

(Basics) 67. Anger

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of dealing with anger in a healthy way, recognizing the difference between righteous and sinful anger, and seeking God's deliverance from anger.

Duration: 13:09

Scripture: Genesis 4:6-7, Psalm 37:8, Proverbs 14:29, Matthew 5:22, Mark 3:5, John 2:13-16, Ephesians 4:26-27

Topics: "Anger Management", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the destructive nature of anger and how it gives the devil an opportunity in our lives. He refers to the Bible verse in Ephesians 4:26-27, which advises not to let anger lead to sin and not to let the sun go down on our anger. The preacher emphasizes that anger is visible on our faces and warns against the consequences of not dealing with it. He uses the example of Cain, who did not listen to God's warning about his anger and ended up becoming a murderer. The preacher also highlights the importance of seeking God's deliverance from anger and the need for self-control. He distinguishes between righteous anger, such as Jesus' anger towards the Pharisees' lack of compassion, and sinful anger that is self-centered. The sermon concludes with the encouragement to cry out to God for forgiveness and deliverance from the sin of anger.

Transcript

Once again, today we're going to look at a characteristic of the human race that is widespread across the world, among people of all temperaments, nations, races, cultures. Something that wreaks havoc and destruction in homes and everywhere, and how God can deliver us from it. I'm talking about anger.

In a previous study we saw how we give Satan an opportunity in our life if we don't forgive someone. An opportunity to get a foothold in our life to destroy us. The Bible says another thing that gives the devil an opportunity in our life is anger.

Ephesians 4 verse 26 and 27 says, Be angry, but don't sin, and don't let the sun go down on your anger, and don't give the devil an opportunity. There is an anger that is sinful, and there is an anger that is not sinful. We read in Mark chapter 3 that when Jesus went into the synagogue, there was a man there with a withered hand, and the Pharisees were watching Jesus to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath day.

And we read that when Jesus saw the lack of compassion on the part of these Pharisees, Mark 3 verse 5 says, He looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart. He didn't lose control of

himself. If he had lost control of himself, he would not have been grieved.

He had grief and anger at these people. Jesus was angry when he saw the money changers making money in the name of religion in the temple. He drove them out.

He did not lose control of himself. A spirit-filled man is full of self-control, we read in Galatians 5 verse 24. He does not lose control of himself, but he may be angry when he sees people today like Pharisees lacking compassion for poor suffering people, or when he sees people making money in the name of religion.

Such anger, where it concerns the glory of God and the good of other people, is not sin. But anger that concerns ourselves, angry because somebody cheated me, or somebody has inconvenienced me, or somebody has disturbed my plans, or made things difficult for me, all such anger is sin, or hurt me. When they slapped Jesus on the face and pulled out the hairs from his beard, he never got angry.

He never said anything. He forgave them. So when it says, be angry but don't sin, we need to recognize what type of anger is sin and what type isn't.

Anger that has got nothing to do with us, but only with the glory of God and the good of others, is righteous anger. But anger because of anything connected with us, the way somebody treats me or hurts me, whatever it is, it's always sin. And then it goes on to say, if you do sin in this way, make sure your anger doesn't stay with you for more than twelve hours.

God recognizes that a lot of believers are not going to have victory over anger, because they're not wholehearted enough. If they were wholehearted, they'd have victory over anger, the wrong type of anger. And because he knows that there are a lot of people who will not choose God's best, he offers them a second best for their salvation.

He says, just make sure the sun doesn't set over your anger. That means, in those days, the day was divided into two parts, day and night. Day was six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening or sunset, and night was from sunset till sunrise next morning.

And so when it says here, don't let the sun go down your anger, what it basically means is, don't go to sleep with your anger unresolved or unsettled. Because in those days, without electricity, people went to sleep in the sunset and woke up at sunrise. So the word for us today is, don't go to bed with some unresolved, unsettled anger still there in your heart.

