

How to manage anger

discussion guide

based on **Proverbs and Eph 4.20-2** (Linked to sermon of 26/11/23)
which can be accessed at www.stjamesbythepark.org/talks

These notes are based on the excellent structure of Tim & Kathy Keller's book "The Way of Wisdom, A Year of daily devotions in the book of Proverbs." All references are from Proverbs unless indicated.

Pg 118: - The Danger of Anger:

"Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one with a quick temper displays folly ... A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel ... fools give full vent to their rage but the wise bring calm in the end. An angry person stirs up conflict, and a hot-tempered person commits many sins" (14: 29; 15:18; 29: 11 & 22).

- When is anger most likely to be dangerous?

"God's anger is for a moment but his favour lasts a life time" Psalm 30:5.

- How is God's anger different from ours?

Pg 119 – One's own worst enemy:

19:19 "A hot-tempered person must pay the penalty; rescue them and you will have to do it again" 19:19. The underlying Hebrew is "a characteristically angry person carries their own punishment with them".

- Can you think of an example from current affairs or history?

Pg 120 – The Goodness of Anger:

11:4 & 22:14 "Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death ... The mouth of an adulterous woman is a deep pit; a man who is under God's curse falls into it". The writers of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are able to observe these liaisons being formed because they live in a city centre.

- Whose anger might be in play here?

"In your anger do not sin*": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold**"

(*Psalm 4:4 – Paul often quotes from the Septuagint) (** a military expression – think forward operating base)

Ephesians 4: 26 & 27 Authorised Version

"26 Be ye angry, and sin not: *let not the sun go down on your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil" **

- Why do you think the Kellers connect these verses under this heading.

Pg 121 – Helping the Angry:

15:1 "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger"

Keller and Keller comment on Gentle and Harsh words and ref. Ephesian 4: 15

15:1 is possibly the verse to hold on to.

Pg 122 – Perspective 20:22 (ref to Romans 2.4):

“Do not say “I will pay you back for this wrong!” Wait for the Lord and he will avenge you.”

God has the power to bring judgement in the right time and manner that might lead them to repentance – Romans 2:4 and Jonah 4:1 – 4. Jonah complains about this.

- How difficult is this?

Pg 123 – Gloating 24: 17–18 (Cut out the schadenfreude) (ref 1 Corinthians 10:12 “if you think you’re standing firm .. Suffering servant ref Isaiah 53:1 – 10 esp 4).

Pg 124 – Annoyance / Conflict:

10:12 & 12 :16 “Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs ... Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult”

- Do you come across people who fit this saying, one way or the other? How about you? Is there anything to reflect on here?

Annoyance and conflict indicate abrasiveness in disagreements.

Bruce Baloiian notes “A hot-headed individual”:

- a) is a fool (12:16 above)
- b) Ecclesiastes 7:9, stirs up strife
- c) 15:18 and is wide open to failure and destruction in his life 25:28

Think Nabal, David and Abigail in 1 Samuel 25, an encounter that illustrates quite a few of these Proverbs.

Pg 125 – Love your Enemy:

25:21 & 22 “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this you will heap burning coals on his head and the Lord will repay you”

“We are to go beyond refraining to curse – we are to bless (Romans 12:14)

“We are not only to refuse to pay evil for evil - but to overcome evil with good (Romans 12: 14 & 17)

Control of one’s anger brings health (12: 18) ref to Javert and Jean Valjean –

But, say Tim & Kathy beware of being kind out of a desire to appear “more noble than thou” – that isn’t love it’s a subtle revenge.

- What is the way to clear the air and avoid an unspoken thing in your relationship?

Do good to them (4 References from Romans 12: 14; 12: 17; 12:17)

Rm 12:18 then a summary 12:18 - doing good as far as you are able.

I pray your times together is fruitful, blessings, Stuart.