

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. Scripture text: **Ephesians 4:25-27.**

Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE *of you*, WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. [26] BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, [27] and do not give the devil an opportunity.

-  B. Third in a series on how to overcome certain personal problems. This lesson is on how to use anger.
-  C. Anger can be destructive; when it persists as aggression, un-forgiveness, or revenge.
- D. Anger can be constructive; if it motivates us to correct an injustice or to think creatively.

## II. THE BIBLE AND ANGER.

A. In the OT there are almost 600 references to wrath or anger, and this theme continues into the NT.

B. Since anger is part of God's nature, we cannot conclude that anger, per se, is bad. Divine anger is vigorous, intense, consistent, controlled, and invariably an expression of indignation at sin.

-  C. The Bible never criticizes the anger of God but it warns against human anger repeatedly. This is NOT evidence of a double standard. Anger against injustice is right and good in both God and man.
  1. God is wise, sovereign, powerful, perfect, and all-knowing. He never misinterprets a situation, never feels threatened, never loses control, and is always angered by sin and injustice.
  2. Humans, in contrast, misinterpret circumstances, make mistakes in judgment, react quickly when we feel threatened or hurt, and sometimes respond with vengeance and vindictiveness. Therefore, man's anger can be harmful and dangerous.

-  D. Five things to consider:

1. Human anger is normal and not necessarily sinful. Jesus showed anger (Mk. 3:5).

*And after looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said^ to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.*

We are created in God's image, which includes the emotion of wrath or anger.

2. Human anger can be harmful. Anger can become sin in two ways:

- a. The explosion of anger (blowing up).
- b. The internalization of anger (clamming up).

See Eccl. 7:9 and Prov. 16:32.

*(Prov 16:32) He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.*

*(Eccl 7:9) Do not be eager in your heart to be angry, For anger resides in the bosom of fools.*

3. Human anger often results from distorted perception. "Every man's anger is righteous indignation in his own eyes." We are NOT always able to judge between real injustice and apparent injustice. As a result we become angry over things which we think are wrong but it would not be considered wrong if we had all the facts.

4. Human anger often leads to sin. Some problems are:

- a. Vengeance including bitterness and hatred.
- b. Verbal abuse making one a fool (Prov. 29:11).

*A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back.*

5. Human anger can be controlled. The Bible says you can control your anger:

- a. Anger must be acknowledged (Col. 3:8).  
*But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.*
- b. Outbursts must be restrained (see Psa. 73).
- c. Confession and forgiveness must be utilized.
- d. Ruminating and revenge must be resisted (1Pet. 2:23).  
*and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;*

### III. THE CAUSES OF ANGER.

-  A. One, injustice.  
Undoubtedly this is one of the most valid reasons for anger. Perhaps the only valid reason, yet it is one of the least common causes of anger.
- B. Two, frustration.  
A frustration is an obstacle that hinders our progress toward a goal. It does not follow that anger increases automatically as one's frustration level goes up, but the potential for anger increases as frustrations increase.
- C. Three, threat and/or hurt.  
Sometimes when we are threatened and made aware of our own imperfections we respond in anger toward those who fail to meet our expectations of them. This directs attention away from ourselves, hides the fact that we are hurt or threatened, and let's us feel better at someone else's expense.
- D. Four, learning.  
To some extent, anger may be a learned response. By watching or listening to others, people learn to become more easily angered and more outwardly aggressive.

### IV. PREVENTING AND HANDLING ANGER.

-  A. One, **admit your anger**.  
Anger that is denied will never be eliminated.
- B. Two, **consider the sources of your anger**.  
There can be value in asking, "What kinds of things make me angry?"
- C. Three, **the art of evaluation**.  
There is value in asking ourselves some questions:
  1. What is making me feel angry?
  2. Why am I feeling anger and not some other emotion?
  3. Is my anger really justified? Or am I jumping to conclusions?
  4. How might others view the situation that makes me angry?
  5. How might the one who is making me angry view this situation?
  6. Is there another way I can view the situation?
  7. Is there anything I can do to change the situation and reduce my anger?
- D. Four, **avoid anger-arousing situations and people**.  
Problems are never solved if we avoid them in an attempt to maintain peace. But one can stay away from situations, events or people which are likely to arouse unnecessary anger.
-  E. Five, **avoid ruminating**.  
When people get angry they often go through the day meditating on the cause of their anger. As this ruminating continues the original causes are blown up into false proportions and anger increases. This kind of thinking can be fun, at first, because it lets the thinker fantasize about his/her superiority. But this kind of thinking (ruminating) is destructive and harmful--it must be resisted.
- F. Six, **self-control**.  
Slow your reactions. Resist your initial reaction (Prov. 15:1).  
*A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.*  
Don't look for the worst in every situation. Don't be constantly critical, always negative or invariably hostile.
- G. Seven, **emphasize humility, confession, and forgiveness**.  
Some people apparently prefer to remain angry rather than to risk admitting weakness or failure. It is humbling to admit anger and having lost self-control. Confession to God and possibly to others can be a kind of catharsis. People who refuse to forgive others, in turn will not be forgiven. This has great relevance for those who hold grudges. Their anger will continue with misery and tension. It would seem that forgiveness is the ultimate disposition of anger.

H. Eight, **grow spiritually**.

Xians who sincerely desire to be led by the HS will discover a slow decline in strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, and disputes with others. As the influence of the Spirit grows there will be a decline in anger and hostility. A life after the Spirit is opposed to a life after the flesh.

V. **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**



- A. Rom. 8:31 says, “If God is for who can be against us?”
- B. Rom. 8:35 says, “What shall separate us from the love of Christ?”
- C. Rom. 8:37 says, “...we overwhelmingly conquer through Him...”.
- D. You can overcome your anger. Come to X.
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.