

The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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~ All articles written by Terry Carter unless otherwise stated ~

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Angry Men



"24 Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go, 25 Lest you learn his ways And set a snare for your soul." Proverbs 22:24-25 (NKJV)

One day, as I was considering this verse, I came up with the following limerick:

There once was a man full of wrath
He attacked everyone in his path
He tried to convince all his friends
To help him in achieving his ends
But his friends were reduced by one half

It has been my experience that angry men have a way of recruiting followers. However, if people were wise, they would refuse to be friends with such men. The limerick is about what ought to happen. Unfortunately, that is not always the way that things actually happen. In the long run, angry people do damage to everyone around them. They may have friends now, but

often those same friends turn on them when they too become angry men.

Our world is full of angry people. We can see that in our politics, our schools, our families, and even our churches. By angry people, I do not mean those who sometimes have anger. That would include everyone. I am talking about people who are consistently and perpetually angry. Their lives are often controlled by their anger.

Such people are dangerous to themselves and to others. Sometimes, we are influenced, or even motivated, by the anger of those with whom we agree. Their passion can be contagious. But all too often, we eventually see that their anger is not righteous indignation; it is something else entirely.

Angry men will lash out at anything they can. They will tear down anything and everything that they see. We all know how much more work it takes to build something useful than it does to tear it down. Tearing down is sometimes necessary when the plan is to build something better in its place. However, angry men rarely build; they lack those skills. They only

know how to tear down what others have built. In the end, they are counterproductive. They usually refuse to take any position of responsibility. They prefer to sit back and criticize those who are busy building. The angry man does not want to face criticism; he only wants to dish it out.

We ought to remember that things like hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, and envy are listed among the works of the flesh. All of these are connected with anger and wrath in one way or another. For some, anger may be an issue of salvation or condemnation.

"19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV)

Paul told the young evangelist Timothy that the servant, or minister, of the Lord must not quarrel.

“24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,” **II Timothy 2:24-25 (NKJV)**

Anger and patience do not go together. Neither do anger and humility. Yet people are often attracted to preachers who do little more than quarrel. I am convinced that some guys cannot preach unless they are angry about something. The fact that so many are attracted to this only indicates how few people are wise enough to heed what Solomon said.

We would do well to heed Solomon's warning. An angry man may have a large following, but they leave too many shattered people in their wake. A patient, humble man may not have so large of a following, but they lead people to repentance so that they may know the truth. Furthermore, they have real friends.

Even the secular world understands the value of friends, especially trustworthy ones.

“...there is no surer criterion of virtue and vice than whether a man is or is not destitute of such [trustworthy] friends.” Plato from *The Seventh Letter*

“No man is a failure who has friends.” Clarence in the film *It's a Wonderful Life*

It was not just Solomon who warned us about the wrong kind of companions; Paul did so as well.

“Do not be deceived: **‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’**
I Corinthians 15:33 (NKJV)

It is believed that Paul quoted from a Greek poet in this verse.