

ME & MY REAL FAMILY #4 – TAME YOUR TEMPER

Sermon by Todd Lester

June 4, 2017

Proverbs 14:29 People with understanding control their anger; a hot temper shows great foolishness.

Anger is a _____ emotion.

HOW DO YOU TAME YOUR TEMPER?

A. _____ TO MANAGE IT

Proverbs 29:11

Anger is a _____.

B. _____ THE (_____) COST

Proverbs 29:22, Proverbs 14:17

Things you can lose:

Anger always a _____ and creates a _____.

C. _____ BEFORE REACTING

Proverbs 19:11

Examine the root causes: i) _____ am I angry?

ii) _____ do I want?

iii) _____ can I get what I want?

D. _____ YOUR ANGER APPROPRIATELY

Ephesians 4:26, Romans 12:17-21

We can express anger in ways that are h _____ or h _____.

E. _____ YOUR MIND

Romans 12:2a, Proverbs 22:24

Anger is a _____ response, so can also be _____.

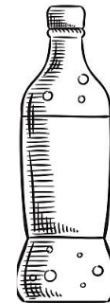
F. _____ ON GOD'S CONTROL

Colossians 3:15, Matthew 12:34, Psalm 51:10a

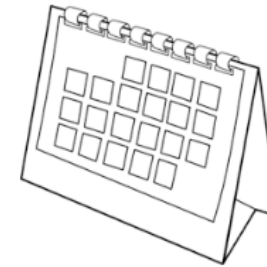
“Lord Jesus, Your _____ is my _____”

Anger (Mis)Management

Experts would say that anger is a normal, healthy part of being human and if expressed in a healthy way, it can be a powerful motivating force. Examine the seven types of anger below and think about those that best describe your experiences. When have some of these types applied to your life (anger you have felt yourself or anger that has been directed at you).



Passive
Unexpressed,
resistant anger.
Eventually ‘snaps’?



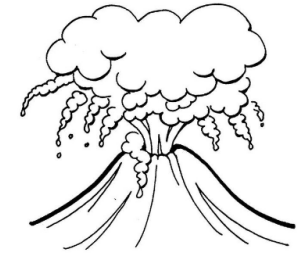
Chronic
Has a ‘habit of anger.’
Holds on to anger for
months and months.



Petrified
Hanging on to a sense
of hatred and
bitterness.



Incidental
Anger about a specific event
or situation, addressed
directly and quickly.



Volatile
Intermittent, explosive
episodes. Expressive,
verbal, sometimes violent.



Vengeful
Obsession that someone
has wronged you



Empathic
Anger on behalf of
someone else (for
example, injustice)

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Proverbs 14:29 People with understanding control their anger; a hot temper shows great foolishness.

Anger is a God-given emotion.

HOW DO YOU TAME YOUR TEMPER?

A. RESOLVE TO MANAGE IT

Proverbs 29:11 Fools vent their anger, but the wise quietly hold it back.

Anger is a choice.

B. REMEMBER THE (RELATIONAL) COST

Proverbs 29:22 An angry person starts fights; a hot-tempered person commits all kinds of sin.

Proverbs 14:17 Short-tempered people do foolish things...

Things you can lose: respect, love, job, health

Anger always alienates and creates apathy.

C. REFLECT BEFORE REACTING

Proverbs 19:11 Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs.

Examine the root causes: i) Why am I angry?

ii) What do I want?

iii) How can I get what I want?

D. RELEASE YOUR ANGER APPROPRIATELY

Ephesians 4:26 And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry,

Romans 12:17-21 Never pay back evil with more evil ... never take revenge.

Leave that to the righteous anger of God ... but conquer evil by doing good.

We can express anger in ways that are helpful or harmful.

E. REPATTERN YOUR MIND

Romans 12:2a ... let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think...

Proverbs 22:24 Don’t befriend angry people or associate with hot-tempered people...

Anger is a learned response, so it can also be unlearned.

F. RELY ON GOD’S CONTROL

Colossians 3:15 And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace.

Matthew 12:34 For whatever is in your heart determines what you say.

