

The Beauty of a Forgiving Personality

From Forgiven To Forgiving

God's forgiveness

It was as if God said to him, “I loved you while you were committing this sin, I loved you before, I love you still, and I will love you forever”

(John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, p. 89, put into modern English)

The true nature of the fear of God

The fear of God produces “true tenderness of heart, true godly softness of spirit”

(John Bunyan, *A Treatise on the Fear of God*, Works, Vol. 1, pp. 460-61)

Ephesians 4:31-32
Message

**Put off the fruits of sinful anger
and replace them with the
fruits of forgiveness**

When anger rots (v. 31) vs. When forgiveness blooms (v. 32)

Ephesians 4:31-32

I. Put away the fruits of sinful anger (Eph 4:31)

The stench of anger's rotting will pollute you and your relationships

Six fruits of
sinful anger:

Bitterness

Sharp, piercing or pungent; bitter foods

Bitterness or resentment (Acts 8:23; Rom 3:14; here; and Heb 12:15)

“Bitterness is the long-term, slow accrual of anger”

(John Fry, ACBC post,
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/resource-library/articles/bitterness-and-her-cohorts/>)

Bitterness

John Eadie explained that bitterness is “that fretted and irritable state of mind that keeps a man in perpetual animosity—that inclines him to harsh and uncharitable opinions of men and things—that makes him sour, crabbed, and repulsive in his general demeanor—that brings a scowl over his face, and infuses venom into the words of his tongue”

(Ephesians, p. 357)

Six fruits of
sinful anger:

Wrath & Anger

Wrath (*thumos*) describes a more temporary passionate rage

Anger (*orge*) when used in conjunction with “wrath” describes an abiding hostility

Put off all sinful anger, that which boils up, the abiding state of anger, and everything in between

Six fruits of sinful anger:

Clamor, Slander & Malice

Clamor describes someone crying, screaming or shouting. Here it refers to shouting in anger or complaining.

Slander - blaspheming God or slandering people. Here it is speaking against others to harm them.

Malice - plotting to do evil to someone

Ephesians 4:31-32

II. Replace them with the fruits of forgiveness (Eph 4:32)

Replace those six fruits of sinful anger with three fruits of forgiveness

Three fruits of forgiveness:

Kindness

Kind describes that which is good, pleasant or kind (Mt 11:30; Lk 5:39; Rom 2:4; Eph 2:7; 1 Pet 2:3)

Tender-hearted - Figurative location of our feelings or emotions; compassion, tender mercy or being tender-hearted

Forgiving - grace of forgiveness (Lk 7:42-43; 2 Cor 2:7, 10; Col 2:13; 3:13). LSB “graciously forgive”

Ephesians 4:31-32

III. Become a forgiving person because God has forgiven you (Eph 4:32)

Forgiveness enables fellowship to flourish

Biblical Forgiveness

When you forgive someone, you promise to:

1. Not bring it up again to the person you forgave
2. Not bring it up to others
3. Not dwell on it yourself

(Bible pictures of God's forgiveness: Ps 51:1, 9; 103:12; Micah 7:18-19; Isa 1:18; 38:17; 43:25; 44:22; Jer 31:34)

Imitate your Father (Eph 4:25-32)

God's character:

- God is truth
- God is angry about sin
- God gives generously
- God builds up through His word
- God is kind, compassionate and forgiving

Your character:

- Speak truth
- Be angry and do not sin
- Work hard so you can give
- Build up others through your words
- Be kind, tender-hearted and forgiving