

Get Smart: A Study in Proverbs

Growth Group Leader's Supplement

Study 5: Keep Your Cool

Growth Point Insights

Questions are always guidelines. Never feel obligated to cover every one. Always put a stress on participation. If someone has a different question, by all means pursue it.

Devotional Seed:

The devotional seed is intended to stimulate conversation as an introduction to the discussion.

Is anger sinful? Is it ever beneficial?

This is the theme of the study. The Ephesians passage in Question 3 below certainly distinguishes between anger and how we express anger. Not much is said about the benefits of anger in the scriptures. There is a sense that it could motivate us to pursue justice, but generally the danger is greater than the benefit.

Deeper Roots

These questions are intended to promote study and deepen understanding.

1. What does anger usually produce?

A few of the proverbs associate anger with quarrelling, cruelty and strife. We can probably all point to times where anger out of control has damaged relationships.

Proverbs 29:22 is probably most relevant and points to the fact that anger is a contributing factor to many sins.

2. How can you manage anger in other people? What kinds of responses calm anger?

Consider the proverbs that talk about overlooking insults, patience and providing gentle answers. People may have a variety of different examples from their own lives.

3. What does Ephesians 4:26-27 teach about anger and how to handle it?

At least 3 good themes in this passage

- Distinction between anger and sin. It is possible to be angry and not sin.
- Anger as the gateway to other evils: The devils foothold
- Dealing with anger: Not letting the sun go down.

4. Is it wise to appease an angry person? When is it wise when is it not?

Anger is often a tool of manipulation and should not be appeased. Anger can become a way to control others and should be confronted.

The proverbs about appeasing the king are not universal strategies. Appeasement may be a necessary tactic when dealing with a king who has great authority and the ability to radically change your life. These verses teach us wisdom in relationships where the power dynamic is out of balance and no court of appeal. This does not mean that we should placate anger in all relationships

6. Romans 1:18 shows us that God expresses his wrath? What does this say about anger?

7. Are we ever justified to express our anger with the things that God is angry with?

These questions may need to go together

Certainly this shows us that wrath is not sinful when appropriately targeted. Notice that God is targeting his anger more on the persistence of godlessness and wickedness than on the person. This is not to say that sinners go unpunished.

The critical point for us is that God is perfectly wise and loving and applies his wrath appropriately. We are called to not seek vengeance, but to leave this to God.

It may be appropriate for us to be angry with sin, but we must be careful to not let our anger overwhelm love. God holds these in perfect balance where we do not.

Bearing Fruit

These questions are designed to be a little more personal and application oriented. Use these questions to focus more on sharing. It helps if as a leader, you are willing to share your life with the group.

Branching Out

Each month your group will be asked to focus some time on outreach and service. Plan to spend some time planning and thinking about how your group can reach out together. We will use this space to help your group integrate with the larger outreach efforts of the church.

On Dec 10-12 we will have a Christmas outreach dinner called Together for Christmas. It will be a nice meal, conversation around the table along with a fun program filled with humor and interaction. It will be a great opportunity to invite guests. We need to help our groups get excited about inviting people. Create a list of possible invitees and pray for opportunity to invite and positive response.