

Love is not easily angered 1Co 13:5

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David Stansbie to lead	(See service sheet online at www.knbc.org)
Welcome:	Plus Covid-19 reminders
Opening Scripture & Prayer:	Psalm 96
Opening Hymn:	MP 45 At Your Feet we fall
Prayer:	Adoration & Praise
Reading:	Ephesians 5:1-21
Notices:	
Reading:	1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (1 Cor 13:4-8a)
Hymn:	MP 1227 The Splendour of the King
Sermon:	"Love is not easily angered"
Closing Hymn:	MP 575 Rejoice, the Lord is King
Closing Prayer:	Ephesians 3:17-19

Welcome and pray

- You are in love, the table is set and you are about to eat. ... You are in love? Well look back to when you were in love, or just imagine you are in love! You are eating together and everything seems perfect when part the way through the meal he or she becomes angry with you. A word is said and he becomes angry. How is that, you think? It's easy to see there is something fundamentally wrong in the relationship, it would be foolhardy to continue in it.

The reasoning is simple: he wouldn't be angry with you - if he loved you >>

How can you be angry with someone you love? ?

This morning we consider the Scripture text: **Love- is not easily angered** x2

A man called 'Lovely', we think how could she ever be angry with 'lovely' Being angry at someone is not to love them. **It is not loving, its unloving man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.**

How about you? Do you allow yourself to become irritated and annoyed?

Other translations have: Love - **is not easily provoked, is not quickly made angry, or quick tempered. or provoked to anger**, i.e Love never gets provoked Williams, **is not irritable** ESV, **nor blaze out in passionate anger** Wey, or **doesn't fly off the handle** The Message, or as Calvin has it '**does not bluster**'.

The word '**easily**' is not there in the original, it is one word: paroxuno par-ox-oo'-no παροξύνω 3947

Which means 'to make sharp', to irritate, to provoke, to scorn, to be exasperated and burn with anger. *Does that come easily to you?*

Are you prone to anger? Or are you prickly? Are people wary of you?

The word 'paroxuno' properly means to sharpen, it may be applied to the act of sharpening a knife. Here it means, to sharpen the mind, temper, to rouse to anger; to excite to indignation or wrath. William Tyndale 1498-1536 renders it, "**Is not provoked to anger.**" Which probably explains how the word *easily* got into our translation.

The oldest English translation *Wycliffe Bible 1395* : '*It is not stirid to wrath*'.

This word occurs in the NT only in one other place. In Ac 17:16 when it says of the Apostle Paul: "**His spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.**" Here in Athens there was a response of irritation exasperation. or sharpness of spirit. Here Paul is provoked at the sin, immorality and idolatry. Paul's spirit was stirred up or provoked when he saw the rampant superstition of the Athenians. His response was not to fly off the handle but to reason and preach the gospel – a response of love.

- ✚ It has been said: A person angry on the right grounds, against the right persons, in the right manner, at the right moment, and for the right length of time deserves great praise.

There is such a thing as righteous anger.

- A man in the church who said he was angry about something in the church said "I have righteous anger" I am not sure it was!

However, some anger is righteous anger.

Jesus showed righteous anger when he was in the synagogue and those around him were hardened and didn't want to see a man made well on the Sabbath.

Or more famously Jesus was angry when he entered the temple of God and saw what was going on. First in John 2:12-16 at the beginning of his ministry and the second is the end in Matt 21:12-17, (also Mark 11:15-17, Luke 19:45-46) after Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

When Jesus entered the temple of God his father, and saw the money changers there he said **"It is written, 'My house will be a house of prayer'; but you have made it 'a den of robbers'."** Lu 19:46

And he proceeded to **"drive out those who were buying and selling there and overturn the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts."** Mr 11:15-16

So is there a time or situation where it is right to be angry? Definitely.

In John 2:15 we are told Jesus made a whip out of cords. It wasn't spontaneous, it took time. It wasn't impulsive, it was metered and considered. And why was he angry? Because God's name was dishonoured. It was not a reaction of his own pride – for he had none.

Oh if only that was true of you and I. It is this area where we see just how unlike Jesus we really are. Our anger – is so often about me. No wonder Paul says: **"In your anger do not sin"** Eph 4:26 My anger almost always is sin!

✚ **Let me remind you that 'anger' is not part of God's essential character – so how did it happen?**

God has a character of love, He is love. Before the world was made there was love between the father, Son and Holy Spirit - but no anger.

But we read about his anger: **The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.** Ps 103:8 = nine times in the Bible, - a record.

