

LOVE IS NOT IRRITABLE TOWARDS THOSE WHO TEST US

When Love Breaks Through, Part 5 1 Corinthians 13:5a

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, **it is not easily angered**, it keeps no record of wrongs. (NIV)

I. Examine Our Quickness To Anger: How Short Is Our Fuse?

A. Sacrificial Love Extends Our Fuse (1 Cor 13:4; Jas 1:19-20; Prov 14:17; 15:18; Titus 1:7)

1. Seek to understand the other person's point of view (Prov 14:29)
2. Remain "cool" as you gather the facts (Prov 17:27; 29:20)
3. Forebear minor disagreements or offenses (Prov 19:11; 17:14)

B. The Spirit Gives Restraint (Gal 5:22-26; Prov 25:28)

II. Evaluate The Object Of Anger: Do We Get Angry At What God Gets Angry At?

A. God Gets Angry At Idolatry (1 Kings 11:9-10; Ex 32:19-20)

B. God Gets Angry At Injustice (John 2:14-17)

C. God Gets Angry At Insensitivity (Mark 3:1-5)

III. Exterminate The Destruction Of Anger: Is Our Anger Constructive Or Destructive?

A. Irritability Seeks To Inflict Hurt In Others

B. Irritability Destroys Joy

C. Irritability Does Not Produce Godly Outcomes (James 1:19-20)

Conclusion:

1. Take responsibility for your own irritability. No one makes us irritable. We make ourselves irritable.
2. Evaluate why we get irritated. Is it for a good and godly reason?
3. Foresee the effect of our irritation. Will it produce righteous results?

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When Love Breaks Through, Part 5

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Introduction:

- Which of Snow White's Seven Dwarves do you most resemble?
- Grumpy is the only one named after a sin.
- I hope that's not the one you would identify most with

SNOW WHITE'S SEVEN DWARF



Doc Grumpy Happy Sleepy Sneezzy Bashful Dopey

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- **70% of people are angry at someone**

1 Corinthians 13:3-8a If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end. (*The Message*)

• Other Translations:

- NIV: "not easily angered"
- NKJV/NASB: "not provoked"
- KJV: "not easily provoked"
- NLT: "not irritable"
- ESV: "not irritable"
- Phillips: "not touchy"
- NEB: "not quick to take offense"
- Voice: "isn't easily upset"
- Message: "doesn't fly off the handle"

- **παροξύνεται, *paroxyneta***
 - From 2 root words: “alongside” and “sharpen”
 - Love is not sharp with others
- “The heart of the word conveys the semantic force of **to exasperate**, *to irritate*, as metaphorical extensions of *to make sharp, to make pointed, to make acid*.” (A.C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: a Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 1052)
- “Love does not go into paroxysms (fits) of anger, nor does it provoke anger in others with its irritability.” (D.E. Garland, *1 Corinthians: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the NT*, p. 618).
- “To be irritable is to be in a constant countdown for a temperamental blast-off.” (Lewis Smedes, *Love Within Limits*, p. 56)
- “an arousal to resentment that results in unfortunate incidents” (Robert Thomas, *Understanding Spiritual Gifts*, p. 73)
- Paul was provoked to preach when seeing the city of Athens full of idols (Acts 17:16)

Acts 17:16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was **provoked** within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.
- Paul & Barnabas’ sharp disagreement or irritation with each other (Acts 15:39) – same root as “provoked”

Acts 15:39 And there arose a **sharp disagreement**, so that they separated from each other.
- “Provoke to good works”

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider how to **stir up** one another to love and good works,
- “[Love] does not become irritated.’ No one is immune to irritation caused by others, not even those who possess poise and grace. After leading the Israelites through the desert for nearly forty years, Moses lost his temper when the people quarreled with him for lack of water (Num. 20:2–11). He was considered to be a very humble person (Num. 12:3); nevertheless, he was unable to control his anger in the face of a grumbling population.” (S. Kistemaker & W. Hendriksen, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 460)
- Jonathan Edwards: “The heart of man is exceedingly prone to undue and sinful anger, being naturally full of pride and selfishness.” (*Charity and its Fruits*, 1852, p. 201)

I. Examine Our Quickness To Anger: How Short Is Our Fuse?

- Church ministry gives us plenty of opportunity to be irritated
 - Somebody parked too close to your car in the parking lot

