

## Making Life Work: Defusing Anger

9.28.08

### Cautions:

- To think that this message is not for you.
- To move past this too quickly without careful reflection.
- To think that change is not possible for you.

### Seeing the Danger:

- Anger destroys your body.
- Anger destroys relationships (*family, work, neighbors, etc.*)
- Anger destroys community (*Paul's letters, church life, etc.*)
- "...the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." *Jas. 1:20*
- Is not consistent with who we now are in Christ. *Gal. 5:22-25*
- The "Hot/Quick-Tempered Man" in the Book of Proverbs:
  - Lit. "man of heat"
  - "Acts foolishly" (14:17)
  - "Stirs up strife" (15:18, 29:22)
  - "Causes much transgression" (29:22)
  - "Make no friendship with a man given to anger..." (22:25)

*Do I see the damage that anger can do? That MY anger can do?*

### Understanding Anger:

- Anger is not a sin in and of itself—a natural, human emotion.
  - God gets angry (Ps. 7:11, 1 Kings 11:9). Jesus got angry (Mk. 3:5)
- There are two kinds of anger: Righteous and Unrighteous
  - Righteous: *Injustice in the world. Sin and its effects. Poor choices.*
  - Unrighteous: *All the things that don't fall into the previous category.*
- All of us have a 'default setting' when it comes to anger.
  - "Stuff it down" "Let it out!" "The Sniper"
- Anger is not always a primary emotion. (*Sin behind the sin*)
- Anger often reveals idolatry.
  - When our idols get threatened, we get ready to fight to defend them.
  - Control—"This situation is out of my control so I am mad..."
  - Selfishness/Self-Centeredness—"I didn't get my way so I am mad..."
  - Fear of Man—"What they said about me made me mad..."

*What is my anger revealing about me?*

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### Better Paths :

#### **"Slow to Anger"**

- "Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding" (14:29)
- "Good sense makes one slow to anger and it is his glory to overlook an offense." (19:11)
- "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." (16:32)
- "A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention." (15:18)

## **"Becoming Angry, But Not Sinning"**

*25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. Eph. 4:25-27 ESV*

*What will this look like in your particular spheres in life? Work? Home—Spouse, Kids? Sports?*

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### How Do We Walk in It?

1. See and feel the weight of the Scriptures as they speak of anger.
  - a. Allow this drive us to the Cross and our deep need for Jesus.
2. Pray that God would teach us to be rightly angry about the right things and have the discernment we need to be "slow to anger" and "be angry and not sin."
3. When you get angry, ask "*Why am I angry?*"
  - a. Righteous cause: Right response? No response?
  - b. Other: Ask the right questions:
    - i. Should I just overlook this offense?
    - ii. Am I simply protecting my idols? On scale of 1-10, was your response in line with the situation?
    - iii. Is there some hurt from the past coming into the present?
4. Be quick to repent and forgive.
  - a. Repentance is not just a moment but also a way of life.
  - b. Leverage your community.
5. Be proactive in regard to our enemy and your own flesh.
  - a. Make no provision for your flesh (Rom. 13:14)
  - b. Learn to speak softly (Prov. 15:1)
  - c. Practice the pause. Stop. Pray!

### **What is God saying to me about my anger?**

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Visit [www.crossinglouisville.com](http://www.crossinglouisville.com) for more helpful resources.

*Works Consulted : Expositor's Bible Commentary, Life Application Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, Messages by Tim Keller, Darrin Patrick*