

Start a new seven-week series out of the Sermon on the Mount – Righteous Living
Living in obedience to God, reflecting Christ’s character, and pursuing what is pleasing to Him in every area of life

Anger – Lust – Divorce – Oaths – Retaliation – Loving Enemies – Giving to the Needy
For seven weeks we are going to be very practical in our sermon structure...remind you
Doing righteous things gets you no closer to heaven but does draw you closer to God
Talking to believers...theses are behaviors believers should be holding to and living out
Today we talk about anger and reconciliation – Cannot stress the importance of these verse
Have you ever been really angry? Not someone cut you off in a parking lot...really angry
We had a outreach pastor in Iowa who I was REALLY angry with...call him Flug...Doug
I didn’t like Doug...we just saw ministry two diriment ways...I talked about him behind back
One of the reasons I didn’t like Doug...he was smarter than me...Interpretation Conference
Doug so kind...helped me through...I was super convicted...we worked through this passage

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. ²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. ²⁶ Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

I ended up asking Doug to forgive me...and we became great friends...ordination coach
There are relationships you are missing out on due to anger...and it is affecting your worship
Big Idea - Don’t let anger ruin your walk and wreck your life

- Anger can ruin your walk with God - Uncontrolled anger disrupts our fellowship w/ God
- Anger can wreck your relationships - Anger rarely stays contained...it comes out
 - Harsh Words – Insults – Bitterness – Retaliation – Withdrawing
- Anger can control your life – Met someone who anger is just their disposition
Friends’ dad growing up...angry all the time...worst spending the night at his house
You do not want anger to be your identity...you want your identity to be Christ

Not all anger is bad anger...I want to share with you a verse that exposes that truth
“Be angry and do not sin.” — Ephesians 4:26 | Righteous vs Unrighteous anger

Righteous Anger	Sinful Anger
Concerned about God's glory	Concerned about self
Opposes genuine injustice	Reacts to personal offense
Controlled by truth	Controlled by emotion
Seeks restoration	Seeks revenge
Motivated by love	Motivated by pride

So anger isn’t out problem...unrighteous anger is
I’m going to give you three things to do with your anger from this passage

- 1. Refuse to give anger a harbor — vv. 21–22a**
²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.

Think about all emotions are boats on a lake...there is anger...floating...don’t give harbor
When you feel it welling up...cast it back out into the water and say, ‘no thank you’

Most of us know how to control our behavior when other people are watching

- Keep our mouths shut. Smile when we're frustrated. Walk away from an argument
- Jesus goes deeper than outward behavior. He addresses what’s happening inside heart
- Religious leaders of Jesus' day were concerned about murder...long before taking life
- It begins with **anger, hatred, contempt, and a heart that devalues another person**
Jesus is showing us that God's standard of righteousness reaches deeper than our actions

- a. Recognize the Seriousness of Anger** - “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’”
Jesus begins with the sixth commandment: “You shall not murder.” — Exodus 20:13
- Murder is a serious sin, life is valuable because people are made in the image of God.
 - He doesn't disagree with command...He exposes the **deeper principle behind it.**
“I haven't murdered anyone, therefore I'm doing fine.”

- A person can avoid murder while harboring hatred.
 - A person can avoid physical violence while destroying someone with words
 - A person can keep their hands clean while their heart is filled with bitterness
- b. Recognize the Sinfulness of Anger** - “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment...”

The issue here is harboring sinful anger toward another person...leads to contempt
Jesus exposes the progression: Anger → Contempt → Destruction

- Anger = emotional response something perceive as wrong, unfair, or hurtful
- Contempt = goes beyond anger by devaluing the person who offended us
Anger, “You did something wrong.” - Contempt, “There is something wrong with you.”
Anger is hostility toward someone has done; contempt hostility toward who someone is

- c. Reject the Contempt That Destroys Others** “...whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.”

