

# Anger Management

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] And now we come to our Bible reading, and today we have two passages to read through. So firstly, we'll read from Proverbs 14, verse 46 through to 15, verse 7. You should see those readings on the screen. And secondly, we'll look at James chapter 1, from verse 12 through to 27.

Paul Brennan, one of our ministers, started a new short series in the book of Proverbs last week, looking at true wisdom from God and how we as God's people may walk in his wise ways every day of our lives. So if you could keep a finger in James 1, we'll come to that shortly. But let's start together with Proverbs chapter 14, reading from verse 26 together.

In the fear of the Lord, one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life that one may turn away from the snares of death. In a multitude of people is the glory of a king, but without people, a prince is ruined. Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly. A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot. Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him. The wicked is overthrown through his evil doing, but the righteous finds refuge in his death. Wisdom rests in the heart of a man of understanding, but it makes itself known even in the midst of fools. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

A servant who deals wisely has the king's favor, but his wrath falls on one who acts shamefully. A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of fools pours out folly. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perversiveness in it breaks the spirit. A fool despises his father's instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is prudent. In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, but trouble befalls the income of the wicked. The lips of the wise spread knowledge. Not so in the heart of fools.

And now if you could flick over to James chapter 1, we'll read from verse 12 to the end of the chapter. That's what I'm saying. Let's read from verse 12 to the end of the chapter 1. Let the verse 12 to the end of the chapter 1, in the chapter 1.

[ 3 : 1 6 ] Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

Let no one say when he is tempted, I am being tempted by God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed.

by his own desire. Then desire, when it has been conceived, gives birth to sin. And sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death.

Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

Of his own will, he brought us forth by the word of truth. That we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. Know this, my beloved brothers.

[ 4 : 20 ] Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger. For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets, but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

[ 5 : 43 ] Amen. This is the word of the Lord. Well, good morning, folks. And it would be a help, I think, to have the book of Proverbs open in front of you.

We're thinking this morning about anger and we'll be dotting around various places in Proverbs. So don't worry if you don't keep up. But it would be good to have that passage that was read earlier in front of you.

But as I said, we'll be jumping around all sorts of places in the book of Proverbs as we think about anger this morning. Now, I'd imagine that anger is an unwelcome guest in many of our homes and lives.

If there's anybody here this morning that does not struggle with anger in any way, then please just mentally check out. But I imagine that most of us struggle with anger at some point or other.

If we're honest with ourselves, then I think we'll realize it's something that crops up every so often. I never really considered myself an angry person until I had three children under the age of four.

[ 6 : 51 ] That pushed a few buttons. So I think the right circumstances and it bubbles up in all of us. So I've had my moments, I can assure you. So whether it's road rage directed at the person who didn't execute a maneuver in the precise way they were expected to, or whether it's the explosion directed towards a child who has spilt milk all over the carpet just before some guests are about to arrive.

Maybe it's the harsh words a spouse speaks to the other half who failed to load the dishwasher in precise accordance with the previously agreed protocol.

Maybe it's your foot connecting with the hapless tire that has gone flat again. Unfortunately, anger can be a bit more serious than some of those trivial examples.

It doesn't just manifest itself on the road. It manifests itself also in the church and among God's people and among our families.

Just thinking last week, Sunday evening, we were looking at Cain and Abel and we were looking at the sad and horrific murder of Abel by his brother Cain.

[ 8 : 08 ] God looked with favor on Abel's sacrifice but not on Cain's which resulted in Cain's irrational and devastating action. The first recorded murder in scripture, brother against brother, it stands as a reminder of what man is capable of when he is angry, when it festers, when it boils over.

And anger is, as we saw last week, just one manifestation of a far deeper fundamental sin which is ultimately the rejection of God's ways and a determined decision to do things our own way.

Anger rises and spills out and it's made manifest with our destructive words or actions. I think we would agree that the anger that boils out in our own lives, it is problematic, it's sinful and even if we don't see it, those closest to us certainly do.

