

ACCEPTABLE ANGER....8.2.10

EPHESIANS 4:26-27

²⁶ "In your anger do not sin" : Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold.

In this era of road rage, is there a place for church rage? An explosive outburst that lets fly at whatever or whoever frustrates or threatens us? The answer is "probably not". Hitting out at others for whatever reason is bound to cause some damage no matter how justified we might feel. We don't feel entitled to scream at a song leader who chooses songs we don't like. We don't figure it is proper to yell abuse at a preacher who loves the sound of his own voice. We restrain from throttling study group members who show off too much of their bible knowledge.

And yet there is a place for anger. When confronted with serious injustice, rightly expressed anger can help remedy the problem. In avoiding wrongful anger we must not drift into apathetic complacency. The issue is what is underlying our anger. So often it is not a deep injustice issue but a personal frustration issue. We don't get what we want, someone gets in our way or on our nerves. So we get angry.

Paul here warns us against chewing over the hurt, dwelling on it. We are to deal with it promptly otherwise it festers and becomes toxic, much to the delight of the evil one. So we don't bury it under the guise of self restraint or good manners. We find a way to safely express it without wounding others or ourselves. We explore just what it is behind our anger. And so it can become an opportunity for growth rather than an occasion for destruction. We don't clam up, we don't blow up, but we grow up.

Blessings

David