- The kid in Sunday School doesn't pay attention for the full hour for four Sundays in a row
- You worked so hard on a church product and you feel underappreciated for it
- You're struggling with your own discouragement and you get frustrated at hearing someone else's
- Miscommunication
- The pastor doesn't seem to know what a clock is used for
- Marriage
 - Husband doesn't seem to pay attention
 - Wife gets more emotional than seems warranted for the issue at hand
 - Expectations are disappointed
 - Spouse doesn't help out enough
- Work
 - Dealing with incompetence – a co-worker or our own
 - Unreasonable boss
 - Unreasonable deadline making you work overtime

A. Sacrificial Love Extends Our Fuse

- **Eros love** focuses on self-needs. Self-needs form expectations. Unfulfilled expectations cause irritation.
 - Smedes: "Erotic love is the root of irritability because our pursuit of fullness always falls short of the perfect ending." (p. 58)

Examples:

- You don't like the meal your spouse cooked
- You don't like your parent reminding you of your chores
- You don't like your boss micromanaging you
- You don't like your spouse nagging you
- Your perceived guilt on an issue makes you think you're being judged at church
- The perfectionist gets mad when execution of plans doesn't occur the way they plan it
- Disciplined athletes might lose their temper towards the end of the sporting event when they are frustrated with losing
- Children get mad when they are frustrated with their toy or art work
- The golfer gets mad when his shot ends up in the rough or trap
- Six Levels From Frustration To Anger
(by Paul Hauck, quoted by Paul Wilson, *How To Stop Being Your Own Worst Enemy*, p. 100)
 - "I want something."
 - "I didn't get what I wanted and am frustrated."
 - "It is awful and terrible not to get what I want."
 - "You shouldn't frustrate me! I must have my way."
 - "You're bad for frustrating me."
 - "Bad people ought to be punished."

- **Agape love** focuses on the needs of others as well as our own. Others + Us gives a more complete perspective. Anger is better evaluated on how it helps You + Me.
- **Subjectivity:** Only can see one's own need – that's selfish
- **Objectivity:** See own need plus needs of others – that's reality
- Love others as love self
- Consider needs of others, not merely your own
- Objectivity sees the big picture

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient and kind

- Love is patient – long fuse
- Love is kind – gentle response

James 1:19-20 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, **slow to wrath**; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

- The glory of God, the repentance of sin, the unity of the Body of Christ is a righteous product of godly anger
- Anger that does not produce the righteous results is sinful – because it produces sinful results

Proverbs 14:17 A **quick-tempered** man acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated.

Proverbs 14:29 He who is **slow to wrath** has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.

Proverbs 15:18 He who is **slow to anger** quiets contention.

Titus 1:7 "For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, **not quick-tempered**, not given to wine, not violent"

- "quick temper" = passionate, flies off the handle, loses cool
 - word implies persistent behavior
- ie/ Hudson Taylor, missionary to China, was at a river bank hailing a riverboat to help him cross. A wealthy Chinese man comes from behind and pushes Hudson Taylor out of the way. The push knocks Hudson Taylor into the mud. The boatman was angry at the pushy Chinese man and refused to take him across the river. The rich man didn't know that he pushed a foreigner because he dressed in the clothing of the common person in China. The man apologized to Hudson Taylor. Instead of being easily angered, Hudson Taylor graciously invited this man to board the boat with him and witnessed the Gospel of grace to him. Not being "easily irritated" gave Hudson Taylor an opportunity to witness.

1. Seek to understand the other person's point of view

Proverbs 14:29 He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly.

Ie/ When the husband comes home from work and snaps at the wife, instead of the wife reacting back with reverberating insults, she could say, "Rough day at work, huh?" or "Did I do something to make you angry?"

Ie/ Find the reason for your teen's anger. They are being emotionally stretched by their raging hormones and yet lack the experience in life to handle the anger. They get upset at the slightest thing – a comment from a parent, the appearance of betrayal by a friend, the work load from the teacher...etc. When they come home angry, ask the why.

2. Remain "cool" as you gather the facts

Proverbs 17:27 He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.

Proverbs 29:20 Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Ie/ You can blow up at a bad report card or you can assess the facts as to why your child got a bad report card. If it's the school work, you can talk to the teacher about getting your child help. If it's the Game Boy or the telephone, you can get righteously angry and remove those distractions until the results improve. The goal is to stay school so you can assess.

Ie/ A coworker is labeling you as a liability to the team. Your first result is to hurl and insult back. A biblical response is to not act on hearsay, but go assess the accuracy of the information.

3. Forebear minor disagreements or offenses

Proverbs 19:11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression.

