

“People with understanding control their anger; a hot temper shows great foolishness.” Proverbs 14:29 NLT

lectio // Proverbs 14:13-35

This chapter, as many of the proverbs, writes about a lot of emotions - BIG emotions. Anger, fear, pride, even jealousy run deep in our human DNA. Anger is a tough one. This passage speaks of the word CONTROL. I've struggled/learned from this powerful word over the past few years. I don't control external circumstances that happen to me... and don't act like you don't try to like me. However, I can and should control my RESPONSE. The trick in every emotional situation is to work on a response, not a reaction. And, believe me, some are skilled at pushing the reaction button so well that it drives me to burst into anger flames and torch everyone in the room! Ah, but I don't really “burst” or flame in public. I just shake, seethe and my blood pressure shoots up. I'm an enneagram nine at core, so I'm too concerned about innocent bystanders to totally go full volcano. Wisdom guys nail it when I can do the “understanding” trick in my head, real fast. So fast, because I try to flip into their shoes and figure out WHY they are behaving this way. I pretend for a moment, that their world is worse than the noxious gas they are fuming out on me. I can do this self-jedi-mind-trick with everyone except my wife. It's just sad, but can't give her the same instant shoe-swap as I give to others. So with the public I appear to be wise, but with my wife, I play the fool. But also, even when the understanding trick doesn't work, I don't go hot-lava on them, I just start planning a delayed, all out anger attack on what I should have said and pretend that “I'll get 'em next time.”

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Dad,

I get pretty embarrassed about my internal thoughts and emotions when it comes to interacting with others. I want to be all Andy Griffith with folks, but end up responding like Chris Farley! I work hard on guarding the amount of nonsense I “show” to anyone outside my family. I feel like being a Pastor trained me to always be aware of someone watching. Problem is, the emotions, the thoughts just get buried in my soul. I don't think that's healthy either. Jesus got very angry when the temple money-changers blocked the Gentiles from their access to you! He was also angry about those who hurt littles in their innocence. I wish I could properly have your wisdom to know when anger is fitting and when it's not.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root