



Suicide, Anxiety, & Depression

(The Gospel changes everything)

Part 5

Tonight, we will cover a topic that every person can relate to: **anger**. Anger is a normal human emotion that can be expressed either **righteously** or **sinfully**. Anger is defined as an emotion that is characterized by hostility towards something or someone who has intentionally harmed you. Our unrighteous anger can be expressed towards another person or even inanimate objects!

Anger, in its most sinful sense, becomes **bitterness** and **hatred**. It becomes our emotional outlet and outburst for stress, anxiety, fears, and frustrations.

First, let's deal with **unrighteous (sinful)** anger: the root cause is always **pride**.

- **Passive aggression**- aggression with the use of sarcasm, procrastination, stubbornness, judgment, and haughtiness.
- **Open aggression**- aggression that lashes out visibly. One may become physically or verbally enraged, often with no care or concern about hurting others.
- Often, we say that people are either '**blow-up-ers**' or '**clam-up-ers**'. Either they give full vent to their anger out loud for all to see, or they hold their anger inside and stew on it in a type of cold war. Sometimes, even *clam-up-ers* end up blowing up too, like a volcano that erupts.
- Left unresolved, anger becomes a root of **bitterness**. Like **cancer** to our souls, it will spread and infect quietly within, until our whole life is changed by it.
- **Hatred** is the point where **bitterness** has infected the mind, and you cannot see anything good in the object of your wrath. It is the point where we forget that we are all children of God, and where we begin to think another person deserves mistreatment.

Now, let's talk about **righteous** anger: it is always motivated by the **healing** or **protection** of others. Also, standing for what is biblically right, ethical, and moral.

- **Assertive aggression**- aggression that seeks to resolve a **conflict** without damaging others and prevents further **escalation** to unrighteousness. Heated, but peaceable.
- **Christ-like aggression**- aggression that seeks to right an obvious moral wrong. Righteous anger over the misuse of God, His Word, His attributes, His name. Hatred of sin and morally sinful actions such as abortion, rape, murder, child abuse, etc.

- An obvious example of this is found in **Matthew 21:12-13**, where Jesus overturns the moneylender's tables and quotes **Isaiah 56:7**.

Turn to the book of Jonah.

- This short book of the bible (4 chapters) is more than a familiar children's story.
- First, a little background about **Nineveh**:
 - Nineveh was the capital (largest) city of the Assyrian empire at that time; it is called a "great city" three times in the book of Jonah. Also called an important city (3:3b).
 - Nineveh's ruins are located under the modern-day city of **Mosul, Iraq**, along the Tigris River. Ruins have been found going back over 6,000 years by archaeologists.
 - We are told in **Jonah 3:3** that it was a three-day walk to encompass the city. There is much disagreement over what this phrase means; nevertheless, the city was BIG.
 - We are told in **Jonah 4:11** that Nineveh hosted a population of 120,000 people.
 - Nineveh was a desperately wicked city, similar to Sodom and Gomorrah. We see a picture of God's sovereign omniscience here; God knows that they will repent when Jonah obeys. Jonah also seems to know this, too; at least he knows God's character.
 - The Assyrians are constant foes of the nation of Israel. They invaded Israel in the 8th century B.C. and deported (exiled) many of their people as slaves.
 - It is highly likely that Jonah ***hated*** the Assyrians and obviously ***resented*** the fact that he was commanded to go and preach repentance there.
 - We are told in **2 Kings 14:25** that Jonah is from a town called **Gath-Hepher**, which is over **500 miles** from Nineveh.
 - Jonah plans to run to **Tarshish**, which most scholars believe to have been in modern-day **Spain**. So, Jonah is literally running away to the far ends of the known world at that time, a voyage of over **2,500 miles**.
 - You know the story of Jonah and the Great Fish, but did you know that the story of Jonah is pointing towards Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (**Matt. 12:38-41**)?
- God's ***compassion*** despite Jonah's **anger: Jonah 4:1-11**
 - Chapter 4 begins with this: ***"But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry."***
 - Nineveh has repented in dust and ashes, from the smallest to the King himself, yet Jonah accuses God of showing too much grace and mercy; look at **verse 2**.
 - Jonah repeats a familiar phrase in **verse 3**: ***"Now, O Lord, take away my life for it is better for me to die than to live."***
 - Look at God's response in verse 4: ***"Have you any right to be angry?"***
 - Jonah then goes outside the city and makes himself a shelter, waiting to see if God would indeed destroy the city (vs. 5).
 - God provides a vine that brings shade to Jonah's head (vs. 6-7), but God also provides a worm to eat the vine the following day, removing the shade.
 - By the end of **verse 8**, Jonah is scorched by the sun and again wants to die.
 - **Verse 9** repeats God's question, but this time about the vine: ***"Do you have any right to be angry about the vine?"*** Jonah exclaims, ***"I do. I'm angry enough to die."***
 - God shows Jonah his ***hypocrisy***; Jonah, you had great concern for this vine, you hated that it withered, because you enjoyed its shade. The vine was here one day and gone tomorrow, yet you had little concern for the lives of 120,000 people.
 - **Romans 3:9-18** tells us that ***'no one is righteous'*** and fully explains the condition of man. Yet, when we get angry, we declare that we deserve, and have a right to, better treatment than someone else!

How do we biblically fight our human propensity towards unrighteous anger?

- Ephesians 4:2-3; be humble, gentle, loving, and peaceable.
- Ephesians 4:26-27; repent, make it right quickly.
- Ephesians 4:29; build others up, don't tear them down.
- Philippians 2:1-4; do nothing out of selfishness, live in humility as Christ.
- Hebrews 12:14-15; live peaceably, be holy, let no root of bitterness grow.
- James 1:19-20; be slow to speak, listen intently.
- 1 John 2:9-11; give no room for hatred in your hearts.

Warnings and wisdom from Proverbs:

- Proverbs 17:27-28; a man of knowledge and a foolish man find commonality.
- Proverbs 21:23; guarding one's mouth/tongue.
- Proverbs 29:11; venting one's anger and self-control.
- Proverbs 29:20; hope for a fool.

Basic rules of non-threatening communication:

- Speak the **truth** in **love**, without judgment.
- Deal with what's **bothering** you, but don't allow it to fester.
- Learn to attack the problem, not the person.
- Act, but don't **overreact**. Stop, breathe, think, and reply.
- Remember the merciful forgiveness shown to you; therefore, show **grace**.

God's wrath/vengeance and our command:

- **Romans 12:17-18**; *"Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*
- **Romans 12:19**; *"Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: It is mine to avenge; I will repay says the Lord."*
- **Romans 12:20-21**; *"On the contrary; if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*



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- _____ **aggression**- aggression that seeks to resolve a _____ without damaging others and prevents further _____ to unrighteousness. Heated, but peaceable.
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