- Ephesians 4 calls this forbearance (4:1) and longsuffering. It will take a long time to make you suffer.
- Forgiveness (4:32)

Proverbs 17:14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

- Ie/ A boy asked his father how wars are started. His father replies that in World War I the Germans invaded Belgium. Mom, who was listening while washing the dishes, interrupted and said, "Why don't you tell him the truth, the war started because somebody got murdered." The father reacted to the mother's interruption and said "Who's answering the question, you or me?" The mother reacted angrily, slamming the dishes into the sink, slamming the kitchen door behind her. There was an awkward silence between the father and son. The son then said "Never mind dad, I think I know how war is started."

- Thomas Jefferson: "When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, one hundred."
- Mark Twain: "When angry, count four; when very angry, swear."

B. The Spirit Gives Restraint

Galatians 5:22-26 But the **fruit of the Spirit** is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control**. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, **provoking** one another, envying one another."

- Use the fruit of the Spirit as a checklist
- If any of these fruits are missing in the expression of your anger – then it is not a Spirit controlled anger
- The fruit of gentleness
- The fruit of self-control

Proverbs 25:28 Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.

II. Evaluate The Object Of Anger: Do We Get Angry At What God Gets Angry At?

Decide whether this is a righteous reason to be angry. Are your expectations biblical?

A. God Gets Angry At Idolatry (1 Kings 11:9-10; Ex 32:19-20)

1 Kings 11:9-10 "So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded."

Exodus 32:19-20 "So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it."

- Moses gets angry at the worship of the golden calf

Ie/ a friend at church idolized marriage and loneliness, that this person marries an unbeliever and stops going to church – our anger should be aroused to encourage this person to get right with the Lord instead of idolizing relationships

Ie/ your spouse loves money more than the Lord – be angry at idolatry

Ie/ your child would rather play sports than go to church – be angry at idolatry

B. God Gets Angry At Injustice (John 2:14-17)

John 2:14-17 ¹⁴And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. ¹⁵When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. ¹⁶And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" ¹⁷Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."

- Devoted Jewish worshippers would bring their best lamb to be offered to God. These wicked moneychangers would inspect their lambs, rate them as inferior, then sell them a replacement from their stock at an exorbitant price. Then they would go and sell the lamb they got in "trade-in" to another unsuspecting customer.
- Jesus was rightly upset

ie/ upset when kids get picked on at school

ie/ angry when boss shows favoritism or prejudice

ie/ mad at somebody cheating someone over a business deal

C. God Gets Angry At Insensitivity (Mark 3:1-5)

Mark 3:1-5 ¹And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ²So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. ³And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward." ⁴Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent. ⁵And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts.

- Jesus was angry because the religious leaders did not understand the importance of compassion and mercy. They were only concerned about the minor technicalities of their manmade laws.

Ie/ someone you love is insensitive to the mercy of the Lord

Ie/ your child is insensitive to obeying you

Ie/ your spouse refuses to hear your side of the story

III. Exterminate The Destruction Of Anger: Is Our Anger Constructive Or Destructive?

- "Anger is only one letter short of danger" (Joseph Aldreich, *Love For All Your Worth*, p. 96)

A. Irritability Seeks To Inflict Hurt In Others

- Complaining leads to attacks, gossip, cursing, hurtful statements
- Quick-temper blasts a shotgun; throws a grenade without concern of shrapnel

- Irritability sometimes turns angry words into violence
- Irritability turns into hostility which turns into violence
- An abusive spouse or parent isn't abusive because they're irritated. But because they've allowed their irritations to develop into hostility. Hostility then is allowed to be expressed violently.
- Consequences of Sinful Anger (from Neil Warren, *Make Anger Your Ally*)
 - Personal embarrassment and the need for a pride-crunching apology
 - Damaged relationships
 - Termination of a friendship
 - Significant job consequence
 - Costly damage to property
 - Runaways
 - Guilt
 - Divorce
 - Anxiety
 - Personal injury or murder
- The one we ultimately hurt is ourselves
- Ie/ Video of a driver filming a tailgater, the tailgater drives alongside her, gives her the one finger salute, passes her, cuts her off, hits the center divide, spins to the other side of the road and crashes on the other side – all caught on film with comments from the distracted, but laughing driver/filmmaker
- Irritation meets self-destruction

B. Irritability Destroys Joy

- Joy is a product of contentment and thanksgiving
- Irritability is discontent and ungrateful
- When we grumble and demonstrate grumpiness, we sap the joy out of ministry, marriage, friendship and love
- We forget we have ministry, marriage, friends and love because of God's grace

