

## Selected Proverbs: Anger Management

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The Book of Proverbs

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## Introduction

- <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2016/october/4100316.html>
- <https://www.thetrace.org/2024/04/road-rage-shooting-gun-highway-deaths/>
- Road rage a big problem - So easy to get angry with people who don't drive the way we think they should.
- What makes you angry? Your boss not recognizing your hard work? Your teacher not giving you the grades you think you deserve? A friend talking about you behind your back? Your children not doing what you tell them? You can probably think of a million things that make you angry.
- Anger is a natural response to things that don't go the way we think they should. Anger is a natural response to injustice. Some things should make us angry. E.g., abortion, abuse, etc.
- Anger isn't necessarily sinful, but how we respond in our anger can certainly be sinful. "Be angry and do not sin" ([Ephesians 4:26](#)).
- How do you respond when you get angry? Yell and scream? Get physically sick? Lose sleep? Increased stress? High blood pressure?
- How do you handle your anger? Count to 10? Go to your happy place? Take a deep breath? Shut yourself off from everyone?
- If unable to control/manage your anger, you become unable to make wise choices. You make choices and say things you later regret.

- The best way to handle anger is not through anger management techniques but by constantly applying the wisdom of God to every situation of life.
- Book of Proverbs has much to say about anger management. Two ways to manage your anger:

## **Know that God is patient in His righteous anger.**

***A patient person shows great understanding, but a quick-tempered one promotes foolishness ([Proverbs 14:29](#)).***

- The ability to control one's emotions and express them at the right time and to the appropriate degree is an important aspect of wisdom (Tremper Longman).
- We get angry because what we want accomplished isn't accomplished instantaneously.
- **Your anger is often unjustified, but God's anger is justified.** You get angry at silly things, and you fail to get angry at the things that anger God (sin). We lack righteous anger. Righteous anger is being angry at what angers God. Righteous anger leads to right action.
- God has a right to be angry.

***God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels indignation every day ([Psalm 7:11](#)).***

- God is angry because people do not live for His will. Solomon told us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ([Proverbs 9:10](#)), yet many do not fear God. God is rightly angry at those who do not fear Him and live for Him.
- God is rightly angry at sin, and He has dealt with sin and satisfied His anger through the death of His Son. Jesus died in our place and rose again so we would not have to taste the righteous anger of God.

- However, a day is coming when God will pour out His righteous anger on those who reject His free gift of grace.

***Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on Him ([John 3:36](#)).***

- You often lack patience in your anger, but God remains patient, gracious, and merciful even in His anger.

***The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities ([Psalm 103:8](#)).***

***The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance ([2 Peter 3:9](#)).***

- What a thought! God is righteously angry at sin and what sin has done in this world. God will righteously judge the world and punish all who reject Him, but He hasn't done it yet! He is giving everyone the gift of more time desiring more people to turn from their sins and trust Him.
- God is angry, but He is also full of love and mercy. He is longsuffering. We need to grow in our ability to be longsuffering! ([Ephesians 5:1](#))

## **Ask God to help you help you act patiently and graciously when you are angry.**

***Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city ([Proverbs 16:32](#)).***

- If the God of the universe is patient with you, who are you to fly off the handle at someone else? You are not going to be slow to anger until you understand the patience of God.

- Why do you have the tendency to be so quick react sinfully when you are angry instead of being slow to anger?

***What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions ([James 4:1-3](#)).***

- Our anger problem is most often connected to a selfishness problem. We get angry because we do not get what we want. When we get offended by someone else, we often respond with sinful, uncontrolled anger that leads to more sin.

***A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression ([Proverbs 29:22](#)).***

- When angry, we either stuff or spew. We stuff - we bottle up the anger until the fruit of anger like bitterness, gossip, unforgiveness, or a judgmental heart keeps us from having meaningful relationships with others.
- We spew - We don't hide our feelings. We speak our mind. We cuss, we yell, or we insult. Whether you stuff or spew, you sin in your uncontrolled anger and you hurt relationships.

When angered ask two questions:

- **What is it that I want so badly that I'm willing to yell at someone, abuse someone, or neglect someone in order to get it?** Identify what it is that you want, and you'll likely identify that what you really want is to fulfill a selfish desire that the person you are angry with isn't helping you to fulfill. (e.g., I want my kids to be quiet so I can have the peace and quiet I deserve after a long day of work...)

- **Why is it that you want something so badly that you're willing to yell at someone, abuse someone, or neglect someone in order to get it?** Much of your anger isn't righteous anger. It's a heart problem - people aren't helping you to accomplish your will. (E.g., My desire for my kids to be quiet is to cater to my comfort. If they don't cater to my comfort, I respond sinfully by exploding in anger. That's not being longsuffering!)
- You need God's help to overcome a sinful heart that leads you to respond in anger when life doesn't go your way. Ask Him!

## **Start treating people with patience and grace instead of treating people with anger.**

- How do you start treating people with patience and grace instead of anger?
- **Let God deal with the hearts of people.**

***Do not say, "I will repay evil;" wait for the Lord, and he will deliver you ([Proverbs 20:22](#)).***

- People will offend you and make you angry, but it's not your job to make sure the person who angered you suffers.
- Leave vengeance to God, and let God deal with the person who offended you. You have to trust that God knows better how to deal with the hearts of people than you do.
- Some of you have been hurt badly. It takes trust to put hurt in the hands of God.
- **Don't engage every conversation.**

***Leave the presence of a fool, for there you do not meet words of knowledge ([Proverbs 14:7](#)).***

- Some people talk to just talk and have no idea what they're talking about. It's easy to get angry with fools who talk foolishly or act foolishly.
- Some of your anger would be lessened if you simply learned to spend more of your time with wise, God-fearing people and less time with foolish people.
- **Learn to overlook minor offenses and handle major offenses biblically.**

***Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense ([Proverbs 19:11](#)).***

- You don't have to get mad about everything. A lot of little things you need to overlook, forgive, and move on. You can overlook it when your spouse doesn't clean up the way you want him to, when your child doesn't get picked for the team, when the person doesn't go fast enough when the light turns green, etc. We spend far too much time angry about things that do not eternally matter, and we spend far too little time concerned about the things that do eternally matter.
- Don't ignore sin, but when someone sins against you handle it biblically (e.g., [Galatians 6:1](#): "You who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness"; [Matthew 18](#)).
- **Be quick to listen.**

***If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame ([Proverbs 18:13](#)).***

- How many conflicts would you avoid, and how would your anger be lessened if you just learned to listen before jumping to conclusions.
- You get angry with people before you even consider what they're going through.
- **Don't give up on reconciliation.**

***Fools mock at making reparation, but there is goodwill among the upright ([Proverbs 14:9](#)).***

***The one who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy ([Proverbs 28:13](#)).***

- God doesn't give up on you. He has made a way for you to have a relationship with you in spite of your sin. He has sent His Son who lived, died, and rose again for you. For some of you, today is the day to place your faith in the One who loves you and gave His life for you.
- Don't give up on others. It's easy to stay angry, but it's destructive. It's hard to forgive, but it's life giving. This morning, ask God to help you put away your anger towards that person who hurt you. Ask God to help you forgive and move on. Ask God to help you live under the control of His Spirit rather than living under the control of your anger.