Faith Matters

Daily Devotional, Thursday, October 12, 2017 - The Danger of Anger

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Ephesians 4:26-27

Yesterday we learned how to deal with anger in our life. Today we'll discover God's principle for preventing long-term bitterness. The key is to deal with this emotion promptly.

It's important to realize that believers can have moments of anger and still remain right with God. Yet anger that lingers and festers is an opportunity for Satan. He quickly plants justifications in our mind: *That person deserves to be yelled at. You shouldn't be treated that way! God understands that you're frustrated.* By handing people excuses to harbor fury, Satan creates a stronghold in their life. It is a foolish person who allows anger to reside in his or her heart (Eccl. 7:9).

We are not to lay even one brick for the devil's stronghold. Instead, believers must respond to provocation by forgiving others as God forgives. His mercy is unconditional; there's no wrong that He will not pardon. Believers with long-standing anger cannot come before God and justify harboring resentment. So we must release it at once through forgiveness.
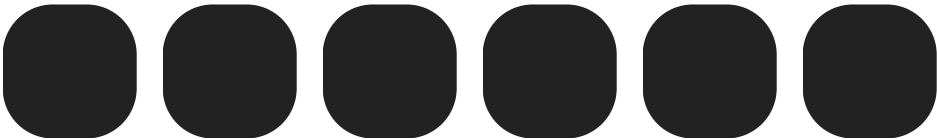
We can further protect ourselves by identifying frequent irritants. When those situations (or people) loom, we should pray that God makes us "quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger" (James 1:19). That is the spiritual fruit of self-control in action.

Anger produces only rotten fruit—such as sour relationships or a poor witness. The wise believer takes a two-fold approach to dealing with it. First, heeding the Bible's many warnings about this dangerous emotion, be vigilant against it. And second, forsake your anger in favor of forgiveness.

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