C. Irritability Does Not Produce Godly Outcomes

James 1:19-20 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not **produce the righteousness of God.**

Two Types Of Anger (from Les Carter, *Good 'n' Angry*)

Aggressive Anger

Seeks to punish a person who does wrong
 Does not care about the other person's point of view
 Is stubborn, immovable, and demanding
 Is condemning and judgmental
 Has high expectations of everyone

 Cares about what happens to oneself
 Holds grudges

Assertive Anger

Seeks to help a person who does wrong
 Tries to be understanding

 Is flexible and willing to seek alternatives
 Recognizes we all have faults
 Knows that even the finest people sometimes makes mistakes
 Cares about the welfare of others
 Knows the value of forgiving

Does not notice one's own area of weakness

Recognizes that one can always improve

- God commands us to get angry
- Who among us would have expected a command to get angry?

- *emotion* = to move out
- Moses' anger moved him to destroy the idol and execute judgment

- Godly anger moves us towards righteous action
 - If we're angry at the political situation, we need to be moved to **pray** more. There is no greater way of impact our world than to pray. The world events are in God's hands.
 - If we're angry at sin in our workplace, school or neighborhood, we need to be moved to **evangelize**. Sinners will act like sinners. Only the transformation through Christ will bring about righteousness.
 - If we're angry at sin in our church or family, we need to be moved to **confront** and **admonish** the one who is in sin before the Lord. The unity of the Body and the spiritual health of the offender is at stake.
 - If we're angry at ourselves, we need to **change** our attitude and behavior. What sin needs to be repented of? What improvements need to be made?

- "Anger offers a wide variety of possibilities. It can create chaos in your life, or you can learn to express it in highly constructive ways. It can provide all the power you need to remove troublesome barriers in your path. You can move forward methodically when you have learned to use anger effectively." (Neil Clark Warren, *Make Anger Your Ally*, p. 20)

Conclusion:

1. **Take responsibility for your own irritability. No one makes us irritable. We make ourselves irritable.**

- David Hocking on 1 Cor 13:5 "not easily provoked": "The verb is also in the middle voice in Greek, meaning that it does not let itself get continually provoked. In other words, if you get provoked, it's your problem! You did it to yourself! It's easy to blame others or the circumstance around you." (*Chapter 13*, p. 147)

- "If we become angry it's because we had anger already within us, and we allowed someone else to pull it out of us. But no one can *make* us angry." (David Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, p. 112)

- When we get angry at golf – we can't blame our partner, our golf clubs, the lay of the hole, the tree, the rough, the trap, the water hazard or the weather. If we hit the tree, we should probably apologize to the tree instead of blaming it. If we hit another golfer, we'd apologize to them – not blame them for getting in the way.

- "You want to avoid the hostile extreme by accepting responsibility *before* showing anger." (Carter, p. 33)

2. Evaluate why we get irritated. Is it for a good and godly reason?

- Though anger itself may not necessarily be sinful, there are three avenues: Motivation, Mindset or Manifestation
- Jay Adams: "Clearly, all our emotions are from God; in and of themselves they are not negative. However, because of human sin, emotions may be aroused for the wrong reasons, released in the wrong ways, etc. Emotions become 'negative', i.e. harmful to others and to the one who exhibits them, under such circumstances." (Forward in Ken Campbell's *Those Ugly Emotions: How To Manage Your Emotions*, Christian Focus, 2001)

a. The Motivation Of Anger May Be Sinful

1. The Absence Of A Just Cause Makes Anger Sinful

Matthew 5:21-22 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment."

- hatred is one of the moral qualifiers here in this passage
- hatred is sinful (righteous anger is a result of love)
- you've heard the phrase: "Hate the sin, not the sinner."

- the other moral qualifier is "without a cause"
- this would understand an insertion of: "without a [righteous] cause"
- the causes of sinful anger are usually void of a righteous cause
- the idols of pride, feeling, personal rights are selfish and sinful causes
- to not pursue the glory of God is to be angry without a [just] cause

2. Anger That Is Motivated By The Flesh, Our Pride And/Or Our Selfishness Is Sinful

Galatians 5:19-26 "19Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: ...20 ...hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21envy, murders, drunkenness...those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ie/ The prodigal son's older brother because jealous because of his selfishness.

