

“Jesus With Us: Jesus With The Angry (Part II)” | Rev Tim Frickenschmidt | September 06, 2020

Old Testament Readings

Prov 14:29-30

14²⁹ Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding,
but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.
30 A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh,
but envy makes the bones rot.

Prov 15:1

15¹ A soft answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Prov 24:29

24²⁹ Do not say, “I will do to him as he has done to me;
I will pay the man back for what he has done.”

Prov 25:21-22

25²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat,
and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,
22 for you will heap burning coals on his head,
and the LORD will reward you.

Epistle Rom 12:17-21

12¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Gospel Reading Luke 6:6-11

6⁶ On another Sabbath, He entered the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was withered. 7 And the scribes and the Pharisees watched Him, to see whether He would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse Him. 8 But He knew their thoughts, and He said to the man with the withered hand, “Come and stand here.” And he rose and stood there. 9 And Jesus said to them, “I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?” 10 And after looking around at them all He said to him, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored. 11 But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Introduction

In the story of the man with the withered hand, everybody is angry. Do we do well to be angry? ([Jonah 4:9](#)) None of us is immune from anger. What are we supposed to do with our anger or the anger of others? Two more points: (3) Our error (4) Jesus’ aim.

Background

3. Our error.

- a. Prov 14:29 Anger destroys our love; i.e., anger can be a way by which other foolish behaviors are done, like a doorway for other foolishness (violence, speech, abuse).
- b. It’s not that God is never angry or that He explodes in anger but He is slow to anger; He’s gracious, patient, always ready to forgive – that, also, should be us.
- c. In her book [Hope Has Its Reasons](#), [Becky Pippert](#) asks if we act with indifference when see someone we love suffering, can we really say we love them. The more a father loves his child, the more he’s angry at the child’s foolishness. Even our morally perfect Father’s love moves Him to anger, to defend what is threatened.
- d. In Luke 6, Jesus is angry at the threat of the man’s lacking in what God intended him to be and everything the broken world had done to him; and against the Pharisees who don’t want him healed, now. The Pharisees error is that they care more about their self-made religious rules than peoples’ needs. Our error is that we get angry about wrong things, at wrong times, in wrong ways. What are the bad things in this world which we shouldn’t love and what are the good things in this world which we don’t love? Even more, what are the things we love too much (our kids’ success, our success, our reputation, our wealth, our political parties).
- e. [Thomas Aquinas](#)’ three categories of sinful expression of anger: it comes (1) too easily (irritability), (2) too strongly (disproportionate) or (3) it lasts too long (resentment). Resentment may be the worst, as we spend our time plotting revenge. If we know, or someone we love knows these categories, it’s because what we love is off; our loves/hearts are disordered and we sin in our anger, and that’s our error.

4. Jesus’ aim.

- a. In Luke and Mark, Jesus’ anger leads to a sequence (1) the Pharisees become furious, (2) they discuss what they might do to Him; and it led to (3) the cross and to (4) the people who plotted the cross and the possibility of their salvation through it. This sequence was always Jesus’ aim, in everything He did (even in His anger).
- b. Prov 15:1 Even from the cross Jesus spoke softly: “**Father, forgive them ...**” they are not thinking rightly; and God turned His anger away from us to Jesus. This is why we sing “All I have is Christ.” He suffered in my place; now, all I have is grace. Knowing that He took our place can turn God’s anger away and our anger away from others, from ourselves and from God – the cross can change our hearts.
- c. Prov 24:29 Jesus never said I will pay them back, in fact He did the opposite: Prov 25:21-22 He cared for His enemies and heaped burning coals on their heads. We are God’s hungry/thirsty enemies and Jesus has done everything necessary to give us the food/drink that we need in order for our souls to live.
- d. In [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)’s sermon “[Loving Your Enemies](#)” he gives three answers to how we should love our enemies (by heaping burning coals on their heads):
1) Develop and maintain the capacity to forgive;
2) Realize the evil deed of the enemy-neighbor never expresses all that he is; and
3) Do not seek to defeat/humiliate the enemy but win his friendship/understanding. Only a Christian would ever say this; only the cross provides this moral motivation; because this is exactly what God has done for us, in Christ – we are Jesus’ reward.

Discuss

1. Our error is anger at the wrong things, at the wrong times, in the wrong ways (3d&e).
2. Resentment may be the worst expression of anger, as we plot for revenge (3e).
3. Knowing that He took our place can turn our anger away from others (4b).
4. MLK Jr’s sermon and essay on “Loving Your Enemies” (4d & Conclusion)
5. His aim (4a & Conclusion) ... we are Jesus’ reward (4d)

Conclusion/Application

•Heaping burning coals upon enemies’ heads is well described in an essay by MLK Jr, an excerpt of which can be read [here](#): so appealing to one’s heart and conscience that they change. This is Jesus’ aim in everything, in His anger as well as in His Grace. So, in our anger don’t avoid those at which we are angry but also don’t rage at them, seeking to get pay back for what they have done (a soft answer turns away wrath); come close to them, just as God in Christ has come close to us; gently insist on what is right and true in a soft answer; absorb any mistreatment that they might offer; do not make them pay; we pay, we absorb – yes, may we suffer. We are the ones united to the Great Absorber, who has absorbed all anger, sin, death and suffering on the cross and is alive again seeking to make enemies into friends. Seek to make our enemies into friends.