

Let it Go!

Ponder: Must you have your pound of flesh?

Scripture: "The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression" (Prov. 19:11, NKJV).

Road rage! It's only one of a multitude of ways people demonstrate out-of-control anger. Anger management classes meet in schools, prisons, workplaces, (did I mention churches?) So how does God want me to deal with anger?

First, realize that not all anger is sinful. God never sins, yet over 130 times the Bible speaks of the "wrath of God," the "anger of the Lord," et. al. And Eph. 4:26 warns us, "Be angry and do not sin." So not all anger is sinful, but an honest evaluation shows most of ours is.

That being the case, step two is to determine why we are angry. Most often selfishness is at the root. Cain was angry because God didn't accept his self-willed worship. Naaman the leper was angry because he felt insulted when a lowly servant told that great general to dip himself in the puny little Jordan. Other angry Bible characters were usually motivated by selfishness in one way or another. Jesus, by contrast, became angry when corrupt people defiled God's temple. His anger wasn't sinful but justified.

Determining whether anger is justified takes time, so step three is "slow down!" "Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools" (Eccl. 7:9). And even if you might justify your anger, ask yourself, "Is this worth getting angry about?" Are you making a mountain out of a mole hill? Must you have your pound of flesh? Would it be better just to let it go?

If it isn't important enough to deal with the offender in person (Matt. 18:15-17), then it isn't serious enough to be upset about it. Let it go!

Hymn: "Angry Words"

Prayer: Righteous Father, help us not to be in a hurry to be angry. Even when our anger is justified, may we be careful not to let it become sin. In Jesus' name, Amen.