

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday July 12, 2020 "All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten" "Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day" How do I deal with anger and frustration?

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from the message this Sunday. This devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it. We had our fourth Sunday of gathering. A small but dedicated and respectful group who followed all the guidelines and were so encouraging with your love and presence. If you're still joining us online we love and so appreciate your presence also. We still are your church family and if there is ANYTHING you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions you have, please pass them our way. We feel just as isolated as you, and we want to maintain that connection with each of you.

II Sunday.

We're in our second Sunday of our series of looking to children's books for wisdom and life advice. This Sunday we used the book "**Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day**". A classic children's book that follows young Alexander, and how for an entire day nothing went his way. We all have days like that, and in those frustrations we have to learn how to deal with our reaction to tough days. I don't know about you, but I don't always handle disappointments and tough situations with the maturity and grace that I need to. Sometimes the monster within me breaks out of his cage, and in those tough moments in life the worst comes out. So let's talk about that.

What are some struggles you face that bring out the worst in you?

How do you handle your anger and reaction to frustrating situations?

A tough question...How do you believe other people experience you when you are angry?

There are a ton of scriptures that address the issue of how we deal with our anger and frustration. So many you would almost think that this is a common struggle for people. Tongue firmly planted in cheek. Anyway, here was the jumping off passage we used to talk about healthier more Jesus like ways to handle our anger and frustration. Read **Ephesians 4:26-31**.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

What did you see that gave you some insight about dealing with anger?

The landing place for helping us deal with our anger came out of this Ephesians 4 passage and it's the idea of -self-control. The ability to recognize feelings of anger and rage are welling up within us, and we have built a system, a set of practices, that can help us from those feelings taking over us. Kal offered some free parenting advice and said these are the top three things that could help our kids if we taught them to do these well. **1. Do "if...then" well.** Which means the ability to predict outcomes based on different choices. **2. Delay gratification.** Work first and then play. **3. Teach the**

ability to self-sooth. This means when the outside world becomes too much to handle, we grow an inner life that will help us not get tossed around by circumstances. This final one is the primary truth surrounding the idea of self-control. We will find ourselves in situations that frustrate us and surface anger within us. Control is the ability to be calm in the midst of any storm.

Here are the ways we can grow our self-control.

1. If you can't gain control of yourselves in the situation, you're too much in your feelings, ask for a break. Sometimes the situation, issue, you're dealing with is a big one, and creates big emotional responses. Sometimes too big to allow appropriate and proper conversation and analysis in the moment. You may need to step away for the moment to let your feelings subside a bit, but in doing that you are always promising a specific time in the future to handle the situation.

2. Essential to control is sticking with the specific issue in that moment. Rarely is the issue at hand triggering the emotional response, the only thing going on within us. We have lots of issues that are often amping up our emotions. And yielding to mentioning those only clouds the situation. In order to deal with the problem, stick to the situation at hand.

3. Own your part in responding or experiencing the situation. No matter how wronged we feel, we have to own some of the responsibility of the conflict. Do some work to surface your own culpability for the situation, and confess that in the working of things out.

4. Limit what triggers your anger. There are things in our lives we're not emotionally mature enough to handle. No shame in this. We need to recognize and own it. Don't keep poking at the sore.

Kal also mentioned.

Forgiving and letting go of bitterness. Touched on this earlier, but we always have to check to see what other issues are not resolved that may be feeding the emotional intensity of that particular moment. Don't let the seed of bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness take root because they will cloud your ability to handle any specific situation.

Growing love/compassion/grace. This is the work we need to continually be doing. Increasing our emotional capacity to handle life, and our reaction to it. This will help us to keep and maintain control, when we can understand the other's perspective even if we don't agree with them in the moment.

Talk about each of those and where you may struggle and wisdom you may have.

III Challenge.

The book, "*Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*" is a great look at understanding life is hard, it's going to throw things at us, and we have to learn to handle it.

So, what are some things about who you are as a person that you could give some attention to, that could help you handle your own terrible, horrible, no good very bad days?

How could you be a source of strength and wisdom for others?

Additional passage about anger.

James 1:19-20, 4:1-2. Hebrews 12:15. Proverbs 29:11, 19:11, 15:1, 15:18, 14:29.