

Anger, pride, strife, and wrath

I have been studying the book of proverbs for quite a while and I find that certain subjects are repeated and over again. I have discovered that there is a connection between anger, pride, envy, and strife. These four are quadruplets where self-centeredness is the root.

1. Anger and Wrath

There is a place for anger. Anger is a good thing, but it was never meant to be directed towards people but the enemy, sin, and evil. It's a God-given emotion that is critical to bring change in our lives as well as runoff things that would bring destruction and harm to us.

A. Ephesians 4:26-27 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.

a) How can you be angry and sin not? This is simply saying that there is a righteous type of anger.

b) Anger is a good thing although it has been abused and misused by Satan. The capacity to be angry was given to us by God and is supposed to be used against evil, sin, and ungodliness.

i) One of the reasons we sin is because we aren't angry at sin. If we love sin, we will fall for it.

- Psalm 97:10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

- Amos 5:15 Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.
- c) This is not saying that it's okay to be angry all day, but not be angry as we go to bed. We should keep this anger stirred up and going always.
 - d) If we do not keep our godly and righteous anger stirred up, we will end up giving a place to the devil.
 - i) We are to be angry. We need to stir up our anger and never let it settle. If we do, we will give place to the devil.
 - e) If we do not hate evil and not get angry at it, we will allow it to prevail in our lives hence giving place to the devil.

Ungodly Anger

Not all anger is good and the Word teaches that we should be slow to anger when we are dealing with people. It does not say we shall never get angry but rather tells us to be slow to anger. Where you will find ungodly anger, you will find pride and strife.

I have leaned over the years that no one can make me angry unless I choose to be. Getting angry is a choice just like many other things. I have the ability and the grace not to walk in ungodly anger. I do this dependent on the Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit. "He that angers you controls you." Andrew Wommack.

- B. Proverbs 14:17, 29 He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated. He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.
 - a) It's not wise to have a short or hot temper. Rushing to temper is foolish. In the same way, plans of evil aren't good and are to be hated. There is a place for anger.

This verse is not saying that we shouldn't or we can't get angry but is speaking against a quick temper.

- b) We all should be slow to anger. Hot tempers and quick tempers are a sign of a lack of understanding. There are so much turmoil and tragedies that quick and hot temper can bring including death, injury, huge consequences, and regret. What a hot temper does is exalt foolishness. It not smart. He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly (Proverbs 14:17).
 - i) James 1:19-20 says "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."
- C. Proverbs 19:11 The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.
- D. Proverbs 29:8 Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise men turn away wrath.
 - a) A scornful man is a proud man. "Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly." Proverbs 3:34.
 - b) From this verse, we see clearly that the opposite of a scorner is someone lowly or humble but also in the NT we see the same verse quoted but this time with more detail. "... for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" 1 Peter 5:5. So, the words "humble" and "lowly", "proud" and "scornful" were used interchangeably when you compare Proverbs 3:34 and 1 Peter 5:5, hence the conclusion that a scornful man is a proud man.
- E. Proverbs 29:22 An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

- a) Anger stirreth up strife. This an ungodly anger with which one abounds in transgression and sin.
- b) Anger that is not used according to God's original intent will only stir up strife.
- c) Anger and strife are twin brothers. Where there is anger, there strife abounds. But pride is the father to anger, strife, and contention. If you have a problem with strife, contention, anger, the root problem is pride.
- d) Contention comes only by pride (Proverbs 13:10).
- e) When you compare this verse here with Proverbs 28:25 "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.",
 - i) Proud heart stirreth up strife and an angry man stirreth up strife, the conclusion is a "proud heart = an angry man"
 - ii) Proverbs 14:17, 29; 15:18; 16:32; 22-10; 26:20; 27:4; 28:25.
- f) Anger and furiousness cause us to sin and to increase in sin.
 - i) I have come to learn that he who angers you, controls you.

2. Strife

- A. James 3:16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.
 - a) This passage is one of the strongest passages. Envy and strife open a door to every evil work.
 - b) Not giving, lying and so forth are all bad but the Word does not say that where lying is there is every evil work.
 - i) We won't benefit from operating in faith while entertaining envy, strife, and confusion.
 - ii) Our prayers can be hindered when we operate in strife and envy.
 - c) Envy and strife are doorways to demonic activity in our lives. We won't go far nor prosper with envy and strife. We need to close the door to these evils.

