



# Links Players

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## Slow To Anger

*...let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.... (James 1:9)*

How many times have you found yourself facing a challenging situation or a rough day, feeling overwhelmed by it all, and instinctively grabbing your golf bag, tossing it in the car, and heading to the course?

I can't count how many times I've done this myself—heading to the range to release my frustrations. Not with reckless hitting but with the smooth, rhythmic motion of striking solids. In a way, golf becomes a form of therapy, offering a release from the stress and the chaos.

Now, some of you might never have thought to use golf—or any sport—as a way to relieve frustration, but I certainly have. There's something about the focus and intention required in the game that seems to help diminish the intensity of anger and stress.

I recently had a conversation with a friend about the emotion of anger, and he shared an article from Science Alert about a current study on anger. The study found that venting or talking about a problem might make anger worse.

In our modern world, we often hear about the benefits of talk therapy, which can be incredibly helpful for sharing personal challenges. However, when it comes to anger, brooding over it or constantly discussing it may not be the best way to resolve it.

So, what does the Bible say about anger? St. James reminds us, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger” (Jas. 1:19). Proverbs offers further wisdom, saying, “Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense” (Prov. 19:11), and “Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city” (Prov. 16:32).

Notice the theme here? Slow to anger—three key words that are worth holding on to. Even the Lord is slow to anger, as Psalm 103:8 reminds us: “The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”

Anger itself is not a sinful emotion. God has given us anger for a reason, and it can be a healthy emotion when experienced in the right context. However, how we handle anger is where our choice comes in. As St. Paul writes, “Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil” (Eph. 4:26).

Interestingly, the Science Alert article also points out that engaging in sports, particularly those involving balls, can be one of the best ways to deal with anger. It states: “Ball sports and other

physical activities involving play seemed to reduce physiological arousal, suggesting exertion might be more useful for reducing anger if it's fun.”

This resonates with me—it's no surprise that I've often turned to golf when I'm feeling frustrated or upset. In fact, playing golf, with its calm pace and the focus it requires, helps me slow down and process my emotions in a healthier way.

Next time anger starts to take hold of you, ask the Lord to help you slow down, grab your golf bag, and head to the course. As the Bible encourages us, we're called to be slow to anger, and sometimes the best way to do that is to step away, engage in a physical activity, and allow the time and space to calm our minds and hearts.

**Prayer: Lord, help us be like you. Slow to anger.**

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Meredith Kirk

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