Anger is the reaction that can incinerate marriages, it can lead to the disintegration of families if left unchecked and if left to fire up and explode.

Christopher Ashe puts it this way, anger is the drawn sword of human relationships. Before the sword strikes with a sharp word or deed, it is first drawn.

[ 9 : 41 ] Anger is one of those experiences that begins with a feeling and ends with an action. The same anger inhabits the angry feeling and then the angry deed. From the first stirrings of irritation when the hand begins to move as it were to the sword handle as annoyance rises in the heart to the full-blown fury when the sword is unsheathed and waved threateningly in the air ready to strike.

Anger is that in-between emotion that proceeds and finally precipitates the saying of the word or the doing of the deed. Anger is the drawn sword of human relationships.

So what is anger? What are we talking about? Well, I've read a few books about anger this week. I can't remember where I found this one. But here's a definition. Anger is the active displeasure towards something that is important enough to care about.

Anger is the active displeasure towards something that is important enough to care about. So the road rage. You're late to an important meeting.

Another driver has delayed you by approximately five seconds. You are displeased about that and you express that displeasure. The spilt milk. You have guests who are arriving imminently and you want your home to be welcoming and tidy and clean.

[ 11 : 09 ] you're very displeased at having to deal with spilt milk and you express that displeasure on the poor child. The dishwasher scenario. You've done the research about the most efficient and effective way to place dirty dishes in the dishwasher.

If you don't believe me Google it. You've taken the time to share this valuable information with your better half but they've disregarded it. You're very displeased about that and you express that displeasure.

Anger is the active displeasure towards something that is important enough to care about. Tim Keller puts it this way.

Anger is energy released to defend something you love. Now as we think about later, there is often a good root at the heart of what we're crossing the path.

There's some injustice. There's something wrong that shouldn't be wrong but often that spills out into sinful responses. And it can manifest itself with irritability, arguing, bitterness, violence, the passive aggressive, the self-righteous anger.

[ 12 : 20 ] And of course we can at times be rightly angry. God himself is described as being angry. And it's right that we are angry when we see instances of abuse or injustice, when somebody really misbehaves, that is right to be angry about that.

But righteous anger is not really the thing that Proverbs deals with. Proverbs, and that's our focus this morning, Proverbs warns us against sinful anger, against anger that is destructive.

Anger need not come erupting out in volcanic displays of harsh words and violent actions. It can also quietly seethe, bubbling away under the surface.

There are few things more terrifying than the cool, calm, controlled, passive, aggressive. It can evidence itself in complaining, brooding, irritability, bickering.

An unchecked anger, sinful anger, is a sign of folly, not wisdom. Unchecked anger can lead to very dark places, and it can ruin lives.

[ 13 : 41 ] Anger is a topic dealt with by the book of Proverbs for those very reasons. And so we're going to consider what the book of Proverbs has to say about anger, and we'll think about it under three headings.

The problem of anger, firstly, secondly, the sources of anger, and thirdly, the solutions. Now this is not everything that there is to say about anger from the Bible. The Bible addresses anger in many places, but this is a distinctly proverbial take on anger.

We're looking at what Proverbs says about subjects. If you want a fuller treatment, then I would recommend Christopher Ash's book, which I've read this week. It's called The Heart of Anger, and that's really a biblical theology of anger.

What does the whole Bible say? There's too much to cover for us this morning, so we're focusing on Proverbs. So let's think first then about the problem. The problem of anger, its fruit, as we'll see, is destructive and deadly.

Proverbs says that the fruit of sinful anger, the thing that anger produces, is not good. Proverbs 15, verse 18.

[ 14 : 54 ] A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention. Proverbs 29, verse 22.

A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression. Chapter 30, verse 33. For pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife.

Proverbs shows us the fruit of sinful anger, and it is destructive. Sinful anger creates greater conflict rather than averting it.

It escalates situations. It multiplies the harm far beyond the harm originally caused. And notice that anger isn't depersonalized.

