Newsletter

Fiona Bosly, guest editor editor@adelphicare.org

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Hello to all in the bonds of love and fellowship wrought by our dear Saviour. This newsletter will focus on what Scripture says about anger and its usefulness. First of all let's agree what anger is NOT. It is a different process from hostility or aggression. When anger is distorted some of the behaviours are blaming, sarcasm, violence, vindictiveness, viciousness, punitiveness, aggression, sulking, manipulation and scapegoating to name a few.

ANGER



Ephesians 4:26 states "Be angry but do not sin". This comes immediately after Paul has been exhorting the Ephesians to be unified. So what is the part anger may play in the process of unity, particularly as unity is something our Heavenly Father values? Ps. 86:11, as well as Deut. 6:4-5. outlines just how important unity is to our Heavenly Father. Feeling angry may help to lead to unity, both internally in ourselves and externally in our relationships.

So if anger, per se, is not wrong, what can make it a sinful process and how might this lead to disunity, both within us and in our communities/families? Ephesians 4 also lists what is not desirable to come from us (bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, slander, malice) and these are often outward manifestations of anger (see above). When we feel angry, do we stop to investigate internally why we might be angry? Has our pride been wounded, do we feel disrespected, overlooked, unacknowledged or ignored in our efforts? It would appear if we

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investigate why we are angry it may help us to understand ourselves. This too is a Scriptural instruction - Know yourself – get Insight. 1 Cor 11:28-32, Prov 4, 1 Cor 2:11, all encourage this process. Alternatively if we don't know ourselves and we are 'triggered' we may attempt to take the speck out of our brother's eye and create disunity both within ourselves and within the relationship with our brother (or sister). One of the questions we need to ask ourselves is 'Did this come from an angry place within me?' Matt 7:1-5, Ezk 18:7.

When we experience anger it is often regarded as the tip of the iceberg. Underneath our anger are much more vulnerable emotions. Our experiences of grief, rejection, cruelty, injustice, abandonment, betrayal, sadness, guilt are often not recognised or processed and can lie within us, undetected. Over time if not dealt with and incorporated into our experience, we can repress these emotions. Then when 'triggered' this pent up energy can lead to explosive anger where we 'lose it', blame others, become violent, etc.

We need to recognise that feelings, including anger, are information but not facts. In noticing our anger we are less likely to turn it into sinful process (as already outlined). If we do notice out anger we can process what is happening and discharge our discomfort, hurt, betrayal, disrespect etc. in appropriate ways.

Finally, Psalm 73. The psalmist identifies what he is doing to himself by continuing to be angry. He incorporates personal info (does not deny it, or act out on it) but brings it before God. Unifying for him personally (more of a whole heart) and unifying with his Heavenly Father.

You might like to consider three other papers on anger. They are listed in the front page of the adelphicare.org website.

Carers' Corner? - Next time!