

## **Living The Good Life: Anger**

Pastor Kevin Donoho

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### **Opening Discussion**

- What thoughts, feelings, or impressions do you have about the sermon this week?

### **Thought #1: Comparing Anger**

Pastor Kevin shared about two different types of anger:

Visceral Anger: This is the anger that hits us immediately.

Meditative Anger: This is the kind of anger that grows over time.

Can you recall a recent experience of visceral anger, such as being cut off while driving or encountering a frustrating situation with little time to think before reacting? How did you respond in that moment? Addressing visceral anger requires years of internal transformation and spiritual growth. In your opinion, what are some practical steps or practices that individuals can take to begin this journey of inner change?

For meditative anger, can you think of a personal experience where you or someone you know has harbored anger over time, leading to worsening emotional states? How did this affect relationships and overall well-being? What are some potential consequences of allowing meditative anger to accumulate without addressing it? How can this type of anger impact our mental health, relationships, and daily functioning? Reflecting on your own journey, have you noticed any changes in how you respond to visceral or meditative anger as you've grown older or deepened your spiritual practices? What insights have you gained along the way?

### **James 1:19-20**

“Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

Pastor Kevin shared that often our anger is rooted in one of two things:

#### **1. Unmet Expectations**

#### **2. Fear**

Reflecting on these, can you think of a recent situation in your life where conflict arose due to unmet expectations? How did you handle it, and what emotions did it evoke? How do unmet expectations influence our perceptions of others and the situations we encounter? Can you identify any patterns in your own life where unmet expectations have led to conflicts or negative emotions?

Moving on to the concept of fear, how does fear manifest differently in each person, and how does it contribute to their emotional responses and reactions?

### **James Bryan Smith lists false narratives that can cause anger, frustration, and stress:**

1. I am alone. (When I am alone...fear rises)
2. Things always have to go as I want them to go. (When things don't go as planned...fear rises)
3. I must be in control all the time. (And when I am not...fear rises)
4. Something terrible will happen if I make a mistake. (When I am anxious about not making a mistake...fear rises)
5. Life must always be fair and just. (I would love for it to be, but it is not...fear rises)
6. I need to be perfect all the time. (When I am not perfect...fear rises)

Of these which most resonate with you and why?

### **Thought #2: Jesus gets to the source of the issue!**

#### **Matthew 5:21-22**

“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject

to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell”

Reflecting on the passage above, Jesus equates anger with the seriousness of murder, highlighting the significance of addressing the root causes of anger. How does this perspective challenge your understanding of anger and its implications in our lives? The text suggests that anger can often lead us down a destructive path, resulting in actions or words we later regret. Can you recall a personal experience where anger negatively influenced your behavior or communication? How did you handle the situation afterward?

Proverbs 15:1 emphasizes the power of gentle words in diffusing anger and promoting harmony. Can you think of instances where responding with gentleness or humility has helped resolve conflicts or tensions in your relationships?

Reflecting on your own spiritual practices, how do you prioritize time with God, whether through prayer, scripture reading, worship, or community engagement? How do these practices contribute to developing better soil for producing positive fruit in your life? How can cultivating a deeper awareness of our own hearts and motives help us recognize and address underlying issues of anger, fear, or insecurity in our lives?

In what ways can our faith community support and encourage each other in navigating the complexities of anger and promoting healthy emotional expression and relational dynamics?

**Thought #3: Our anger needs to be dealt with before it puts down roots!**

### **Ephesians 4:24-27**

“Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy. So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. And “Don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun

go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil.”

Reflecting on the passage, what do you understand by the instruction to “put on your new nature, created to be like God”? How does this concept relate to the theme of righteousness, honesty, and emotional regulation discussed in the passage? The passage warns against allowing anger to control us, emphasizing the importance of addressing conflicts and grievances promptly. Can you share a personal experience where unresolved anger or bitterness affected your relationships or emotional well-being over time?

Discuss the concept of bitterness and resentment as a result of anger. How have you seen these emotions manifest, either in your own relationships or in others? How can they shape our interactions with others?

How do you interpret the idea that anger can give a foothold to the devil, as stated in the passage? What are some potential consequences of allowing anger to fester and control our actions and attitudes?

In what ways can prioritizing the relationship over winning the argument lead to reconciliation and healing in strained or broken relationships? Share any personal experiences or insights you have on this topic. How can practicing forgiveness and extending grace toward others contribute to breaking the cycle of anger and bitterness in our lives? Discuss any challenges or barriers you may encounter in forgiving others and moving forward in reconciliation.

**Thought #4: God invites us to bring our anger to Him!**

### **Jonah 4:4**

“The Lord replied, “Is it right for you to be angry about this?”

Why is it essential to acknowledge our own role in seeking change?

