

## Anger (#3)

Joe Slater

Anger can be righteous or sinful. How can you tell the difference? Thus far we've asked, "Why are you angry?" and, "What fruit comes from your anger?" Now consider a third question: "How quickly are you angry?"

Wise Solomon wrote, "*He who is quick-tempered acts foolishly*" (Proverbs 14:17). The same author said, "*Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools*" (Ecclesiastes 7:9).

In stark contrast David wrote, "*The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy*" (Psalm 103:8). And James 1:19-20 admonishes us in "*Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.*"

A short temper is no laughing matter! One may pass it off, saying, "Yes, I blow up, but I calm right back down." Perhaps so, but the same is true of a stick of dynamite! And the damage from the explosion remains.

Finally, we should ask, "How long to you stay angry?" Quoting David in Psalm 4:4, Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:26-27, "*Be angry, and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.*" A grudge harms no one but the person holding it. Harboring ill will serves Satan's purposes shows a lack of trust in God. Rather than follow such a destructive course, let's heed David's counsel as his psalm continues, "*Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Offer the sacrifices of the righteous, and put your trust in the Lord*" (Psalm 4:4b-5).

## Toppling Dominoes

I have always enjoyed watching videos that involve the placing and toppling of dominoes. It amazes me to see the creativity and imagination that goes into these events. Domino toppling requires hard work, dedication, and perseverance to get things just right. Most of all, patience and skill are involved in the exact placement of the dominos. The slightest accident can destroy incredible amounts of planning and work.

Too often, people structure their existence in a similar fashion. Almost every facet of life is fragilely structured – like an extended stand of dominoes. When this proves to be the case, the slightest upheaval in life can lead to a chain reaction. Things seem to be going well, and suddenly, disaster strikes. It can be anything... sickness, family issues, loss of employment, or numerous other issues. One collapse leads to another, and another, and another . . . like the toppling of dominoes.

I realize there's no such thing as a perfect life, and I have, at times, found myself "*weighed in the balances and found wanting*" (Daniel 5:27). I've experienced the tumbling of dominoes in my own life with health issues and life situations. And when these times occur, I'm thankful Jesus is there to help pick up and reorganize the pieces. Faith in Him ultimately leads to either relocating or removing the one that began the chain reaction.

--Kenny Westmoreland (Celina, TN)

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On the door of the nursery in a church building I saw this Scripture: "*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*" (1 Corinthians 15:51).

## A Call For Kindness

Ephesians 4:32 begins with these words: "*and be kind to one another.*" The inspired Paul added to that in 1 Corinthians 13:4 – "*Love . . . is kind.*" He listed kindness as one of the qualities a Christian is to "*put on*" (Colossians 3:14).

Glen Campbell had a catchy song that suggested, "Try a little kindness, then you'll overlook the blindness of narrow-minded people on the narrow-minded streets." Our world needs kindness. Kindness is the product of our love for others. Love and kindness make the world a better place in which to live. As Christians, we are in the world to change it by our wholesome influence. We should live with kindness radiating from our words and actions. We teach the gospel, which is God's expression of His loving kindness to mankind.

Hatred walks our streets. It is seen in emails and other sources of communication. It bubbles out in our political arenas and produces wars. Many follow a god of bitterness and vengeance. The world needs the loving kindness of God to be personified in Christians.

Let us be kind in our day-to-day dealings! People will do things that disturb us. We can either jump on them with spurs, or reply with kindness. Which will have the greater influence for Christ? We are here to win them to Christ, not condemn them to the devil! Our words and actions must be seasoned with the wisdom of kindness.

Every day in the news we hear of people who are unkind to their fellow-man. But every day there are those who go out of their way to show love and kindness to someone who is not in a position to help himself. Christians should be the ones most prone to be kind; and in my experience, they are!

If your life has not been marked by kindness, try it – you'll like it!

--Joe Dale Wilson (via Old Paths)