

SLOW TO WRATH

JAMES 1:19 & PROVERBS 14:7

Text: James 1:19, Proverbs 14:7

James 1:19

¹⁹ Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

Proverbs 14:7

⁷ Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.

Introduction:

I recently read about a plot to murder a third grade Center Elementary School teacher in Waycross, Georgia, was thwarted when a student told authorities about the plan just before the start of the school day.

The students - eleven of 12 students, girls and boys (8 and 9 years old), schemed to murder their teacher, Belle Carter, taking with them to school a steak knife, a roll of duct tape, handcuffs, ribbon and a heavy crystal paperweight.

The detailed plan gave to the students' specific assignments, such as taping paper over windows and wiping up blood after it was all over.

Why would they want to do such a thing, because they were angry at the teacher for scolding one of the students, who stood in a chair?

We live in an angry society.

Ben Franklin once said, "Anger is never without a reason, but seldom a good one."

We must remember that anger is one letter short of **DANGER**.

Notice:

1. THE PURPOSE OF ANGER

Ephesians 4:26

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

Ephesians 4:31

³¹ Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

In verse 26 we read be angry and in verse 31 we read to let all wrath and anger be put away.

So which is it?

To answer this question, we have to see what ANGER really is. We think of ANGER as being a BAD thing ... but

it's not. What's BAD about anger is the way we EXPRESS it, sometimes.

ANGER is NEUTRAL ... there's nothing wrong with ANGER itself. ANGER has a good and useful purpose ... if it is used correctly. If it is NOT USED CORRECTLY, it can lead to sin (4:26) ... when it is mixed with "malice" (4:31).

ANGER is a physical state of readiness ... when we are angry, our body gets prepared to ACT ... it is a God-given instinct for SURVIVAL. ANGER supplies POWER and PREPAREDNESS to our bodies.

Illustration:

What happens if you see a stranger fighting with your child or grandchild. Maybe they are trying to force them into their car. You get MAD ... you get ANGRY!

NOW ... is ANGER a good thing? You bet it is! What happens? Your heart beats faster ... the adrenaline begins to flow ... more sugar is released in your body ... your blood pressure raises ... the pupils of your eyes open wide ... you become highly alert. Your body is prepared for action ... power becomes available for you to assert yourself.

The PURPOSE of ANGER is POWER and PREPAREDNESS. ANGER can be very beneficial, when used the right way. “Be ye angry!”

2. THE PROBLEM WITH ANGER

ANGER can also be very DANGEROUS. “and sin not”. When all that POWER is mishandled, and not brought under control, it can be very destructive. If anger is EXPRESSED improperly, it can have very severe consequences.

The reason why we look upon ANGER in a negative way is because it is usually expressed in AGGRESSION and HOSTILITY. We see this illustrated many times in the Bible.

MOSES spent 40 days & 40 nights up on Mt. Sinai, where God gave him the 10 Commandments, and the Laws of God. While he was up there, the Children of Israel got tired of waiting, and Aaron made them a golden calf to worship. When Moses came down and saw it, he was ANGRY! (Exodus 32:19-20)

Exodus 32:19-20

¹⁹ And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. ²⁰ And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder, and strawed *it* upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink *of it*.

Moses lost it! He didn't control his anger, but he let it control him. He lost it again when God told him to SPEAK to the rock and water would come from it to quench their thirst. The people complained against Moses for leading them into the desert to die of thirst. Moses got MAD and STRUCK the rock with his rod ... TWICE. Because of the angry disobedience of Moses, he wasn't allowed to enter into the Promised Land.

There can be a DANGER with ANGER ... if we let it CONTROL us ... and we lose CONTROL over it. "Danger" and "anger" are very close ... only a "d" difference between them. When we let the "d" (DEVIL) get in front of our "anger", it spells "danger".

Ephesians 4:27

²⁷ Neither give place to the devil.

3. THE PERMISSION OF ANGER

Sometimes ANGER is PERMISSIBLE ... it is PERMITTED. "Be ye angry, AND SIN NOT." Jesus got ANGRY ... but He never sinned when He did.

Note: Mark 3:1-5

Mark 3:1-5

¹ And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. ² And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. ³ And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. ⁴ And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do

good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. ⁵ And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

Let's take a look at the ANGER of Jesus.

- He Had The Right Motive
- He Controlled His Anger

Jesus could have called down fire from Heaven & destroyed them all. BUT ... He didn't ... He CONTROLLED His ANGER.

4. THE PERIOD OF ANGER

Ephesians 4:26

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

“Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”

There are several things you can do with your ANGER

- Keep It In – You can't IGNORE anger ... it won't let you. If you try to keep it in, it will eat you up from the inside out ... ulcers, blood pressure, heart attack, depression. When you bury ANGER

inside of you, you aren't burying it DEAD ...
you're burying it ALIVE.

- Let It Out – If you try to keep it inside, sooner or later, your ANGER will EXPLODE. You can share it with others ... spread it around! It will ferment inside of you until it comes out in bitterness, rage, violence or hate.
- Control It – REMEMBER, not all ANGER is bad ... it's bad only when you lose control over it. It's YOUR CHOICE ... YOU'RE DECISION ... you have the CONTROL.

The IMPORTANT thing is to CONTROL IT QUICKLY ...
“Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” The sooner you turn your ANGER over to God, the sooner you can put it to GOOD use. AND ... the less chance the Devil has of turn turning it from “anger” to “danger”.
Learn to balance the books by the end of the day.

Close:

There are some things that we should get angry over.

Our sinful habits that cause us to ruin our testimony for Christ

Our lack of faithfulness in praying, reading God's Word

The corruption that we see in the world – pornography, crime, alcohol, drugs, sodomy

The millions who are lost and we don't tell them the Gospel

Our anger needs to be focused on what will glorify God.

Maybe you have an ANGER problem this morning. Maybe you have ANGER buried deep within your heart that has been there a long time. You need to RELEASE it. NOT ... VENT it ... BUT RELEASE it to God. If you don't, it will turn into bitterness, rage and vengeance. If you KEEP it, it will destroy you. You have to turn it over to God.

Colossians 3:12-15

¹² Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. ¹⁴ And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. ¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.