

Don't Let it All Out

Conventional wisdom tells us that when we are upset or angry to “let it all out” and get it off our chest. But while reading in the Proverbs I came across this extraordinarily different idea:

*A fool vents all his feelings,
But a wise man holds them back.
(Proverbs 29:11)*

Could it be that in some cases it's better to keep my mouth shut rather than letting all of my feelings be known? Many a harmful word has been spoken while fueled by strong emotions. Not every situation is the same but we must use God-given wisdom to determine when to speak and when to keep quite. Back in the 90's I had a college course on the introduction to the Internet. One thing I remember from the class was that you never send an email in anger but wait a day and see how you might respond differently to the situation that upset you. Good advice that holds true today.

I'm reminded of the trial of Jesus when He was accused by the chief priest and elders and “He answered nothing.” (Matt. 27:12). Jesus could have easily spoken a word and destroyed them all but rather “He held His peace” (Matt. 26:63). We should never hold things in and allow them to fester into a worse situation. Rather we should take a breath, hold our response until after we've had time to settle down. “So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”
(James 1:19)

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