

Lesson 11, Part 2: Dealing with Anger

Key questions we'll answer:

1. What is God's view of anger?
2. When is anger righteous vs. sinful?
3. What is at the root of anger?
4. How do we deal with anger?

III. What Is the Root of Anger?

The culture says,

- Inner, unconscious psychodynamic forces
- Childhood trauma or chronic bad parenting
- Present sufferings
- Unmet emotional needs
- Physiological factors
- Direct Satanic activity

If those aren't the cause, then what is?

- A. _____ - _____ **(James 4:1-3)!**
- B. An underlying _____ with His sovereignty and providence.
- C. A sense of _____ (part of being made in His image)

IV. How Do We Deal With Anger?

The culture's way of dealing with it:

1. Express it (pillow beating, rage rooms, or against whom/what you're angry)
2. Scream therapy
3. Relational imagery
4. Letter writing
5. Exercise
6. Get even
7. Anger management (vs. "master" or "crucify" or "Put-off" or "Repent")
8. Count to 10
9. Have a beer
10. Shopping therapy

God's way of dealing with it:**A. Confront yourself – Examine your heart by asking yourself, “Why am I angry?”**

1. Organize your thoughts. What happened that made you angry?
2. Figure out what you are demanding. Complete the sentence: *[He/She] must...*
3. Figure out if your demand is biblical. Is this a biblical right that you have?
4. Look for idols in your heart. Is it possible that what started out as a desire of yours has morphed into a demand (an idol)?
 - a. Six stages in the war for your heart, from Paul Tripp in *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*:

Stage 1: Desire (“I want”)

“The objects of most of our desires are not evil. The problem is the way they tend to *grow*, and the control they come to exercise over our hearts. All human desire must be held in submission to a greater purpose, the desires of God for his kingdom.”

Stage 2: Demand (“I must”)

“Demand is the closing of my fists over a desire. . . . I am not longer comforted by God's desire for me; I am threaten by it, because God's will potentially stands in the way of my demand. . . . The morphing of my desire changes my relationship to others. Now I enter the room loaded with a silent demand: *You must help me get what I want. . . .*”

Stage 3: Need (“I will”)

“I now view the thing I want as essential to life. This is a devastating step in the eventual slavery of desire. . . . To ‘christen’ desire as need is equivalent to viewing cake as I do respiration. . . .”

Stage 4: Expectation (“You should”)

“If I am convinced I need something and you have said that you love me, it seems right to expect that you will help me get it.

Stage 5: Disappointment (“You didn't!”)

“There is a direct relationship between expectation and disappointment, and much of our disappointment in relationships is not because people have actually wronged us, but because they have failed to meet our expectations.”

Stage 6: Punishment (“Because you didn’t, I will...”)

“We are hurt and angry because people who say they love us seem insensitive to our needs. So we strike back in a variety of ways to punish them for their wrongs against us. We include everything from the silent treatment (a form of bloodless murder where I don’t kill you but act as if you do not exist) to horrific acts of violence and abuse. I am angry because you have broken the laws of my kingdom. God’s kingdom has been supplanted. I am no longer motivated by a love for God and people so that I use the things in my life to express that love. Instead I love things, and use people—and even the Lord—to get them. My heart has been captured. I am in active service of the creation, and the result can only be chaos and conflict in my relationships.”

b. Idols of the heart, from Lou Priolo in *The Heart of Anger*:Love of power - 3 John 9, 1 Pet 5:3

- I can’t believe he won’t let me . . .
- She’s so bossy
- This child will obey me!
- They can’t do this to me

Love of money

- I have to work these long hours
- We both have to work

Love of approval – John 12:43, Matt 23:5-7

- Language – jokes, cussing
- Hard on your kids b/c their actions reflect on you
- Constantly considering whether or not you’re being appreciated
- Clamming up when you know you should address a tough topic
- Caring more about what others think rather than what God thinks

Love of pleasure – Prov 21:16-17, 20; 2 Tim 3:1, 2, 4, – Jas 4:1-3

- She never lets me play golf
- I really need to go for a run, etc. but he/she won’t let me
- I really need a recreational companion for me but he/she won’t go with me

Love of ease

- Appliances should never break
- People should never sin
- All my kids should be solid, mature believers...like Jesus, when he was a kid!
- The world may be fallen, but that should never affect my plans

B. Put-off (Ephesians 4:31)

1. Confess it as sin (and be as specific as possible).
2. Repent (*metanoia* in Greek) – change your _____/_____.
3. Let it _____ be put away – you are not to simply “manage” it... but how?

C. Put-on (Ephesians 4:32) – contrary to your feelings in the moment:

1. Be kind to one another (Titus 3:3-4) – _____ and gracious, as opposed to harsh, hard, bitter, sharp.
2. Be tenderhearted – _____ and sympathetic (cf. 1 Pet 3:8), lit. “good-gut.”
3. Be forgiving – not in the sense of “putting it out of your mind,” but rather in the sense of _____ or agreeable to/for the very person with which you’re angry (i.e. seek to be a blessing).
4. Do it “just as” God in Christ forgave you.

Finally, consider this:

As with other sins, your anger reveals that you have a _____ problem. The problem is not the accident that caused traffic, the loved one who hurt you, the bad hand you were dealt. The problem is that you want what you want, when you want it, the way you want it, and if God doesn’t run the universe according to your will then you’ll be the first to let Him know.

The more you do this the more miserable you’ll become. However, if you deny yourself and follow after Christ, you will find life!

Recommended for further study:

- *Anger and Stress Management God’s Way*, Wayne Mack
- *Uprooting Anger*, Robert Jones
- *The Heart of Anger*, Lou Priolo