So where does God's anger come from? His anger is responsive. God's anger is a response to his holiness. God's prime attribute is Holiness. God's wrath or anger is against sin – and the sinner, we might make a distinction between the two but he doesn't – God is angry because sin is an affront to his Holiness.

Even though Christ's anger is a controlled chosen anger, it still has emotion. His love for God his father stirred him to rightly balk at this attack on His Holy character.

Does it stir you? When you hear God's name being used as a swear word, see lewd immoral images in the media, or examples of unfaithfulness, dishonesty or greed like Denise Coates from Bet 365 who reeled in £470m last year from the gambling habits of those who often can least afford it.

Does it stir you? - We should be angry at sin, sin is such an affront to Christ and his honour. Here we should be *angrier* when we see the Lord's honour or name trampled down. Our society is so awash with this, and we as Christians have absorbed it far too easily. The result? Many of us are too dulled to be repulsed by ungodly behaviour. Add to this the devil's use of the "don't judge" mantra. Little love for God means little hatred of evil. That said

This passage is about unloving, sinful anger - with one each other.

It is possible that you could be angry with someone we love when they hurt themselves, that would be loving. However, that is not normally the case – nor do we usually become angry due to the violation of some high principle – rather it's an unchecked ugly response of my pride.

✚ **Anger is never without a reason, but seldom with a good one.**

'Anger' appears hundreds of times in the Bible it is a big issue. Jesus said: **I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.** Matt 5:22

Anger comes from inside you and therefore will be judged. So why become angry when it is someone else's action?

Some of you live in situations that are very testing, very trying, almost constantly so... but don't let it provoke you to anger. While in this world we all have things that rattle us. What is it that gets to you?

■ A word said, or someone is late and keep you waiting, or they don't tidy up or wash up their things, or they let the paint brush to go hard, or they cancel an appointment with you, or talk too much, or that person who takes too long and you have to wait in the queue behind them. What is it with you? those who keep leaving the door open on a cold day or, or.. what is it that stirs or provokes you?

Don't become irritated and angry. "To be angered is to be conquered"

For the unbeliever today anger is never far from the surface. The person at the counter is not accepting her return so what do she do? Get angry.

It is almost a standard technique for getting what you want.

- A lady on the phone the other day said she spoke to a member of the family and all was going well until she mentioned something and then suddenly she flared up in anger and banished her from the house.

The papers are full of people getting angry, there's little effort at self-control - often now its anger that someone should think differently to themselves.

The more our nation turns away from God and puts me in His place the more anger there is. *The more pride there is - the more anger there is.*

✚ People are so often 'outraged' our society has run out of superlatives.

It's an outrage! "I'm deeply offended". Being offended has almost become a virtue. I say "Who are you to be offended? Are you the Queen? The lawgiver? Are you very important? No, but at that moment you act as if you are because YOU have been offended." **No App yet but**

You can measure how much pride you have by how easily offended you are.

Anger is often like a child's anger. It is used as a means to get your own way, just as a child screams and shouts if it can't have its own way.

Adults should have learned to fight it and control it. No the display of anger helps me get what I want. It forces my will on others, it distorts reason and justice.

- The latest example of the offended crowd outside the School in Batley.

The display of anger and threats has forced an apology, forced it.

Anger forces people. The crowds outside Pilate's palace were not listening to reason. "Crucify Him", "I find no wrong in him." "Crucify Him" x2

It shuts down dissent, it shuts down debate – and reason - and consideration.

People do that not only in crowds but with each other.

- One person comes to mind in this. One who is quick to become angry, whether consciously or not - it is a way of get their way.

Others are fearful and give in - the threat of 'anger' hangs over like a stick

Anger pulls everything towards me – this anger has no concern for the other

✚ Anger is so opposite to love x2 – and it ruins my witness.

Christ was provoked but he never responded: **When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.** 1Pe 2:23

Do what you like to Christ and there was nothing in him to respond.

- Remember when young you took a stick and prodded a hedgehog, you prodded, you provoked to see if it would move. And what? It bristled!
- Do that with a cat, and it will bare its teeth and claws menacingly

With Jesus there would be no response x2. What about you - and I?

Is there a response to a prod, a niggle, a difficult word or manner or action? Do you bristle? Do you bare your teeth and claws menacingly?

Love **is not provoked**. It does not react, it does not fly into a rage, but keeps the temper under control.