Our words can become weapons – Anyone in here have a sharp tongue when angry

- You can kill someone's reputation without touching them.
- You can crush someone's spirit without raising your hand.
- You can destroy a relationship with a sentence | My son remembers the one time
Examine your heart – Control your words – Release your Resentment

- 2. Reconcile Before You Worship — vv. 23–24**
²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Pursue reconciliation because our relationship with others affects our worship
It is possible to come to church, sing the songs, pray the prayers, listen to the sermon, and participate in worship while knowing there is an unresolved relationship in our lives
Jesus confronts that kind of compartmentalized faith

- Jesus is saying: *You cannot use religious activity to excuse relational brokenness*
- a. Recognize the Relationship That Needs Repair** - ²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you
- Notice who is in the wrong here...your brother has something against you
 - You have to get to a place where you can recognize when you have wronged someone
- Ask, “Is there someone I have offended, hurt, or sinned against?” Answer is ‘yes’
Go to them – Confess your sin – Seek Forgiveness | Girl at the gym

- b. **Prioritize Reconciliation Over Religious Routine** - ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar & go
This is a striking passage – This would be like you getting up right now and leaving
Jesus tells the worshiper to interrupt the worship service and go deal with the relationship
- He is not saying worship is unimportant...we had night of worship last night...awesome
 - **Genuine worship cannot be separated from how we treat people | Communion**
- c. **Pursue Reconciliation Personally and Promptly**

“First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

“Be reconciled” means we should take intentional steps toward restoring the relationship

Go → Reconcile → Return → Worship

This does not mean every relationship will immediately be restored. Reconciliation requires the participation of another person. But **we are responsible for our part**

Romans 12:18 “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

In Christianity there are no relationships that cannot and should not be reconciled through grace
I had a girlfriend in high school...treated poorly...because a Christian...sought her out...(STORY)

- Have you been wronged? Have you wronged someone? Do the hard work of reconciliation
Remember...Jesus left his offering at the cross to reconcile you to the Father...seems moot
What wrong has been committed against you that is worth your worship being compromised
Admit your wrong - Don't make excuses - Listen to their perspective – Pursue Peace

3. **Resolve Conflict Quickly — vv. 25–26**

²⁵Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. ²⁶Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

We’ve talked about heart condition – don’t harbor anger; we’ve reconciled before worship
Now Jesus brings it to a very practical level. God’s commands matter at every level:

Matter for our righteousness - Matter for our relationships - Matter for our success

- So he says listen: my command against anger is for your own good in this life too
- We have opponents, or accusers, in life all the time...not taking to court...against us
- Could be a dispute at work, could be about money or the tool we borrowed from them
- Could be family about something that happened last time we got together
- Could be parents on our kids sports team. Here’s what they all have in common

The longer the conflict lingers, the more it grows

- This is what would happen here: if there was money owed or a dispute over property and they weren’t able to settle privately, accuser would demand you go before a judge
- If you refused, they could ask anyone around if they wanted to be a witness and if they could find anyone who said yes, you were required to go with them to the judge.
- So they’re already in a position of strength: they have a witness on their side.

Better to get it settled before going to the judge

- If the judge ruled in the accusers favor, you’d be sent to debtor’s jail, where you would have to work off the debt before being set free...debt grew the longer you waited
- This is still true today (HSBC fraud case - \$1 billion in interest judge ruled against them)
The point here is clear: **The longer a conflict lasts, the more expensive it gets**
- Spiritual conflict is the same. If you have a conflict to resolve, an apology to make, a promise to fulfill, do it quickly, because the interest rate is high.

Don’t bankrupt your relationships because you’ve let the cost of conflict pile up.

- This passage might have stepped on some toes more than usual.
- Conflict is a feature of human nature in our fallen world
- I imagine everyone in here has stored up anger or even lashed out a time or two
- But here’s the good news: our power to follow God’s commands comes from his grace, not our strength.
- And when we do follow him, he builds our lives up and draws us close to him.
- And what’s more, if we refuse to let anger live in us, if we make reconciliation with each other our priority, and if we resolve conflicts quickly, we’ll mark ourselves out as different from the world.
- Your family, friends, coworkers, will say this isn’t normal.
- People will say our community is uncommon.
- And Jesus will be glorified and his name honored in our lives.