- d) Notice that where we have envying and strife, there is confusion. God is not the author of confusion but Satan.
- B. Proverbs 12:16 A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.
- a) How do you know a fool? One doesn't have to wear a shirt that says so. This verse says that he who has his anger presently known or is quick to anger is not prudent.
- C. Proverbs 15:18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.
- a) We can appease strife. How? By being slow to anger. This means that being quick to anger will only stir up strife.
 - b) Anger, pride, and strife are related. No anger or short tempers, no strife. We can avoid strife by being slow to anger. Another way we can appease wrath is by being gentle, softer and kinder in our words.
 - i) Proverbs 13:10 says that only by pride comes contention. Therefore, no pride, no contention.
- D. Proverbs 26:17 *He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*
- a) We have to discern when to mind our business and when not to. We can't be poking our nose in people's strife all the time. If we do, we will get bitten just as a dog beat one who takes it by the ears. This doesn't mean that we should neglect what is the right thing to do (especially when we are in positions of leadership) as long as we know the consequences.

- b) This verse seems to be talking about someone who is just passing by and has no relationship with the two people in strife but even then, wisdom and discernment must be exercised as to whether to get involved or not.

E. Proverbs 26:20-22 *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife. An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*

- a) No wood = No fire. No talebearer = end of strife. So, the talebearer is the reason strife is present. If you throw out the talebearer, the strife will come to an end. The fuel to strife is the talebearer just as wood is to fire. Talebearer is referring to Gossiper and slanderer.
- b) It takes coals to get burning coals and it takes wood to get fire but also it takes a contentious man (Proud man; Proverbs 13:10) to start strife. If you throw out the scorner or the contentious man, strife will go out and cease.
 - i) Two things are at the foundation of strife: Pride and Slander (Gossip).
- c) Slander and gossip inflict wounds on others. They go deeper than we think. Words can get to where a spear couldn't.

3. Pride

- A. Proverbs 13:10 *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.*
 - a) Pride is the number one source or cause of contention. If contention exists, there is a pride problem somewhere. Someone is self-centered.
- B. Pro 16:18 *Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*
 - a) Anytime there is the destruction of a person, or a fall happens, we can rest assured that they were caught up in pride first.
 - b) Self-centeredness and pride always precede a fall and destruction. So, to stop a fall and destruction, we need to watch walking in pride.

- C. Pro 18:12 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honor is humility.
- D. Pro 21:24 *Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.*
- a) A proud and haughty person is a scorner and vice versa. Wrath and anger = pride. Anger is pride (Proverbs 13:10).
 - b) There are two types of Wraths (Anger).
 - i) Godly Wrath (Ephesians 4:26-27)
 - ii) Ungodly Wrath.
 - Self-centered Wrath
 - Arrogant (Proud) Wrath.
- E. Proverbs 28:25 He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.
- a) Anger and strife are twin brothers. Where there is anger, there strife abounds. But pride is the father to anger and strife and contention. If you have a problem with strife, contention, anger, the root problem is pride.
 - b) Contention comes only by pride (Proverbs 13:10).
 - i) When you compare this verse here with Proverbs 28:25 "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.", Proud heart stirreth up strife and an angry man stirreth up strife, the conclusion is a proud heart = an angry man (Proverbs 14:17, 29; 15:18; 16:32; 22-10; 26:20; 27:4; 28:25).
- F. Proverbs 29:22-23 *An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression. A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.*
- c) By combining these verses and Proverbs 28:25, it clearly shows that it is not just anger that stirs up strife but rather pride. Anger is a sign that we are self-centered. This leads to strife.

- d) Anger and strife are twin brothers. Where there is anger, there strife abounds. But pride is the father to anger, strife, and contention. If you have a problem with strife, contention, anger, the root problem is pride or self-centeredness.
- i) Contention comes only by pride (Proverbs 13:10).
- e) When you compare this verse here with Proverbs 28:25 *"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat."* You will notice that "A Proud heart stirreth up strife and an angry man stirreth up strife, the conclusion is a proud heart = an angry man (Proverbs 14:17, 29; 15:18; 16:32; 22-10; 26:20; 27:4; 28:25).
- f) Anger and furiousness cause us to sin and to increase in sin. I have come to learn that he who angers you, controls you.
- g) Anger and strife do us more harm than they do to someone else. Although we might be deceived to think that it hurts the other person, the truth is it hurts us who are walking in strife more.
- h) It is a decision to get mad and angry. We can choose not to get angry under any circumstances. No one can make me mad if I don't want to be. We can choose to be angry at people or not. We don't just get angry. We can control it. We can choose how we want to react.
- i) Apologizing doesn't mean you are wrong, and the other person is right. It just means you value that relationship more than your ego.