

Living The Word Devotionals

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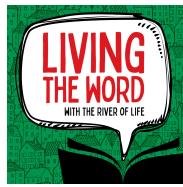
# The Wisdom of Kindness



By Katie Cooper

*Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."*

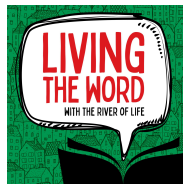
Proverbs is full of general wisdom for life. Solomon offers wise advice on life to his son, and in this verse, he talks about how to respond to anger or hostility. This verse was one I memorized in my early 20's. I worked in retail for ten years before working full time in ministry. I often think about how God prepared me for full time



ministry through those years learning to serve people no matter how they spoke to you or treated you. I often saw Solomon's wisdom in this verse play out when a customer would be unhappy with something and become angry and upset when the company policy was not the solution, they desired a soft or gentle answer from me in response would often defuse an explosive situation.

The word "wrath" used in this context is translated to rage. This is the kind of volatile anger that would eventually lead to physical conflict. When we are insulted, embarrassed, provoked to anger the easiest course of action is to respond with a similar rage. In my case most times even if the customer made a scene and tried to belittle me, I did not have the freedom to respond how I may have liked to in the moment. I was in a workplace as an employee. Solomon's wisdom in remaining soft and gentle however often caught the person off guard, and they would eventually apologize for their misplaced frustration at the situation. If I had responded with hurtful, cutting, or bitter words then it could have enraged the person further and caused more hostility.

This wasn't only used in my workplace, this wisdom has also proven to be worth its weight in gold in more personal situations. It has often kept me from responding in a hurtful way in situations where I have felt another's anger towards me in a more personal way. James dedicates a chapter of his letter about taming the tongue. We ought to consider the words we say with a cool temper that refuses to fight fire with fire. A wise person answers gently, and that gentleness extinguished the fire. A calm and polite response can take a great deal of tension out of an argument.



This response calls for wisdom, thoughtfulness, concern for the other person, and self-discipline. Where do you stand with this? Do you struggle with anger or being offended easily? It is the believer's responsibility to show kindness to our enemies, just our Christ has shown kindness to us while we were still enemies (Romans 5:8). So, Christian memorize this verse, ask the Holy Spirit to tame your tongue, work this wisdom into your heart that we may be a people of peace and not a people of wrath.

Make your move Christian!