Anger is something we’re all familiar with. We’ve been on the receiving end…and most likely on the giving end at one time or another. Anger is a societal cancer that is spreading at a rapid pace, with no end in sight. It has spilled on to our freeways to such an extent we need to label its presence as “road rage”. Wife-abuse and child-abuse give evidence of the growing problem. Rape, gang activity and murder in the workplace give evidence of how devastating the consequences of anger are. We have anger management programs to assist people in handling this devastating emotion, and medication in an attempt to help keep it under control.

Anger can be the most devastating of all emotions. Being filled with anger is like driving a car on ice. You think you’re doing just fine, then suddenly you’re out of control. Proverbs shows that anger begins its devastation by creating bitterness, withheld love, manipulation, deception and harsh language that if unchecked, can lead to tragic consequences.

A. The Source of Anger

Jealousy
6:34 For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge.

Foolishness
14:16-17 One who is wise is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is reckless and careless. A man of quick temper acts foolishly, and a man of evil devices is hated.

Harsh Words
15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Quarreling
17:14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out.

Speech
25:23 The north wind brings forth rain, and a backbiting tongue, angry looks.

B. The Damage from Anger

Causes Disunity
15:18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, and he who is slow to anger quiets contention.

29:22 A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.

Puts Life at Risk
20:2 The terror of a king is like the growling of a lion; whoever provokes him to anger forfeits his life.

Brings Personal Trouble
22:24-25 Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man, lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare.

Produces Strife
30:33 For pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife.
C. The Consequences of Anger

From Someone Else
14:35 A servant who deals wisely has the king's favor, but his wrath falls on one who acts shamefully.
16:14 A king's wrath is a messenger of death, and a wise man will appease it.
27:3 A stone is heavy, and sand is weighty, but a fool's provocation is heavier than both.

Assigns Blame
19:3 When a man's folly brings his way to ruin, his heart rages against the LORD.

D. The Subduing of Anger

With Patience
16:32 Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

With Generosity
21:14 A gift in secret averts anger, and a concealed bribe, strong wrath.

With Wisdom
29:8 Scoffers set a city aflame, but the wise turn away wrath.

With Self-Control
29:11 A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.

With Understanding
14:29 Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.
19:11 Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

E. The Signs of Anger

Recklessness
14:16 One who is wise is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is reckless and careless.

No Self-Control
29:11 A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.

Other Bible References: Gen. 49:5; Ps. 37:8; Eccl. 7:9; Matt. 5:22; Eph. 4:26; Col. 3:8; Jam. 1:19