

Managing Anger, Part 2

Last week I shared with you part one of this message, let me refresh the points:

I. RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION IS WHEN WE TAKE SIDES WITH GOD AND EXPRESS FROM HIS VIEWPOINT THE OFFENSE AND WHY IT SHOULD CEASE AND DESIST.

John 2:13-16

A. The offense is recognized as against God.

B. Our Lord never lost His temper.

Matthew 12:19; Matthew 11:29; Matthew 9:13; Matthew 12:7; John 10:18

C. No one was physically hurt.

Romans 12:18; James 1:19, 20; Matthew 5:22

II. ANGER CAUSES LIFETIME AND SOMETIMES ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES.

Genesis 49:5-7; Romans 12:19

In Numbers 20, Moses angrily struck the rock God commanded him to speak to and for this final unbelieving outburst, he forfeited the prize of the Promised Land. He could not enter. How many times, in a moment's rage, good jobs have been lost, marriages have gone on the rocks, friendships have been severed and people have been hurt with irrevocable consequences?

III. SEE THE IRRATIONALITY OF ANGER.

Jonah 4:1-4; Jonah 4:10,11

God's word to Jonah is clearly stated. Jonah 4:4: "Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?"

Jonah 4:9: "And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry...?"

IV. ANGER IS A CATALYST FOR OTHER SINS.

The Bible says, "An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression" (Proverbs 29:22). Woody Hayes, a famous football coach threw his career down the drain in one moment of temper. A father of a little girl will suffer permanent damage because her father was involved in road rage. Sadly illustrations are far too numerous of people who fell into other pitfalls because of the loss temper. We cannot escape this conclusion: anger is never a sin that stands alone. It always brings other heartbreaking events with it.

My dad had a sermon that stands out in my memory. It was entitled, "Please Pass the Salt." The gist of the message revealed how sins accompany other sins. This is always the case, but it is illustrated vividly in the sin of anger.

God gives great commendation to those who control their temper: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs 16:32). We have talked about anger and its evil effects; let's get into the management:

How do I know if I have a problem with anger? People will tell you. The Bible says, "...In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (II Corinthians 13:1). If you keep hearing from others that you have a temper problem, don't go into denial. Facing the problem is a big part of solving the problem. Have you ever gotten hot and bothered about something and when it is over you are exhausted? This is a sign you need anger management. Another problem with not controlling anger is that it is never over. Just thinking about what made you angry or sometimes thinking about certain people upsets you. Uncontrolled anger turns into hatred and bitterness. I have heard it said, "Bitterness is the only chemical that destroys the container that holds it." God doesn't want anger controlling you; He wants you controlling anger. The Bible says in Ephesians 4:31, 32, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." How can we manage anger?

A. Make up your mind; you do not have to be angry.

Behind every command of God He places omnipotence (all power). God never gives us a command that He does not supply the accompanying ability to perform. God commands us to stop being angry. He says in Psalm 37:8, "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil."

B. Do not feed anger.

Two things contribute to the intensification of anger:

1. Vitriolic and venomous words intended to hurt can sometimes be more damaging than a physical wound. Proverbs 15:1; Psalm 19:14; Psalm 141:3

First of all, be done with attempts to hurt people by your comments. In all interchanges keep in mind Proverbs 15:1.

2. We should never try to own something that is not ours.

Our so-called insightful observations and entering into a fray which is not ours is intrusive and almost always will never be appreciated. The Bible is strong on this: Proverbs 20:3; Proverbs 26:17. God scathingly denounces this when He speaks of gossips: "...wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" (I Timothy 5:13).

C. Do not esteem anger.

High honor is given to the person who conquers self! Proverbs 16:32.

To congratulate someone on his or her outburst or subtle anger is unbiblical. God does not give any praise to a person out of control. He rebukes it and congratulates the one who controls his temper. Let us have a goal to first conquer ourselves. God does not esteem a Kahn, Napoleon or a Caesar; God esteems the person who controls himself.

D. Give no response to offense.

Offence does not have to be addressed: Proverbs 19:11; Psalm 119:165.

God categorizes those who do not control their responses as fools: Proverbs 29:20; Proverbs 29:11; Proverbs 18:6 and 7.

E. Kindness done with no ulterior motive turns away anger.

Proverbs 21:14. We are not referring to random acts of kindness, but rather things done on purpose. When we do something kind for someone who has done wrong to us, the love that was expressed on Calvary is in the air. Kindness with no hope of requital totally disarms a potential enemy. This is an essential teaching of Jesus. Matthew 5:44

CONCLUSION:

1. Don't justify your anger by saying you are just angry with yourself.

Genesis 45:5: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life."

2. Anger is hard to live with.

Proverbs 21:19: "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman."

3. Anger is contagious.

Proverbs 22:24 and 25: "Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul."

4. Anger suppressed is still anger.

Luke 15:28: "And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him." This is the attitude of the older brother who was silently seething in covert anger while his prodigal younger brother was more overt in his actions. Both types of anger are wrong.

5. Anger can be expressed or suppressed but healing comes when confessed.

James 5:16: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Think about it, lives are lost and lifelong relationships are lost in a moment of anger. You may win the argument, but lose the relationship. Through Jesus, bring your anger under control or be controlled by anger. Do not take it lightly. Do not tolerate it in your life. Deal with it firmly and decisively. Do it, starting today!

-Pastor Johnny Pope-