Luke 15:28-30 "28"But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. 29"So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. 30'But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

b. The Mindset Of Anger May Be Sinful

- Sinful vs. righteous anger has to do with quality
 - Righteous anger will have a divine quality to it
 - Sinful anger will have a degrading quality to it

1. **Anger That Is Not Under The Control Of The Spirit Of God Is Sinful**

Galatians 5:22-26 But the **fruit of the Spirit** is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control**. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

- Use the fruit of the Spirit as a checklist
- If any of these fruits are missing in the expression of your anger – then it is not a Spirit controlled anger

2. **Anger That Resists God's Will Is Sinful**

Jonah 4:1-4 1But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. 2So he prayed to the Lord, and said, "Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. 3"Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!" 4Then the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"

- Jonah is upset that his preaching was successful. The Ninevites repented of their sin and didn't get judged by God like Jonah was thinking should have happened.

3. **Anger That Does Not Produce A Righteous Outcome Is Sinful**

James 1:19-20 "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

- The glory of God, the repentance of sin, the unity of the Body of Christ is a righteous product of godly anger
- Anger that does not produce the righteous results is sinful – because it produces sinful results

4. **Anger That Is Vengeful**

Romans 12:17-21 ¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

²⁰Therefore 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.' ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

c. **The Manifestation Of Anger May Be Sinful**

- "Righteous anger can become unrighteous anger in two ways: 1) by the *ventilation* of anger; 2) by the *internalization* of anger. These two opposite extremes are known more popularly as **blowing up** and **claming up**. When one blows up, his emotional energies are aimed and fired at someone else. When he clams up, bodily tensions are released within oneself. In both cases, the emotional energies of anger are wasted. In both they are used 'destructively.' In neither instance are they used constructively to solve problems." (Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor Manual*, pp. 349-350)

1. **Expressed Anger** – Anger taken out on others

Proverbs 29:11 A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

Proverbs 25:28 Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.

Proverbs 29:20 Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Proverbs 29:22 An angry man stirs up strife, And a furious man abounds in transgression.

Proverbs 14:17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated.

Proverbs 14:29 He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.

a. **Harmful Anger**

Psalm 37:8 "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—it only causes harm."

- Cain slew Abel (Gen 4)
- Saul got angry and tried to kill his son, Jonathan, as well as David (1 Sam 20)
- Simeon & Levi – angry, self-willed, murderous (Gen 49)

b. **Quick Temper**

Titus 1:7 "For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent"

- “quick temper” = passionate, flies off the handle, loses cool
- word implies persistent behavior

c. Physical Expression (Titus 1:7)

- “violent” = lit. means a “striker”

ie/ Christ overturned tables, not people (Jn 2)

- ie/ Note about spanking: Spanking is a responsibility of a parent in disciplining a child. We are not to spank unless our anger is under control (not absent, but controlled). It is purposeful, loving and controlled. This is only for parents and children, not for spouses or friends or church discipline.

d. Breeding Anger

- anger breeds anger

z “Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

- same word for *provoke* and *wrath*
- fathers would provoke their children to be provoking

Proverbs 29:22 “An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression.”

2. Repressed Anger – Anger taken out on yourself and others (indirectly)

(Material adapted from Norman Wright, *Living Beyond Worry And Anger* and James Cecy, *The Emotions*)

- “Repression is a form of denial. If a person denies that he is angry, then he feels no obligation to deal with his anger....Repression may have its short-term rewards, but in the long run repressed anger is usually especially powerful and bitter. By repressing it, a person is pushing anger from the conscious to the subconscious. There it can fester and worsen without that person’s knowledge.” (Les Carter, *Good 'n' Angry*, p. 94)

a. Scape-Goating – We blameshift responsibility for our anger onto somebody else

ie/ mad at your boss, take it out on your children

ie/ mad at your spouse, take it out on your dog

b. Spring-Loading – We stuff down our anger so we can excuse our explosion later

- there is a momentum and intensity that can build up
- explosions are a result of pressing down the anger

- later on, we will address the solution is not blowing off steam
- pent up anger can be resolved through confession of sin and giving it over to the Lord

- but there is a recognition of an intensity and momentum that builds up from stuffing anger

ie/ catapult, rubber band and paper wad

c. Stress Sickness – Repressed anger affects our physical health

- high blood pressure, migraine, ulcers, colitis, indigestion, insomnia
- too much adrenaline burns out the body
- blood pressure rises from 130 to 230
- Hebrew language describes anger as from the “bowels” – it knows the effect of illness
- Warren calls this form of anger manifestation “somatizer” – one who turns anger inward and it manifests itself in physical problems
 - “One of the most common causes [of headaches] is tension. When your body is activated by anger, you are prepared for war with primitive forces. Your whole musculature is rigid and ready.” (Warren, p. 63)

d. Subtle Revenge – Passive aggression seeks dispassionate harm

- Strategic pouting
- Sarcastic jabs
- Stealth revenge

ie/ you get cut off by a car on the road – instead of fuming, you speed up, cut the person off and smile at them as you drive by or you speed up to cut them off between you and a big rig in front of them

