLT)*

Do you easily get tangled in the web of gossip?

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This exceptional person is someone who’s long abandoned the need to impress others or be the center of attention. In humility and appreciation of others, they are content just being a participant like everyone else. They do not think they are always right and that everyone else is wrong. They just listen and learn. Contemplating and considering. Weighing and waiting.

This is wisdom.
And Power.

In group discussions do you tend to sit quietly or take over the discussion?

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How do you think either way can be hurtful to you?

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There has to be some kind of median in my opinion. You sit and listen and then you give your viewpoint with respect to all other’s views.

How can listening quietly be seen as not being participating?

How is taking over the conversation hurting those around you?

When you are having a one on one conversation do you tend to bring it back to your experiences and feelings instead of listening to theirs?

Do you feel without being silent is having no power?

Try it for a day or two. Deliberately keep from saying something that’s better left unsaid. Allow the bait of another’s unkind or inappropriate remark to land without hooking a response from you. See how this effects you.
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Day 4

Underneath it All

The only way to rectify some problems are to address the foundation.

This resolution will be difficult for many people. All this talk about being a blessing to others by disciplining ourselves to listen and by preparing thoughtful, careful responses is a lot of work.

Controlling our own tongue is a quest. It requires a lot of maturity.

If you tried; how difficult was it to hold your tongue when someone was baiting you?

Where does this need to speak out even when its not needed come from?

Lets look at Luke 6:45 I used NIV

45 A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Paraphrase what you feel this means.
Why is this relevant to this resolution?

Are you immersed in humility and surrendered in obedience to the Lord, or housing a malnourished spirit that stubbornly refuses to yield to the wisdom of God's own Word?

It's a foundational issue.

Check if these symptoms pertain to you.

- **Symptom:** Are you always quick to offer an opinion, inserting your assessments into conversations at every conceivable opportunity? **Diagnosis:** This could reveal a arrogant stain in your heart, which causes you to feel the need to impress and be at the center of attention.

- **Symptom:** Do you frequently find yourself quarreling with your spouse or being division among others? **Diagnosis:** You are lacking a spirit of peace and unity deep inside, a true desire for your relationship to be strengthened and reflect the grace of Christ.

- **Symptom:** Are you constantly critical and demeaning in your spoken sentiments? **Diagnosis:** These are often code words for insecurity and a lack of certainty in your inherent value, as well as a heart infested with anger and judgmental attitudes.

- **Symptom:** Does gossip continue to come easily for you, so that even the steeliest self-restraint is unable to stop you? **Diagnosis:** You find others problems and difficulties entertaining and don't think of them as people needing your support, prayer, and companionship.

The words of our lips are like cracks in the wall, revealing what's going on at the foundation.

Pick one of these above symptoms in your life and try to find the foundation problem?

During the next few days try to be aware of these symptoms and record specific times where you have had problems with them.
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Day 5

Underneath it All

Jesus’ use of the word heart in this verse signifies the inner being of an individual, the place where our thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs are cemented. The heart is a reservoir, a holding tank for every attitude and belief we’ve either placed there or allowed to hang out there.

Is there something in your heart you keep hidden, that could be effecting who you are in a negative way?

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Those hidden loves, desires, and tendencies will eventually be seen. I am hoping ours are in line with the Lord.

Is there some love, desire, or tendency that you keep hidden that could effect your life in a positive way, but you have been to unsure about showing it?

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45 A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Luke 6:45
What are you putting inside? What treasures are you storing?

Your words and tone and topics of conversation will tell you; that is why it is so important that you guard your heart.

Above all else, guard your heart,
for everything you do flows from it.
(Proverbs 4:23)

So guard your heart, do not allow it to become hardened (Proverbs 28:14) deceptive (Psalm 12:2), prideful (Proverbs 21:4), or unclean (Psalm 51:10). Seek rather a heart that is always sensitive to the prodding of God’s Spirit (Romans 8:5), single-mindedly devoted to Him, (Psalm 12:2) drenched in humility (Proverbs 22:4), and pure before God. (Matthew 5:8)

This resolution is not just watching your mouth but watching your __________. (pg 125)

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My Blessing

I will be a woman who is quick to listen and slow to speak. I will care about the concerns of others and esteem them more highly than myself.