29, verse 22 says, the man of wrath stirs up strife. One given to anger causes much transgression. Anger isn't some sort of isolated force over here, something for which I'm not responsible for, no.

[ 16 : 07 ] Proverbs describes a man of wrath, one given to anger. It isn't anger that produces strife and transgression, it's an angry man, or an angry woman, that produces bad fruit.

anger. It's an angry man that produces strife and transgression. And so as we think later about solutions to anger, part of the answer is to deal with our own hearts.

Anger's not some sort of isolated thing over here, it's an angry person. That's how Proverbs talks about anger and its fruits. It's angry people that produce these fruits.

And just notice the fruits that it mentions there. Strife, transgression, anger is a catalyst to further sin and destruction.

Anger is the gateway drug to a host of other problems and sins. As Tim Keller writes, no other sinful emotion has led to so much violence and literally to so many dead bodies.

[ 17 : 18 ] In the New Testament, James, as we read earlier, picks up the same strand of thought. He writes that the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

As Christian people, our desire is to see a fruit of righteousness in our lives. Anger does the opposite. Anger does not produce righteousness of God.

Anger leads to the opposite of what we seek. Anger is the servant of folly. It's a very powerful tool wielded ultimately by the great enemy.

And he uses it to sow discord to reap a harvest of unrighteousness. It leads, anger leads to a harvest of destruction and death for others but also for ourselves.

Proverbs 19 verse 19 warns us, a man of great wrath will pay the penalty for if you deliver him you will only have to do it again.

- [ 18 : 22 ] Do you see what it's saying? If we lose our temper, if we boil over with anger there are natural consequences that we must bear. A man of great wrath will pay the penalty.
- Sometimes it's very costly. The road rage leads to a collision. Your insurance premiums rocket. You literally pay the penalty.
- The spilt milk situation leads to a child running off in tears and a house full of tension into which you're meant to be welcoming your guests. So one way to help an angry man is to leave him well alone.
- Let him face the music. Don't pay for the damage he's caused. Let him pay it himself. Let him learn the fruit of his anger. It warns us against jumping in and helping doesn't it?
- It said if you deliver him you'll only have to do it again. So let them pay the price of their own anger. So let us consider the fruits of our anger.
- [ 19 : 30 ] That's a worthwhile thing. Where does my anger lead? What does it produce? What does it lead to? We would do well to meditate on the fruits of our anger.
- I cannot think of a single situation which has been improved by allowing anger to boil over. Sinful anger is not a sin to be tolerated.
- It is not a respectable sin. Sinful anger is a quality that would be in evidence at Lady Folly's table. Remember last week, those two feasts? Anger would be present at Lady Folly's feast.
- It would be anathema at Lady Wisdom's. So in case we're unsure, Proverbs reminds us that anger is no virtue. It is destructive and it's deadly.
- That's the problem of anger. I'm sure we knew that. We hardly convinced but Proverbs is very clear. What anger leads to, it leads to strife and transgression. That's the first thing, the problem.
- [ 20 : 31 ] Second, the sources. What is the source of anger? And we'll consider two main sources. The first is internal and the second external. So firstly internal.
- And we read from James. And won't be worth just turning to the book of James for a moment. You had that open earlier. I'm going to read from two sections.
- So James chapter 1 and verse 13. Let no one say when he is tempted I am being tempted by God.
- For God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.
- Then desire when it is conceived gives birth to sin and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. And flick over a couple of pages to James chapter 4 verse 1.
- [ 21 : 37 ] What causes quarrels? And what causes fights among you? Is it not this? That your passions are at war within you?
- You desire and do not have so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your own passions.
- You adulterous people do not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God. Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.
- So James in the situation there in the church he's writing to identifies the symptoms there are problems among the believers fighting and quarreling. And the causes of those public problems are private.
- James speaks of passions and desires verses 2 and 3 there. And the diagnosis the heart of the matter is worldliness.