- revenge feels good
- “I don’t get mad, I get even.”
- This a person who smiles at you while plotting on you
- Students who cut school or are constantly tardy are passive-aggressive
- Clarence Darrow: “I’ve never killed a man, but I have read obituaries with great pleasure.”
- “Underhandlers are typically the most clever mismanagers of anger. They are like magicians – almost impossible to catch in the act, but

somehow they're doing it to you. Many underhanders are unaware of their anger. They think they're just being funny. They argue that they didn't mean a thing by what they said or did. They try to make you think that you're imagining things. But when you feel invisibly punched or cut up or poked at or deflated or put down, trust your feelings. And look around for an underhander." (Warren, p. 81)

e. Self-Pity – Anger turns into a depressive immobilization

- you get mad at God or the person who did not fulfill your expectation
- the anger destroys you from within
- "If you are a *self-punisher*, you may not be aware of it. We often beat up on our self-conceptions in quiet and subtle ways, so imperceptibly that sometimes we become aware of it only when we meet up with a crisis in our lives and realize that our self-image is shriveled and drawn." (Warren, p. 69)

f. Silent Hatred – Bitterness strikes out at others internally for an extended period

ie/ Rubin "Hurricane" Carter was a former boxing champion and a very angry man that was falsely convicted of 3 counts of murder. Denzel Washington depicted his struggle in a recent movie as he spend 20 years in prison for something he didn't do.

How angry would you be if you were "Hurricane" – imprisoned for 20 years for something you didn't do? How much bitterness should he be permitted to have?

In his own words, here's what Hurricane wrote: "The question invariably arises, it has before and it will again: 'Rubin, are you bitter?' And in answer to that I will say, 'After all that's been said and done – the fact that the most productive years of my life, between the ages of twenty-nine and fifty, have been stolen; the fact that I was deprived of seeing my children grow up – wouldn't you think I would have a right to be bitter? Wouldn't anyone under those circumstances have a right to be bitter? In fact, it would be very easy to be bitter. But that has never been my nature, or my lot, to do things the easy way. If I have learned nothing else in my life, I've learned that bitterness only consumes the vessel that contains it. And for me to permit bitterness to control or to infect my life in any way whatsoever would be to allow those who imprisoned me to take even more than the 22 years they've already taken. Now that would make me an accomplice to their crime.'" (cited by David Jeremiah, *Slaying The Giants In Your Life*, p. 117)

Two Types Of Anger (from Les Carter, Good 'n' Angry)

Aggressive Anger

Assertive Anger

Seeks to punish a person who does wrong
Does not care about the other person's point of view

Is stubborn, immovable, and demanding
Is condemning and judgmental
Has high expectations of everyone

Cares about what happens to oneself
Holds grudges
Does not notice one's own area of weakness

Seeks to help a person who does wrong
Tries to be understanding

Is flexible and willing to seek alternatives
Recognizes we all have faults
Knows that even the finest people sometimes makes mistakes

Cares about the welfare of others
Knows the value of forgiving
Recognizes that one can always improve

* Consequences of Sinful Anger (from Neil Warren, *Make Anger Your Ally*)

- Personal embarrassment and the need for a pride-crunching apology
- Damaged relationships
- Termination of a friendship
- Significant job consequence
- Costly damage to property
- Runaways
- Guilt
- Divorce
- Anxiety
- Personal injury or murder

3. **Foresee the effect of our irritation. Will it produce righteous results?**

4. **How Can I Deal With My Struggle Of Anger?**

- Thomas Jefferson: "When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, one hundred."
- Mark Twain said: "When angry, count four; when very angry, swear."
- David Jeremiah: (*Slaying The Giants In Your Life*, pp. 110ff)
 1. Don't Nurse Your Anger
 2. Don't Rehearse Your Anger
 3. Don't Converse About Your Anger (Eph 4:29)
 4. Don't Disperse Your Anger (Prov 19:11)
 5. Reverse Your Anger

