

Messenger Of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16).

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Anger

"Anger is often more hurtful than the injury that caused it." – Proverb, American

"Anger is a stone cast into a wasp's nest." – Proverb, Malabar

"People hardly ever do anything in anger, of which they do not repent." – Richardson

"Anger is a momentary madness." – Horace, *Epistles*, Book I, Epistle II

Anger is scary, and for some more scary than others. It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who once remarked, "We boil at different degrees." (*Society and Solitude*, "Eloquence")

We don't relish the thought of losing our cool, but at times it happens to all of us. Now anger itself is not wrong, for even our Lord got angry and overturned the tables in the temple on two separate occasions (John 2:15; Matt. 21:12).

The key with handling anger is spelled out by the apostle Paul. "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26-27). Anger is such a violent emotion that, if we are not careful, it can get out of control. It is important that we realize that the key is not letting our anger cause us to sin.

It is interesting that our not sinning in anger is contingent upon self-control. Is that not a part of the fruit of the Spirit? "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).

What this suggests to us is that we need to learn to get a handle on our anger. Christians cannot afford to let their emotions get out of control. It is in those moments of violent emotion, that we are more prone to sin; i.e. to say something, or do something that would be unbecoming to a child of God.

Horace was very much attuned to the problem when he referred to it as "momentary madness." When we want to strike out at someone, or strike back, the temptation in those moments is tremendous.

Did you ever wonder how Jesus managed to retain self-control, both in the situation with the money changers in the temple, and in the horrible abuse he endured leading up to and on the cross? Peter tells us that in the most stressful of moments, our Lord did not sin (1 Pet. 2:21-24).

Is it wrong to get angry? No, for Jesus did, but the Bible certainly warns us of what can happen. "An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression" (Prov. 29:22).