

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY



KEEP QUIET OR SPEAK UP?

(There is quite a bit of material here. Feel free to 'edit' it based on time available)

TEXT: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

In Ecclesiastes 3:1,7b, the wise man says, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be silent and a time to speak."

Times When It Is Appropriate To Be Silent (or KEEP QUIET!)

Have someone read the list of keep quiet times. Then share with one another relationships or experiences when you've been guilty of speaking when you should have been silent and what the result or outcome was. Can you think of other times when it is inappropriate to speak, and why?

- When you have nothing to say that is worth hearing.
- When you do not know what you are talking about.
- When you are talking just to hear yourself talk.
- When you realize you are saying something that may not be true.
- When you are gossiping.
- When someone else is talking.
- When someone else is gossiping.
- When you are saying something that you would not say directly to the person you are talking about.
- When you are being judgmental.
- When you are talking too much about yourself.
- When you should be listening.
- It is appropriate to be silent unless you cannot improve the silence.

Times When It Is Appropriate To Speak (or SPEAK UP!)

Discuss what each of these appropriate speak up times means to you, especially based on the scripture references. What other scriptures apply? Can you think of other times when it is appropriate to speak up and why?

- When what you say benefits those who are listening (Ephesians 4:29).
- When you can speak a word of encouragement (I Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 3:3).
- When you can express your love (Matthew 5:43-46, John 13:34, Romans 12:9, I Corinthians 13:4-8).
- When you can and need to express your appreciation (Romans 16:4).
- When you can speak the truth in a loving way (Ephesians 4:15).

- When you preach the Good News to the poor, proclaim freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight to the blind, release the oppressed, and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:18-19).
- When you need to ask for help for yourself or someone else (Matthew 18:19).
- When you can truly empathize or show compassion (Philippians 2:1, Colossians 3:12).
- When Christ is preached (Philippians 1:15-18).
- When you have good news to share (Mark 16:15, Luke 2:10, Romans 10:15).
- When you are offering hope and life (Romans 12:12, 15:13).
- When you are being thankful (Colossians 3:15, Psalm 95).
- When you need to speak up for the cause of Christ (I Corinthians 1:17-25).
- What issues of morality, integrity, ethics, or law are you willing to speak up for?