The puritan Matthew Poole (1624–1679) said: The man or woman not easily provoked is not without his passions, but he is not governed by his passions. He is not overruled by them to fly out extravagantly against his brother upon every light and trivial occasion; he knows how to bear injuries, and is willing rather to bear lesser wrongs, losses, and injuries, than to do anything in revenge of himself, or to the more remarkable prejudice of his neighbour.

✚ God's way of love is to cover over an offense - not react to it.

He who covers over an offence promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends. Pr 17:9. Become irritated = you amplify the matter x2.

A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offence. Pr 19:11

If Christ is so patient and gently with me in all my failings - How can I then be angry with another - my brother or sister – for whom Christ also died.

So get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, Eph 4:31 **rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice,** Col 3:8 **"as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."** Col 3:12-13

What of the church at Corinth? Why did Paul write this to them?

The Swiss Protestant theologian Frédéric Godet (1812–1900) says: the term **to be provoked** alludes to the dissensions and lawsuits between believers. ^{ir} chap.6. So when they provoked each they didn't bop each other on the nose, no - they took each other to court.. Once you see a lawyer it is then very difficult to resolve it amicably. The issue is encapsulated, it is then projected

into a prolonged system of which there is little escape. And it is there for the world to see. Here the issue is broadcasted - when it should be covered over.

✚ The saying is so true: **Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame.**

Paul wanting Christians to love each other says: **The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated?** 1Co 6:7 Quite!

✚ Love covers over an offense, **If I am wronged let it be so. Why not!**

Whatever is brought to me is brought by Christ. His grace for me is sufficient. The more the problem the more the grace. Want to show God's grace? Then show your weakness. This is not masochism but rather showing others how Christ can so change a life that we are quite different. Paul had learned that tough lesson. he was now not concerned his own Glory - but for God's Glory. He said: **That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.** 2 Cor 12:10 **You and I must learn this key lesson!**

So let us walk as Christ did

The gospel is the power of God to salvation. Christ is that power. Power to save the sinner from eternal punishment in Hell. Yet why does he save? That His saved people will have His power to live rightly. **Power CROSS.**

We as Christians in the UK are weak. There is little speaking out – and little standing out. Little confidence in Christ and little confidence in his power.

On Wednesday before last we looked at 'regeneration'. Here is a key mark of a regenerated person. The effect of Christ's Spirit is nowhere else more striking and apparent than in changing a temper. A lady once naturally quick, excitable, and irritable, is now calm, and gentle, and controlled. A consciousness of the presence of God will do much to produce this state of mind; **If we truly love all men, we should be angry with none.**

Will you say as a Christian – "I was once prone to anger towards others – but not now"?

That is right I am no longer like that. I no longer react like that. I am dead to sin and this world how can I now react? This is a great revealer of a person.

✚ It is evidence of Christ's living power to change character.

John Knox said: before God I am a man undone, but before you I have conducted myself with uprightness and integrity He's paraphrasing 2 Cor 1:12

Is it you with that short fuse? Do you go off in a huff?, or cry? Are you a shouter? NO? maybe you burn silently? There's open anger - but it may well be hidden anger.

As a Christian don't just internalise it. Some anger shows and some anger doesn't show. Some anger shows in a raised voice, that defiant walk out, but other anger is to get hot under the collar. Do you 'go quiet', seethe and simmer. If it is trying to control the outwards signs of anger for the sake of the other, then it can be commendable. However, it does not address the problem of anger.

I don't explode – but I won't let it go either. It festers, it is allowed free reign in my mind and grows into a monster which slowly eats me up.

So ask the question: Why am I getting irritated? why am I angry? Am I concerned solely for me, a rights' based mentality. Is this anger the right response to what has happened? Or is it because I am still irritable deep down? Is it because of my unchecked pride?

Being angry with one another is sin. A sin for you are failing to act in love.

God is slow to anger so James says: **"My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.**

1:19,20. **God is slow to anger - so we should be - and can be with his power.**

Someone said: Where the fire of love is kept in, the flames of wrath will not easily kindle, nor long keep burning. Love will never be angry without good cause, and will endeavour to confine the passions within proper limits, that they may not exceed the measure that is just, either in degree or duration.

✚ **If someone is in love it is almost impossible for them to be angry with each other. Anger cannot rest in the bosom where love reigns.**

In fact it should be impossible to be angry with those we love, - and easy to drop our resentments and be reconciled. *Ask The Lord to help*

■ **Do you love your brother or sister? Then don't be angry with them. x2**

A derivative word "paroxysm" means to provoke. Let us not be provoked to anger, Let us not provoke others to anger but **"let us consider how we may spur provoke one another on towards love and good deeds."** Heb 10:24