THE WAY

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.

In case you're wondering, that's a quote from James 1:19 and it's really helpful when you're in a discussion with someone who disagrees with you.

No matter where you stand on any issue, there's a very good chance we are going to be in a discussion with someone who thinks the exact opposite to us. At some point, all of us are going to be tempted to say mean things to that person or about other people – whether they are from a different family, church, country of origin, or something else entirely. Social media is already full of people debating. All the people you interact with, and speak about, whether in broad generalisations or in very specific terms, are made in the image of God, they are loved by him, and Jesus died for them. Treat them for who they are. They are God's and he will take your treatment of them personally.

What if our first response to someone who disagrees with us either online or in real life was "tell me more", "I don't know enough about this, help me understand", or "Thank you, I hadn't thought of things that way".

Chances are whatever you want to say has already been said, so you probably don't need to say it again, they've heard it before. But what if you were known as someone who listened, someone who was thoughtful, and someone who was not easily baited. That's probably better than being known as someone who thinks they're right, and tells everyone else why they're right, and how everyone can be right like them.

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