- [ 22 : 46 ] You see it there in verse 4. The cause of the external fighting lies in the private allegiances of the heart to the world and not to God. That is the central problem.
- That's the very heart of the matter in James' letter. Friendship with the world equals enmity with God. The desires of our heart, the fundamental allegiances, they crop out.
- They crop up in our behavior and how we interact with others. anger. And you see our anger is very revealing because it reveals what's really driving us.
- The fundamental cause of anger is an internal one. The presenting causes of anger are usually clear. A desire for control, a desire to have something, a desire for pleasure that's denied, a desire to be respected or honored that isn't forthcoming.
- But there are deeper realities driving those things. Anger's source is deep in our hearts. Our anger shows us both what we really value, what we treasure, but it also reveals something of our attitude towards God.
- [ 24 : 05 ] Fundamentally, we want to be like him. We want to be like God. We want to be in total control of our lives. We want all the plans of our desires, of our hearts to be worked at.
- and reality without hindrance or problem. It's the very issue that was in evidence in Eden. It was the possibility of power, the prospect of control, the right to possess, the acquisition of self-importance, the possibility of being like God.
- It is that deep heart attitude that is the source of our anger. We want to be sovereign. sovereign. We want to be the creator.
- And so we push back against God's sovereignty, and we rail against our creatureliness. We hate being creatures. We want to be in control.
- control. And that is the internal source of our anger. It is the root of all sin. It's the essence of all sin. And it's the essence of anger. We want to be in control.
- [ 25 : 10 ] We want things to go just as we like. I want the guests to be welcomed to a nice clean home. I don't want spilt milk. I don't want someone in my way on this journey to the important meeting. I want things done in my way, and anything that gets in the way, our anger boils over.
- Our sovereignty is threatened. And that's at the very heart of our anger. So there's the internal issue, but there's also external sources.
- Listen to Proverbs 22, verse 24. Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare.
- Make no friendship with a man given to anger. Anger can be infectious. If you are close to one who is prone to anger, then you or experiencing anger, you may learn his ways.
- Anger may sometimes be caught. We see examples of this in the Bible. The Bible observes this reality of infectious anger. Number 16 records Korah's rebellion against Moses.
- [ 26 : 29 ] That began with a small group venting against Moses, but quickly a huge crowd gathered together. Or think of the riot in Ephesus recorded in Acts 19. What begins is a small group of disgruntled idol makers quickly spread to the whole city.
- Before long, a huge angry mob has come together and most of them don't even know why they're there. Luke tells us in Acts 19 that most of them did not know why they'd come together.
- They were just angry. They didn't know why, they just were. And anger can be like that. Anger can spread. It's infectious. Implication, be wise about the company you keep.
- And we'll think more about that now as we think about the solutions to anger. We thought of the fruit, what it leads to. We thought about the sources. But what are we to do?

What wisdom does Proverbs impart to us? We'll think about this in two key ways in terms of what Proverbs says about the solutions to anger.

[ 27 : 35 ] What wisdom does it impart? We'll think about anger and ourselves first. And then we'll think about anger in relation to others. So firstly, with regards to ourselves, three things.

One, be slow to anger. Two, watch our words. Three, choose our company. So number one, be slow to anger.

That is the constant refrain in Proverbs when it comes to anger. Just listen to these. No need to turn to them, but listen to these Proverbs. So 14, verse 29, whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.

15, verse 18, a hot-tempered man stirs up strife. But he who is slow to anger quiets contention. 16, 32, whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

19, 11, good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. 29, verse 11, a fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.

[ 29 : 05 ] The way of wisdom, when it comes to anger, is to be slow to anger. The Hebrew phrase, long of nose, or long of nostrils, describes one who is slow to anger.

I guess the idea is that long nostrils take longer to grow hot. We would talk of someone with a long fuse, or a short fuse. Now, there are times in sermon preparation when you come across a quote that makes your heart sing, and this one brought real joy to my heart.

It was an article by an American pastor called Caleb Cangalossi. Never heard of him, but I like the article. And here's what he said. From the perspective of the Bible, a long nose is in fact a desirable trait for the disciple of Jesus Christ.

