



**SERIES: A SEASON OF HOPE**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Wednesday; December 16, 2020**

**Scripture: Proverbs 14:29 & James 1:19**

**TITLE: Don't Flip Your Lid**

What things in life make you angry? What are those things that are hot button issues for you? What are the things that trip your trigger - that make you go from one to ten in under five seconds flat? One of them for me is in the area of communication.

My wife recently went to an exercise class that she teaches, but she did not arrive at her usual time. I texted her - no response. I called her - no response. Twenty minutes turned into 40 minutes, turned into an hour, which turned into two hours, where finally she messaged me back, and said, "Sorry, can't talk right now."

I will tell you, incrementally over those two hours, I went from concerned, to frustrated, to angry. And then when I got the "I'm sorry, I can't talk right now", I nearly flipped my lid, and went screaming out the door.

She finally called me around ten o'clock, and I let her have it. And she took it like a champ. She listened to me go off, and all she said was, "I know, I know, I know. I'm sorry. I should have called, but my friend needed to talk", and she began to tell me about the seriousness of this discussion.

I wish I would have remembered what Proverbs 14:29 (ESV) said about my anger. It says, "[Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.](#)"

You see, my wife didn't mean anything malicious by not communicating with me. We have an expectation that if we're going to run late, we will text each other, and let the other person know, "Hey, this is what's happening. I could be late; I don't even know how long this is going to take." But you see, when my wife called me, I was prepared to let her have it. In fact, I'd been rehearsing and thinking about the lecture I was going to give her, instead of doing what Proverbs say, which is gain understanding.

This was 1000 years before James would ever write, "[be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.](#)" (James 1:19b) If today, you are struggling with anger, the question you should ask yourself is, why? Why are you so angry? Now, I don't know what your answer is, but I can guarantee that a piece of the problem is in the area of understanding.

We just came out of a very tense election cycle. No one on either side of the aisle, or very few people on either side of the aisle, cared to gain an understanding of the other person's position. Instead, there was a lot of anger and frustration and attacking.

This posture to become quick to anger isn't just in politics, and it's not just in the marriage. It happens in the workplace. It happens with children, with parents, with friends, with neighbors. Virtually every area of life lends itself to anger, when understanding is not pursued.

My challenge for you today is, the next time you begin to feel angry, ask yourself why. Ask yourself, why is it that you are reacting the way that you are? Then don't rehearse the lecture, or the insult, or the way to get even. Instead, rehearse the questions you will ask to gain understanding, before you jump to anger, or respond out of anger. And then, ask God for the strength to seek understanding, and ask Him to guide your emotions and your actions.

Today, pursue understanding, and leave behind your anger.