A. Separate Responsibility For Your Anger From Others Unto Yourself: Only You Can Make Yourself Angry

- "If we become angry it's because we had anger already within us, and we allowed someone else to pull it out of us. But no one can *make* us angry." (David Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life*, p. 112)
- "This can be done by positive self-talk such as, 'I'm feeling really angry, but I do not have to give in to these feelings. I may be hot, but I don't have to blow. I want to choose my reaction rather than let my blood pressure dictate my response. I can

also ask myself whether the situation is worth the energy I am expending on the experience." (Paul Wilson, *How To Stop Being Your Own Worst Enemy*, p. 104)

- When we get angry at golf – we can't blame our partner, our golf clubs, the lay of the hole, the tree, the rough, the trap, the water hazard or the weather. If we hit the tree, we should probably apologize to the tree instead of blaming it. If we hit another golfer, we'd apologize to them – not blame them for getting in the way.
- "You want to avoid the hostile extreme by accepting responsibility *before* showing anger." (Carter, p. 33)

B. Slow Down The Anger Process (James 1:19-20)

James 1:19-20 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Proverbs 19:11 The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression.

1. Seek to understand the other person's point of view

Proverbs 14:29 He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly.

Ie/ When the husband comes home from work and snaps at the wife, instead of the wife reacting back with reverberating insults, she could say, "Rough day at work, huh?" or "Did I do something to make you angry?"

Ie/ Find the reason for your teen's anger. They are being emotionally stretched by their raging hormones and yet lack the experience in life to handle the anger. They get upset at the slightest thing – a comment from a parent, the appearance of betrayal by a friend, the work load from the teacher...etc. When they come home angry, ask the why.

2. Remain "cool" as you gather the facts

Proverbs 17:27 He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.

Proverbs 29:20 Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Ie/ You can blow up at a bad report card or you can assess the facts as to why your child got a bad report card. If it's the school work, you can talk to the teacher about getting your child help. If it's the Game Boy or the telephone, you can get righteously angry and remove those distractions until the results improve. The goal is to stay school so you can assess.

Ie/ A coworker is labeling you as a liability to the team. Your first result is to hurl and insult back. A biblical response is to not act on hearsay, but go assess the accuracy of the information.

3. Decide whether this is a righteous reason to be angry. Are your expectations biblical?

- Idolatry (1 Kings 11:9-10)
- Injustice (John 2:14-17)
- Insensitivity (Mark 3:1-5)

4. Ignore minor disagreements or offenses

Proverbs 19:11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression.

- Ephesians 4 calls this forbearance and longsuffering. It will take a long time to make you suffer.

Proverbs 17:14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

- Ie/ A boy asked his father how wars are started. His father replies that in World War I the Germans invaded Belgium. Mom, who was listening while washing the dishes, interrupted and said, "Why don't you tell him the truth, the war started because somebody got murdered." The father reacted to the mother's interruption and said "Who's answering the question, you or me?" The mother reacted angrily, slamming the dishes into the sink, slamming the kitchen door behind her. There was an awkward silence between the father and son. The son then said "Never mind dad, I think I know how war is started."

C. Seek The Source Of Your Anger (Genesis 4:4-7)

Genesis 4:4-7 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.

- notice that Cain was challenged to examine the source of His anger
- God, in His divine counseling, did 3 things:
 - Asked Cain the source or reason for his anger – "Why are you angry?"
 - Acknowledged Cain's hurt feeling – "Why has your countenance fallen?"
 - Analyzed Cain's options – Do best for the Lord and resist sin or allow oneself to be dominated by sin.

1. The Reasons For Anger:

a. Disappointment

- We can get angry when we are disappointed with someone not meeting our expectations
- We can get angry when relationships fail – breakup, divorce, betrayal of a friend
- We can get angry with God when we are upset with His direction in our lives or we have different expectations of God than who He is

b. Frustration

- The perfectionist gets mad when execution of plans doesn't occur the way they plan it
- Disciplined athletes might lose their temper towards the end of the sporting event when they are frustrated with losing
- Children get mad when they are frustrated with their toy or art work
- The golfer gets mad when his shot ends up in the rough or trap
- Six Levels From Frustration To Anger
(by Paul Hauck, quoted by Paul Wilson, *How To Stop Being Your Own Worse Enemy*, p. 100)
 - "I want something."
 - "I didn't get what I wanted and am frustrated."
 - "It is awful and terrible not to get what I want."
 - "You shouldn't frustrate me! I must have my way."
 - "You're bad for frustrating me."
 - "Bad people ought to be punished."

c. Pain

- "If you see anger, look for the pain." (R. C. Sproul)

d. Fear

- Fear causes us to feel out of control and we get angry to try to bring control or dominance over the situation.

