

Damsel in Distress

#6 Anger

I. Introduction: Prov. 19:13, 21:9, 19 and 27:15

Contentious/Quarrelsome: a Hebrew word sometimes translated "brawling." It means "to strive", "to fight", "to dispute", "to deliberate" or "to compete."

Dripping: like Chinese water torture, it's the dripping...dripping...dripping...driving your loved ones crazy!

II. Anger

A. Is anger a sin?

Yes: "Let all...anger...Be put away" (Eph. 4:31); "cease from anger..." (Ps. 37:8); "If you are only angry, even in your own home, you are in danger of judgment." (Matt. 5:22)

No: "Be angry and sin not..." (Ps. 4:4); "Be angry and do not sin." (Eph. 4:26)

1. Consider the fact that God and Jesus both display anger in the scriptures. In fact, the Hebrew word for anger appears approximately 455 times in the Old Testament, and of these it refers to the anger of GOD 375 times! Jesus is angry in the New Testament on many occasions (see Mark 3, 11, Matt. 23 and others).
2. It appears that anger isn't a sin in and of itself. The issue is how it is expressed and what the anger is based upon. Note that the same Hebrew and Greek words for anger are used in both appropriate and inappropriate frames of reference in the OT and NT. Examples: OT – Num 11:1 and Num. 22:27. NT – Eph. 4:31 and Jas. 1:19.

B. Ten Biblical Principles About Anger (Thanks to Dwight Carlson and his work, "Overcoming Hurts and Anger")

1. *Anger is a communicable attribute of God.*

It is a quality that originated in God and He passed it on to us. As one of our feelings, it is a God given gift that can and should be used to help us serve Him better. Remember: "to deny feelings is to deny a part of the person God created us to be."

2. *Anger in and of itself is a neutral feeling.*

Like all our feelings, anger can be used for good or ill. The issue is how it is controlled and what it is expressed over.

3. *We need to listen to our feelings (including anger), but never allow them to control us.* (See James 1:19, Prov. 16:32 and Prov. 19:11)
4. *We must not be hasty in expressing our anger.* (See Ecc. 7:9 and Prov. 25:8)
5. *We should not procrastinate in dealing with our anger.*
Eph 4:26 enjoins us to not let the sun go down on our anger...it is an issue of chronological time, and, it is an issue of emotional time.
6. *Remember that when you are angry, you are much more vulnerable to sin.* Eph. 4:27 adds, "And do not give the devil an opportunity..." Look too at Prov. 29:22 and Prov. 14:29.
7. *Be aware that our anger may be wrong simply because it is based on wrong motives.*
8. *Note too, that if you are chronically angry, you are probably sinning.* Heb. 12:15 encourages us to make sure that the root of bitterness does not spring up in our hearts and cause us trouble.
9. *A vindictive kind of anger is always wrong.* See Rom. 12:18-21
Ps. 37:8 says "Cease from anger and forsake wrath..."
10. It is also true that anger may be righteous and its very absences may displease God. In other words, there are times when we may be sinning by not getting angry!
Look at Saul in 1 Sam. 11:6

III. So what? Dealing with anger

A. Realize....

Conflict is normal. It is not a deficiency in others or us.

Conflict often begins at home.

29%: a loved one is the target of a person's anger

24%: someone well known and liked is the target

25%: anger is shown towards an acquaintance

8%: anger is displayed to someone known but disliked

8%: anger is shown towards someone unknown (Carlson, p. 61-62)

Conflict is necessary. It does not have to be a sign of hostility, just disagreement.

B. Handle it...

1. Recognize what's going on. Try to identify the REAL cause of your hurt, displeasure or anger.
2. Count to ten! Think it over before reacting. Look at Neh. 5:6-7

The 5-6-7 principle!

3. Pray before proceeding (even if it is a one word prayer...help, peace, patience, wisdom, discernment, insight)
4. Choose your course of action:
 - a. Confront when necessary (See Lev. 19:17)
 - b. Compromise when possible (See Acts 15)
 - c. Choose to let it go whenever you can (See Prov. 19:11 and Matt. 6:15)

IV. Remember too, anger thrives on unmet needs. Insufficient love, poor self esteem and inappropriate dependencies all create fertile ground for emotional instability. These instabilities can feed inappropriate anger that can be expressed inwardly (depression) or outwardly (hostility).

Our sufficiency is in Christ! "Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God." 2 Cor. 3:5

Remember: "We are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ." Rom. 8:16-17