A Soft Answer

A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:1)

In the preceding passage, the wise man gives some great relationship advice. We've all found ourselves in confrontations at some point in our lives. While some folks revel in a good fight, most of us would rather avoid those uncomfortable situations all together. The bible is not short on advice and warnings about controlling our anger and resisting the temptation to fly off of the handle when things frustrate us. Uncontrolled anger and confrontation always lead to hurt feelings and alienation in our relationships. However, the mature Christian has developed a sure fire way to handle anger through prayer and self-control. I suppose one of the hardest things we have to do is keep our cool while someone is letting us have it "with both barrels". But that's exactly what this proverb is telling us to do. Remember the old cartoons, where the characters avoided getting blown up by a bomb by licking their fingers and pinching off the fuse? You and I can "diffuse" difficult situations by following these simple suggestions (all of which are encouraged in the Scriptures). First, be kind and patient, even if the other person is being unreasonable. Don't fight back, because nothing can take the momentum out of a fight better than an unwilling sparring partner. And finally, never go to bed angry, even if the other person is unwilling to make up. Be sure that you are at peace with yourself and God, then pray about your relationship with the person with whom you've had a disagreement.

"Be angry, and do not sin do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26)

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