2. The Root Of Sin: Idolatry

- We must analyze whether our frustration, disappointment or hurt is for selfish reasons.
 - a. The idol of feelings – we've been too hurt and damaged to not be angry
 - b. The idol of pride – leads to jealousy & envy
 - c. The right to damage or vent on others – leads to rage, fury, clamor
 - d. The right to vengeance or retaliate – leads to revenge, gossip, insult

D. Solve The Issue That Caused The Anger (Prov 27:4-6; Gen 4:8-15)

Ie/ A lady wrote an article that expressed how she solved the issue of anger that was routed in getting frustrated and spending 2.5 hours every day preparing meals and cleaning up. Part of the problem is that she was so obsessive in washing the pesticide on every carrot and cleaning every germ, that it would take her a long time to prepare the food. She was get so resentful, that she would be angry by the time dinner came around. She knew she had to stop that anger.

So she gave her anger over to the Lord and sought to resolve the issue. The first thing she did was to understand her obsessive nature made her consume time with anxiety. The second thing she did was to enlist help from her family, which they were willing to do but were not asked because of her obsession to have control. The third thing was for her to thank the Lord for the privilege of a wonderful family and the joy she could have in preparing meals for them. This solved the issue of her anger. (See CCM newsletter, Challenger, Oct/Nov 99, Isabel Ng, "Using Anger God's Way").

- anger moves us to action

Proverbs 27:4-6 "Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, but who can stand before jealousy? Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy."

- If you don't solve your anger, problems will arise – often exponentially and dangerously.
- "Anger is one letter short of danger."

Genesis 4:8-15 ⁸ Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. ¹¹ So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth. ¹³ And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! ¹⁴ Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me." ¹⁵ And the LORD said to him, "Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him." ¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.

- Cain allowed anger to over come him and turned from the Lord
- Cain killed his brother (8)
- Cain was investigated by God (9a)
- Cain lies and pleads "not guilty" (9b)
 - "brother's keeper" is a sarcastic term related to Abel being the "keeper of sheep"
- Cain is judged (10-12)

- Cain's hardened heart complains to the Lord instead of complying to the Lord (13)
- "One controls his anger best when he is *solution-oriented* rather than *problem-oriented*. Christians who are problem-oriented tend to talk about the problem, feel sorry for themselves, start up blameshifting operation, and focus their energies upon who is at fault. Solution-oriented Christians size up the problem, try to fix responsibilities, and then *turn as quickly as possible* toward solving the problem biblically." (Adams, p. 354)

E. **Settle Your Anger Immediately (Eph 4:26; Ps 27:8; Mt 5:21-24)**

Ephesians 4:26 "Do not let the sun go down on your wrath."

Psalms 27:8 "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not yourself, it leads only to evil doing."

Dangers of not settling your anger immediately:

- There is a failure in an attempt to resolve the controversy – the problem persists
- Reaction dominates your marriage, not communication
- Children are taught the pattern of destructive intimidation, not constructive resolution
- Your testimony before others is damaged as one who is controlled by emotions, not the Spirit of God
- Your ability to worship God will be impaired
- Your marriage will struggle intimately
 - "Letting the sun go down on anger is the most frequent cause of sexual disharmony in marriage. It is hard to bring all of the baggage of resentment into the bed at night and expect to have freedom of joyous sexual expression under those circumstances." (Adams, p. 359)

Matthew 5:21-24 ²¹"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' ²²"But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. ²³"Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴"leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

Ie/ While Leonardo da Vinci was painting "The Last Supper", he got angry at a particular individual. His violent rage would be expressed in giving this individual

harsh and furious tongue lashings. When he returned to the canvas to paint the face of Jesus, he was unable to. How could one seek to paint Christ and regard sinful anger in his heart. Da Vince needed to put down the paintbrush, find the man he was mad at, ask for forgiveness and then with a clear conscience return to the canvas to paint Christ.

F. Stop The Sinful Expressions Of Your Anger (Prov 29:22, Eph 4:31)

Proverbs 29:22 "An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression."

Ephesians 4:31 "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice."

- Cain allowed his sinful anger to dominate him to the point of murder

G. State Your Confession Of Sinful Anger To The Lord (1 Jn 1:9)

- Jesus pointed out how anger will destroy our fellowship and ministry with the Lord – deal with it before you move on in your walk with the Lord

- admit our sinful anger to the Lord – you are not telling Him something He doesn't know already

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"