

Sunday, July 21, 2019—Body Building: Corrupt Communication, Part 11 (Don't Let the Sun Go Down Upon Your Wrath)

Introduction

- Romans 14:19—the second segment of this series is devoted to looking at things that make for peace among the brethren and edify the body of Christ.
- Ephesians 4:26-27—last week we started talking about a biblical model for dealing with anger. In doing so, we considered the following points:
 - Considered three Biblical examples of how anger does not exist in isolation:
 - Genesis 4:5—anger was Cain's response after God rejected his sacrifice.
 - I Samuel 18:5-9—King Saul's anger was kindled when David received more praise than he did from the people.
 - Jonah 4—Jonah's anger was kindled against God when God did not destroy Nineveh like Jonah wanted.
 - We saw that anger itself is not a sin. Rather how one handles their anger may or may not be sinful. God is sinless, yet the Bible tells us that He possess the capacity to get angry.
 - Exodus 4:14
 - Numbers 25:3
 - Mark 3:5
 - Anger is a “signal emotion” that alerts us to injustice, ungodliness, and unrighteousness.
 - Even though God intended anger to be a righteous response to something that's wrong, we all have felt anger that is far from righteous. Our task as believers is to separate anger from the sins that accompany it.
 - Lastly, we began looking at some Biblical instructions for how to deal with anger.
 - *Be Slow to Wrath*—James 1:19—this habit develops our ability to handle anger when it first begins to rise. It equips us to evaluate what has happened and choose appropriate responses.
 - *Be Angry and Sin Not*—Ephesians 4:26—we must be aware of the sins that so easily attach themselves to anger.

- *Don't Let the Sun Go Down Upon Your Wrath*—Ephesians 4:26—letting anger linger to long with touch off a corrosive effect in our lives. We need to direct our focus on finding solutions that will bring peace to our inner man and restoration of relationships.

Be Slow to Wrath

- James 1:19—the word “slow” literally means to hesitate or delay. The essence of this wise advice is to be patient.
- Restraining anger means hesitating long enough to carefully evaluate a situation.
- The following five steps can help us hesitate, evaluate, and control our anger:
- *Remember God's statements to angry people*
 - Genesis 4:6-7—Why are you angry?
 - Jonah 4:4—Do you have good reason to be angry?
- *Check to see if you have sufficient facts to justify your anger*—seeking to understand both sides of a matter slows anger but is also reflected in words that show self-control and a fair spirit.
- *Try to understand the situation from other points of view*
- *Pinpoint the specific cause of your anger*—the sooner we get to the source of our anger the better we will be able to deal with it.
- *Verbalize the sense of oncoming anger*—pride makes it hard to say, “I am angry.”
 - Proverbs 16:32

Be Angry and Sin Not

- Ephesians 4:26
- This command draws a clear distinction between anger and sin. Anger in and of itself is not sin. Just as we can be tempted without sinning, we can become angry with following it up with a sinful response.
- Lingering anger turns into the self-destructive sins of bitterness and hatred. Speech sins like lying, slander, murmuring, threatening, cursing, taking God name in vain, and contentious words are all products of anger handles improperly.

- Murder, envy, strife, and revenge are common sins of an angry heart.
- Psalm 141:3—“if you can’t say anything nice don’t say anything at all.”

Don't Let the Sun Go Down Upon Your Wrath

- Ephesians 4:26
- God wants us to deal with each day fresh, not with unresolved anger and guilt from the day before.
- Psalm 37:8
- Ephesians 4:31
- When we become angry, our natural tendency is to direct our mental and emotional energy toward the source of our anger. The person that has stimulated the anger becomes an overriding preoccupation. We think about the perceived injustice everywhere we go, so we take it out on other people who have done nothing to deserve our anger. We plan what to say the next time we see the offending person, what he or she might say in reply, and what our follow up comment will be. We fantasize various schemes of revenge.
- Meanwhile, while we are doing all these things, we become servants to the one(s) on whom we have focused our anger. The other person may not even know we’re angry, and even if he does, the matter doesn’t consume his time and energy nearly as much as it does our own.
- The intensity of our emotion will usually progress through five stages.
 - Fret—we will mull the problem over in our minds
 - Envy
 - Anger—this is the slow burn
 - Wrath—this is the explosion
 - Evil—the plot to carry our revenge
- Read pages 110-111 from Stowell’s book
- Psalms 37:1, 8—the psalmist knew what it was like to be the victim of evildoers and workers of iniquity. Yet he tells us that anger, wrath, fretting, and evil doing are all outside of God’s will.

- Psalms 37:3-7—set forth five positive responses that liberate our focus from the source of our anger and redirect it to God.
 - *Trust (v.3)*—means depending on some firm realities that are rooted in God’s character and His word:
 - Genesis 18:25—God is just. Whenever wrong is done, He is aware of it.
 - Romans 12:19—God’s word promises that He will repay the wrongs that have been done.
 - Focusing our attention on these realities diminishes our desire to retaliate, even the score, effect change, or protect ourselves.
 - *Delight (v. 4)*—we can always rejoice for God’s word and his work in our lives regardless of what someone else has done to us. Fixing our attention on the goodness of God will help us deal with our anger.
 - Romans 8:31—“. . .if God be for us, who can be against us?”
 - *Commit (v. 5)*—if you succeed in trusting and delighting you can expect the residual brain wiring of your old man to tap into your fleshy sense of justice and ask, “Are you going to let them get away with that?” It is in these instances where we need to commit to trusting and delighting in the Lord and not allow rouge brain messages to sidetrack us.
 - *Rest (v. 7)*—this is the result of following the previous three steps, the inner peace the comes from focusing your attention on God and not the offense or the offender.
 - *Wait Patiently (v. 7)*—this means committing to these five steps regardless of God’s timing. Some of the sources of our anger might not be resolved until the Ages to Come. In the meantime, focusing our attention on God and his Word enables us to enjoy peace, a clear conscience, and experiential maturity. Our commitment to waiting patiently should be based on our desire to obey God’s word, not depended upon immediate action or lack thereof on the part of our offender.