Psalms 51: 10a Create in me a clean heart O God

“Lord Jesus, Your love is my peace”

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Icebreaker/Introduction

The 'Anger (Mis)Management' activity is adapted from information at this website: <http://www.everydayhealth.com/news/whats-your-anger-type/>. Read the introductory remarks together and then give time for participants to read through the given types of anger. Do they recognize most of them, do specific instances come to mind? Can they give examples? Do 'passive' and 'volatile' represent opposite extremes, and if so, what would a middle option look like?

Ask if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made which really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

Todd said that nobody teaches us how to handle our anger. Have you found that to be true? (what about parents, teachers? – did anyone teach you about what to do with anger?)

Anger is a God-given emotion. Do you agree with this statement? Do you think anger existed in the Garden of Eden?

Todd said that anger can sometimes be an appropriate response – for example at injustice. When else can it be appropriate?

What do you think of the Old Testament passages which seem to speak of God being angry?

How does our Anabaptist belief in nonviolence relate to anger?

HOW DO YOU TAME YOUR TEMPER?

A. RESOLVE TO MANAGE IT

Focuses on Proverbs 29:11

Anger is a choice. Do you agree? If anger is an emotion do we have a choice in how we feel? Is the choice more about what we do with the anger?

Recall Todd's example of a couple having a big fight and then if the pastor called them on the phone it would defuse. Is this a good illustration of anger being a choice? Would it be true for yourself (ie. can you turn anger on and off?)

Todd said that 'resolve' means to 'choose in advance'. What are some things you can do ahead of time to prepared for when you are confronted with feelings of anger?

B. REMEMBER THE (RELATIONAL) COST

Focuses on Proverbs 29:22, Proverbs 14:17

Recall some of the things Todd said you can lose because of anger - Things you can lose: respect, love (of children, spouse), job, health What else could you possibly lose?

Todd said that Anger always alienates and creates apathy. How does it create apathy?

Todd pointed out that parents are often tempted to use anger in order to motivate their children. Has this been true for you? Have you ever pretended to be angry to get the response you're looking for?

What do you think about preachers who have used God's anger/wrath (or fear of hell) to try to convince unbelievers about God? It is effective? Does it come at a cost?

C. REFLECT BEFORE REACTING

Focuses on Proverbs 19:11

Todd emphasized the importance of stepping back from a difficult situation and giving yourself time to think. What strategies have you found helpful for this? (eg. counting to 10?)

Examine the root causes: i) Why am I angry? ii) What do I want? iii) How can I get what I want? Do you find these 3 questions helpful? Could we adapt iii) to include 'Do I need to get what I want?' Could another appropriate question be "Who or what am I angry with?" (usually would it be: a situation, a person, God, ourselves)

Todd said that usually anger is caused when we are hurt, frustrated or afraid. Would you agree? Would you add to that list?

D. RELEASE YOUR ANGER APPROPRIATELY

Focuses on Ephesians 4:26, Romans 12:17-21

We can express anger in ways that are helpful or harmful. What are some helpful/appropriate ways to express anger? (talking about your feelings – perhaps with a third party, venting [at God], taking a walk, taking some positive action)

Do you think that Jesus' anger in the temple was expressed appropriately?

Discuss Todd's statement that many Christians repress or deny anger.

E. REPATTERN YOUR MIND

Focuses on Romans 12:2a, Proverbs 22:24

Anger is a learned response, so it can also be unlearned. Where did Todd say we learn anger (family, school, media). Where have you learned it? How can it actually be unlearned? (through some of the steps already discussed? Ie. reflecting, releasing. What about recognizing when we have feelings of anger? Can this be helpful in repatterning: 1. recognize, 2. reflect, 3. release

Todd pointed out the importance of our thinking in helping us to deal with anger. How does his statement that 'the way you act is determined by how you feel, which is determined by how you think' apply here?

F. RELY ON GOD'S CONTROL

Focuses on Colossians 3:15, Matthew 12:34

Read Colossians 3:15. How can we (practically) let Christ's peace 'rule in our hearts'? How seriously do you take the instruction that we are called to live in peace?

"Lord Jesus, Your love is my peace" Todd introduced this phrase as a centering prayer/breathing exercise (breath in on 'Lord Jesus' and breath out on 'Your love is my peace'). When can you see this being useful? Have you tried it?