How careful people are to brush their teeth before they go to bed. Many people just to ensure that leftover particles of food don't stay within the teeth and destroy their teeth. How much more careful we should be to make sure that some leftover bitterness or anger is not still there in our heart, not cleansed away, and we go to sleep with that.

This means that a husband and wife, even if they have a disagreement or a tension between them during the day, should settle it before they go to bed. Very, very few believers, husbands and wives, obey this exhortation. You lose your temper, you get angry, well, seek to overcome it.

But until you do, make sure of one thing, that at least you settle the matter before you go to sleep. That's the absolute outer limit. Don't go beyond that.

What shall we say then about believers who carry anger and bitterness and hatred in their hearts against others for days and months and years? We have to say they have no fear of God, no respect for the word of God. When you let anger stay in your heart, it says in verse 27 of Ephesians 4, you give the devil an opportunity. You're giving the devil a foothold in your life to destroy you, to control you, to do something in your life to bring confusion.

Don't give the devil an opportunity. When you turn back to the beginning of the Bible, you see the time when Adam and Eve were thrown out of the Garden of Eden and they had two children. They were not the only two, they had many others.

But two of them are mentioned here, Cain and Abel. And they both came and offered an offering to God. Abel offered a lamb and Cain offered some vegetables.

And the Lord accepted Abel, verse 4, Genesis 4, 4, and his offering. But he did not accept Cain. And there we read of the first sin mentioned after man has left the Garden of Eden.

No doubt Adam and others committed many sins before that, but the first sin mentioned in the Bible after man has got out of Eden is anger. Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. You know when a man is angry you can see it in his face.

You can't hide it. God has made our face in such a way that if you're angry everybody will know it. And the Lord said to him, why are you angry? Why is your face like this? If you also do well and intend well, don't you think your face will be lifted up? You'll be cheerful and not angry? Cain did not listen.

And because he didn't listen to God when God tried to warn him, he went out and became a murderer. The Lord said to him, sin is crouching at your door, verse 7. He desires you. Sin desires to have you.

But you must master it. That's the first place in the Bible where you hear about victory over sin, preached by God Himself. God preached the first message on victory over sin.

Sin desires you, but you must master it. You must overcome it. And there we see the importance of dealing with anger as soon as it comes.

God warns us even today through the Holy Spirit. But Cain didn't listen. And when you don't listen, sin just grows like a cancer.

If you don't cut it out, it will be worse. And it finally became so bad, he went and killed his brother. So there we see anger that came out of jealousy.

Here was Cain. He saw God blessing Abel and he couldn't stand it. Particularly because Abel was younger.

Are you jealous of somebody who's younger than you? Who's being blessed mightily by the Lord? What is your attitude towards him? Do you rejoice like you should if you're a member of the same body? Or are you jealous that God's using him and not you? If so, you're evil. That jealousy will lead to anger and you never know what the final result will be. We read another example in 1 Samuel and chapter 17.

Chapter 18, sorry, 1 Samuel 18. We read of the time when David had killed Goliath. And all the women came out of the cities of Israel dancing and singing and saying, 1 Samuel 18.7, Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands.

And just like it said about Cain, it says about Saul, a man whom God had once chosen to be king. Saul became very angry. And an evil spirit finally possessed him.

Because he allowed this anger to go beyond limits. He was angry because of jealousy. He said in 1 Samuel 18 and verse 8. They have ascribed ten thousands to David but only thousands to me.

And it came about on the next day an evil spirit came upon Saul. It's dangerous to let anger continue. It can lead to an evil spirit oppressing you.

That's what we see here. And this became so bad that Saul took a spear and tried to kill David. Anger can lead to murder.

Of course David escaped unlike Abel. Jesus Christ has come to save us from sin. Seek God with all of your heart to be totally free from anger.

Ask God to deliver you from it completely. Totally. Cry out to God every time you slip and fall.

Go to God and say, Lord I've sinned. Deliver me from this completely. Don't take it lightly.

And Jesus can deliver you totally from this bad habit.

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