

PREPARING AT HOME

August 6-12, 2018

Focus reading: Ephesians 4:25—5:2 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=391938420>)

Other lectionary readings: 2 Samuel 18:5–9, 15, 31–33; Psalm 130; John 6:35, 41–51

Theme: Anger to Love

Ephesians continues to teach us how we are to live as the embodiment of Christ in the world. Since we are one body, anything that hurts one member harms the entire body. As an illustration, consider how a sore finger or toe can impact your whole body, mind, and spirit! In my own journey with back pain I learned about “referred pain” that starts in one part of the body but is felt in a completely different spot! Likewise, pain and injustices felt by one person ripple throughout the entire community, affecting the welfare of everyone. Therefore, the author urges us to live peaceably with all; but that is not always easy! People make us angry! Here the author reassures us that anger is OK. We are bound to get angry, but we are not bound to sin because of our anger. We must check our anger and control our response to that anger. Anger that motivates us to right injustices can be a very good thing, but anger that festers and divides people has no place in the lives of believers. Anger is a powerful force if left unchecked. We are told not to go to bed angry. We must recognize the power of our anger and deal with it constructively. There is power in our words as well. Because our speech can destroy as well as build up, we must choose our words carefully. Honest work is to be valued. These specific, practical teachings lead us to a more general guideline: imitate God; live a life of love as Christ did.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH MY ANGER?

This letter says that it is OK to be angry, but we need to be careful about what we do with our anger. Talk with your child about what makes you and your child angry. What does that anger feel like? Draw it or shape it out of clay. Brainstorm things that you can do with your anger. Which of those responses are OK and which are not? Check in with your child from time to time to see how he or she is experiencing and dealing with anger.

POWER OF WORDS

We are reminded in this letter to use words that build up rather than tear down. Do a word-check in your home this week. Make up a sign to use when “tearing down” words are spoken and a sign to use when “building up” words are spoken (like thumbs up or down). Use the signs to call attention to the power of words. If “tearing down” words are spoken, turn things around with “building up” words.

PRAYER

Loving God,
you love us and forgive us.
Help us to remember that loving you means
loving others.
Amen.

Prospect Presbyterian Church, Maplewood, NJ, www.prospectchurch.org

Rita Boyer, rita@prospectchurch.org