Amen to that. If you're listening to this, you need to watch it to get the joke. But I'm proud of my nose. But it's a desirable trait to be long of nose, to have a long fuse.

You see, Proverbs ties together a slow to anger person, one long of nostrils with wisdom and righteousness.

[ 30 : 21 ] One quick to anger is depicted as a fool. Slow to anger is the way of wisdom. Quick to anger, that's the way of fools.

Whoever is slow to anger, says Proverbs, has great understanding. But he who has a hasty temper, exalts folly. So being slow to anger, being patient, is a characteristic that Proverbs encourages.

God himself is described as being slow to anger. And being slow to anger is not to be indifferent to the wrong.

Proverbs doesn't say ignore the source of the anger. Doesn't say turn a blind eye. No. It urges patience.

It urges a long fuse, not a short one. Being slow to anger is not to be indifferent to bad driving.

[ 31 : 26 ] It is not to be indifferent to the poorly behaved child. But patience considers before action. anger reacts and boils over, lashing out at the injustice or the perceived injustice that's got in its way.

Patience considers and ponders and determines the best way to respond out of all the possible options. Not just the first response, which can often be driven by the heat of the moment.

Be slow to anger. Consider the various options. What are all the ways I could respond to my child who spilt the milk? The first one is to lash out. But be slow to anger.

Consider. There's a lot of other ways I could do this. The driver that pulls out could immediately leap on the horn and shout and get angry and then crash into someone.

There are other ways to do it. There are other options. Be slow to anger. Patience considers and ponders. It determines the best way to respond.

[ 32 : 35 ] I've got all the possible options. Good sense, says Proverbs. Good sense makes one slow to anger. And it's his glory to overlook an offense.

A fool gives full vent to his spirit. No filters. It's all out there. But a wise man quietly holds it back. You see, patience remembers that we are not God.

We are not all-knowing or all-powerful. We grow angry because we pridefully think that we know best how things should be. When we believe that some event or process is taking too long and we're unwilling to wait for the Lord to bring it to his appointed end and his time, our arrogant impatience easily leaves to anger.

So let us remember we are not God. We are not sovereign. We do not know everything. The person that pulls down in front of us may be on the way to the hospital because his wife is about to give birth.

We don't know that. He is sovereign. We are not. He knows everything. We do not. Even the things that annoy us.

[ 33 : 54 ] Even the wrongs that we encounter are under his sovereign control. We are to be slow to anger. Remember, we are creatures.

We are not a creator. And linked to that idea of patience, of being slow to anger, is our words. So, Proverbs says, be slow to anger.

That's the big thing. Be slow to anger. Secondly, watch our words. 29 verse 11, a fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.

James, in the New Testament, makes the same connection. Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. There is a link between words and anger. Be slow to speak. Be slow to anger.

[ 34 : 57 ] We are to guard our tongues. And Proverbs has much to say about words. And we might look at that in the future. Proverbs has an awful lot to say about the use of our tongues.

But guard your words. Thirdly, choose your company. Be slow to anger. Watch your words. Choose your company. Thirdly, 22 verse 24, make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare.

We've mentioned already the contagious nature of anger. And we are to make wise choices about who we associate with. Make no friendship with a man given to anger.

So implications for friendship. Don't seek to become friends with someone who is known to be angry. Don't naively assume that your good nature and patience will wear off on him.

It will likely be the other way around. But you will learn his angry ways. That's the warning that Proverbs gives. Make no friendship with a man given to anger.

[ 36 : 09 ] Second, implication for marriage. Do not pursue marriage with an angry man or woman. If whilst dating somebody or you're engaged to them and they cannot keep their temper, do not naively think that their anger problem will somehow dissipate upon the exchanging of vows.

It will get worse. It will get worse. So if you are involved with an angry man or woman, get out. It will not get better. That is the warning of Proverbs.

Make no friendship with an angry person. Implication for parenting. Do not be surprised if your anger rubs off on your children. That is one of the chastening things about parenting.



