

WISDOM TO NAVIGATE DISAGREEMENTS

Parents, teaching your kids to slow down and seek wisdom when navigating disagreements is a powerful way to help them mature. Over and over in the book of Proverbs, it says that *fools rush and make mistakes*, but wisdom tells us to SLOW down. Using the word SLOW, to apply the wisdom provided in Proverbs, can help your family navigate disagreements before they turn into mishandled conflict. Read on to discover how to think S.L.O.W. when you have your next disagreement.

STOP

Stop and put everything on hold. It is like hitting the time-out button. Retreat and find a place to be alone with God. Be sensible. We need to watch our steps. I love to hike in Big Bend National Park, and there are times when the trail gets rough with big boulders. The best way to keep moving forward is to stop and look ahead. Evaluate. What's the best path? What should I avoid? The first thing we should do when it comes to disagreements is to stop.

LISTEN

Patience is essential in disagreements, so stop and listen to seek understanding. It is really hard to do this if we're not using our ears. Sometimes we get in trouble because we assume things, or filling in holes with things that were not actually said or done. We start to believe lies instead of looking for the truth. We have to slow down and listen.

OBSERVE

As we listen, we look. Ask God to give you eyes to see. In seeking to be peaceful, we must use discernment and rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us. Observe everything about the disagreement; What is the source or the point of tension for the disagreement?

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WALK

Sometimes it's easier to avoid moving in the direction of someone we have a disagreement with. There are times we must intentionally walk with others to be a peacemaker. According to a study from the University of California, people who engage in productive communication are more likely to stay connected long-term compared to those who avoid disagreements. As you walk through conflict with others, ask yourself, "How would a wise person respond in sensible, patient, and peaceful ways?" Then, you can move in the direction of disagreements, knowing that no matter the outcome, you are doing it from a place of wisdom, not from a place of foolishness.

PRACTICE IT!



STOP

Have I prayed about this and asked God to help?

Have I looked at God's word?

Am I attaching my feelings or experiences?



LISTEN

What is really being said?

What am I really saying?

What is the Lord telling me?



OBSERVE

What am I assuming about the situation?

Do I see the other person the way God sees them?

What am I missing?



WALK

Am I being sensible?

Am I being patient?

Am I being peaceful?