

# Life Group Lesson

## July 11, 2010

### “Anger”

*"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." - Matthew 5:21-22 NIV*

**ICEBREAKER:** Name a time when you let your anger get out of control? What were the consequences you faced?

#### **LESSON:**

Benjamin Franklin said *"Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame. Anger is never without a reason, but seldom with a good one."*

Anger is probably the strongest of all human emotions. It is a common and unavoidable emotion that is a natural, almost automatic response to emotional or physical injury, mistreatment or opposition, resulting in a desire to strike out at something or someone. That being said, we cannot let anger spiral out of control. We must control it. Anger can be constructive or destructive. It is not the proper response or action from a Christian.

Anger can be indignation, rage, fury, and wrath. It can develop, if left unchecked, into offense, bitterness, resentment and hatred. It is like a fire in a forest. If left untended, it can spread to a massive, uncontrollable force with devastating consequences.

*In the spring of 1894, the Baltimore Orioles came to Boston to play a routine baseball game. But what happened that day was anything but routine. The Orioles' John McGraw got into a fight with the Boston third baseman. Within minutes all the players from both teams had joined in the brawl. The warfare quickly spread to the grandstands. Among the fans the conflict went from bad to worse. Someone set fire to the stands and the entire ballpark burned to the ground. Not only that, but the fire spread to 107 other Boston buildings as well.*

So how do we control this “wildfire” we call anger?

The Bible says this: **"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." (Proverbs 16:32)**

What does it mean to “be slow to anger”?

What steps can you take to “be slow to anger”?

According to this verse, if you can control anger and your spirit, you have done something greater than what?

“Slow to anger” is easier said than done. I’ve heard it said that those who fly into a rage always make a bad landing. Are there examples of people in the Bible who were angry?

Jonah didn't like God's plan with Nineveh, and burned of anger. In wrath, Moses asked God not to wipe out the unbelieving Israelites in the desert. Paul warns the Galatians against anger. The Psalmist says to be angry, but not sin. The Corinthians were moved with indignation. The religious establishment was very angry that Jesus healed on the Sabbath. This type of anger they had was a bitter anger and rage.

"Wrath" means heat, rage, anger, poison and venom, describing a strong emotional state, resulting in rage. This is the dangerous version of anger, for it inflames everybody who comes close. That's why Rebekah advised Jacob to stay away from Esau.

How do we deal with rage? Solomon said,

**"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Proverbs 15:1)**

Why do you think we turn to harsh words instead of soft answers first?

What does Solomon mean by “soft answer”? Does it mean let others run over you?

According to this verse, when we get angry, what does it stir up?

*A lady once came to Billy Sunday and tried to rationalize her angry outbursts. "There's nothing wrong with losing my temper," she said. "I blow up, and then it's all over."*

*"So does a shotgun," Sunday replied, "and look at the damage it leaves behind!"*

Paul told the Colossians,

**"But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath" (Colossians 3:8).**

**How do you “put off anger and wrath”? (The answers are in verses 12-17.)**

*“Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

## **BE ANGRY AND DO NOT SIN**

How can you **“Be angry, and do not sin”**? (Ephesians 4:26)

What was Jesus angry at when he was angry and turned over tables and ran people out of the temple with a whip? He was angry at sin. He did not sin. Is your anger at sin or is your sin anger?

The second part of Ephesians 4:26 says, “***Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath***”.

What does this mean? (This isn't a hard question)

When should we deal with anger? (time span)

What do we do with God to get rid of anger? With others?

*Not only is getting rid of anger before you go to bed a good idea, you'll sleep better!*

God wants you to overcome anger. It only grows out of control. He desires you to be at peace with all men. Hebrews 12:14 says, "**Let it be your ambition to live at peace with all men.**"

**If you are having a problem with anger, resentment, strife, bitterness, rage, wrath, fury, etc., you should do the following:**

- 1. Confide in someone that you have a problem with anger – or are angry with someone.**
- 2. Confess it to the Lord. Apply the verses above.**
- 3. Pray the following prayer:**

#### **Prayer To Overcome Bitterness and Resentment**

Lord Jesus, there is anger in my heart and I cannot root it out. I know that I should calm down and offer the hurt and disappointment to You, but my emotion is running away with me. Help me to overcome this weakness and give me peace of heart as well as mind. Let me learn from this experience and grow into a better human being. I acknowledge that I've held resentment and bitterness against (name). I confess this as sin and ask You to forgive me. I forgive (name). Remind me, Lord, to not hold any more resentments, but rather to love this person. Father, I ask You to also forgive (name) . Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' Holy Name, Amen.