You see traits in your children that you yourself possess. It's horrifying. But your children do imitate your behaviors. So if you do not want angry children, then work on your anger.

So there's three things as we think about ourselves with regards to anger. Be slow to anger. Watch your words. Choose your company. With regards to others, chapter 15, verse 1 says this.

[ 37 : 21 ] A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Don't, in other words, provoke someone to anger.

Consider carefully the impact of your own words. Speak soft words, not harsh words. Speak in such a way as to help those you are speaking to respond with calmness, not anger.

You can speak to someone in such a way as to provoke anger in them. And that is our responsibility. We can, up to a certain point, be responsible for the anger of others.

So consider your words. Do not stir up a brother or sister in Christ to anger because of how you've spoken to them. A soft answer turns away wrath.

A harsh word stirs up anger. So we've thought about some of the solutions that Proverbs advocates with regards to anger. With regards to ourselves, be slow to anger.

[ 38 : 27 ] Watch our words. Choose our company. With regards to others, do not provoke them to anger. But one final thing to say, and it's this. Do not waste your anger. Do not waste your anger.

It is helpful to realize that our anger, our anger is very revealing. Anger reveals what really matters to us. So in that sense, don't waste your anger.

Ponder. What is at the root of my anger? What is the thing that I'm longing for? What has gotten in the way of me attaining it that's really got me annoyed?

And the thing that blocks my way is often the trigger to our anger boiling up into sinful thoughts and actions. Our anger can flag up the things in life that we perhaps overvalue and overtreasure.

It's the things that we seek over and above the Lord. And that realization ought to move us to repent, to seek the Lord's forgiveness for our anger, but also to seek forgiveness for the fundamental desires in our hearts that are the source of our anger.

[ 39 : 34 ] So don't waste your anger. Repent and turn afresh to the Lord. Repent and realize what the very presence of our anger points us to.

The fact that there are things in this world that provoke our anger, the fact that we get irrationally angry should move us to realize afresh that all is not as it should be in this world.

Fundamentally, anger exists because evil exists. And the great hope of the Christian faith, the great hope, is not only that we can manage our anger better in this world, which I think we can with God's help make progress, but we're never going to perfectly manage our anger, are we?

Let's be honest. We still live in a fallen world. We're still fallen people. The great hope is not only that we can manage our anger better, but one day anger will be no more. The reality of anger in our own hearts and our own lives should point us to God's ultimate answer for our anger, for our sin.

Anger will one day be perfected and transformed into joy. When Christ returns on that awesome day, a day of judgment and ushers in the new creation, sin will be no more.

[ 40 : 51 ] There will be no more tears, no more sadness, no more anger. There will be no more sinful anger because God's perfect anger burned against the source of sinful anger, the very heart of sin itself.

And Christ defeated it once and for all through his death on the cross. And as his followers, we know something of that victory now.

But ours is an imperfect and incomplete foretaste of victory. Our triumph against anger is today imperfect and incomplete.

But we have a great and certain hope that full victory will one day be ours. And until then, we must walk in the way of wisdom.

With God's help, we walk in wisdom. We seek to reflect God's character, most beautifully revealed in the Son, Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God.

[ 41 : 56 ] And so we ask that God will give us wisdom. Get wisdom. Ask the Lord to help you and to grant us every day more of the humble patience and wise slowness to anger of our Savior.

So ask him for that. And keep your eye fixed on the great day when anger will be no more. Let's pray, shall we, before we sing. Father, we thank you that your word deals with the realities of day-to-day life.

And we thank you for this book of Proverbs, which instructs us and teaches us. And so would you help us? Not that we can manage perfection in this life, but Lord, help us as we consider our own hearts and lives.

Would you make us a people who are known to be slow to anger, slow to speak, abounding in love and kindness. So make us that people.

Help us in the ups and downs, but ultimately keep us focused on the Lord Jesus Christ and the great hope, that great day when anger will be no more.

[ 43 : 22 ] So until then, make us a people of hope. Make us a people of wisdom, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.