



Living the Jesus Way

Session 2:

How to Handle Anger

Matthew 5:21-26 (NIV)

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’²² But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister, will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

²³ “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you,²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

²⁵ “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison.²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Class Notes:

Question: Is it wrong or even a sin to be angry?

- Anger - *Many Hebrew words for anger that range from rage to ‘anger’, ‘wrath’ or even ‘sorrow’*

1. What is anger?

- An emotion, a natural passion
- Can be a manifestation of an underlying root feeling
- Can be a response to something other than our feeling...based on principle
- Physically, causes changes in our bodies
- Involves ‘self’
- Something to be mastered, not managed

2. Why is the Bible contradictory on anger...or is it?

- Matthew 5:22 - What do we make of this...angry people will face God's judgement?
- Ephesians 4:31 - We should not get angry at all?
- Ephesians 4:26-27 - Is it okay to be angry?
- Consider James 1:19-20
- Consider Romans 12:19-21
- Consider Matthew 23:1-36 as a model response to righteous anger
- Unrighteous anger - Seeks to hurt
 - Genesis 4:1-16 Cain and Abel
 - Genesis 34:1-31 Simeon and Levi
- Righteous anger - A response to an offense against God out of love
 - John 2:13-17 Jesus clears the temple courts
 - Mark 3:1-5 Jesus responds to the Pharisees regarding healing on Sunday

3. Consider the Cause

- Righteous versus unrighteous
- Rational versus irrational
- Constructive versus destructive
- Love of others versus love of self

4. Pause, reflect, discuss

- Can only happen if we acknowledge our anger
- Psalm 145:8
- Proverbs 14:17

5. Mastering Anger instead of Managing Anger

- Brain in gear before the mouth and actions are in gear
- Winning the battle in your mind - Matthew 5:21-22A
- Consider Ephesians 4:26-27
- Consider Matthew 5:22B
- Consider Matthew 5:23-24
- Consider Matthew 5:25
- Responding to anger Luke 15:11-32 The father, a dancing God, of the prodigal son
- What is the price of your anger...righteous anger versus unrighteous anger
- Repent and reconcile...pursue the peace...Matthew 5:22B; Matthew 5:25

“Lord, Let my mastery of my anger be an alternative to the world's culture and society:

- The power of the cross
- The blood of Christ
- The power of the resurrection

Amen”

“FORGIVENESS IS NOT AN EMOTION...FORGIVENESS IS AN ACT OF WILL.” Corrie Ten Boom

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Jesus' call to another way is unrealistic in today's increasingly stressful and fragmented world or a standard worth aiming for?
2. Is there ever a time when anger is justified? Can you share an experience you have had in this context?
3. How can you make sure you have allowed enough time to pass before getting angry in a situation? What practical ways have you found helpful in pressing the pause button?
4. Is it possible to only speak the words of love?
5. How does anger effect our decisions? How can we control our minds?
6. What is the cost of unrestrained anger? Can you share consequences of unrestrained anger?
7. When is there a time for anger and a time for peace and reconciliation? What do you see as the characteristics of a time for anger and a time for peace and reconciliation?