

## Handling Anger

This lesson adapted from:  
Making Things Right When Things Go Wrong (P. FAULKNER)  
“Keep your cool, even when you’re hot!”

### I. Introduction

#### A. There are many opportunities for anger in life

1. Cain and Abel – Genesis 4:3 – 6 (READ)
2. Jacob’s sons – Genesis 34:7 (READ)
3. Balaam – Numbers 22:22b – 27 (READ)
4. Saul – 1Samuel 18:8 (READ)
5. David – 2Samuel 6:8 (READ)
6. Naaman – 2Kings 5:9 – 12 (READ)
7. Jonah 4:1 – 4 (READ)
8. Disciples – Matthew 20:21, 24 (READ)

#### B. Anger has many adverse consequences:

1. Anger prevents problem solving
2. Anger tends to distort the truth
3. Anger can have severe health consequences
4. Anger is usually intimately focused
5. Anger is condemned spiritually
  - a. Galatians 5:19 – 21
  - b. Ephesians 4:31
  - c. Colossians 3:8

#### C. If there are so many opportunities and it is so destructive, why do we get angry all the time?

1. Sometimes it’s a healthy response to unrighteousness
  - a. God expressed His righteous anger many times in the Bible
  - b. Jesus demonstrated a righteous anger towards the Pharisees
2. Most of the time it is a knee-jerk reaction of infant-like emotions! This is the anger we must learn to deal with

II. Body – If anger is inevitable, what can we do?

A. There are two tried and true ways to fail!

1. You can vent it

a. This can be positive sometimes

- Go work in the yard
- Build something – fix something
- Dig a hole
- Pull weeds – clean the garage
- Do laundry!

b. Generally we don't vent in positive ways:

- More like a temper tantrum of a small child
- Proverbs 22:24, 25
- Proverbs 29:11
- Proverbs 15:18

2. You might think stuffing your anger is a better choice?

a. Not really!

b. When we stuff our anger away, it has a tendency to all come out at once when we least expect it!

3. The key concept in Proverbs is “slowness”

a. Proverbs 19:11

b. Proverbs 16:32

c. Proverbs 14:29

B. Some practical suggestions – with this in mind

1. Practice the fine art of avoidance

a. Try to avoid the temptation to push the “Red Button”

- An example – Acts 23:6 Perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Council, “Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!”

- What the inspired Apostle did by the leading of the Holy Spirit is a far cry from what we do to one another in our own homes and congregation!
- c. Try, when possible, to avoid the situations which you know will make you angry
2. James 1:19 “This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger”
- a. Learn to count to 10 – 20 – 100 – 2,000!
- b. Write down angry feelings on paper before you speak them with your tongue
- Written words can be erased, burned, thrown away and destroyed with no harm done
  - Words spoken, however, take on a life of their own
  - You can never take it back!
3. Ephesians 4:26, 27 “Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity”
- a. Deal with your anger quickly and decisively
- b. Often we think we’re dealing with our anger by bottling it up
- c. Here’s what normally happens:
- Keys are missing – late – car won’t start – making you even later
  - Guy cuts off in traffic then slows down – you’re even later
  - He coasts through the light while you get stopped – you’re even later
  - Finally get to school to pick up little Johnny who is nowhere to be found
  - Wait and wait and wait while every kid leaves school – no Johnny!
  - Drive frantically all over trying to find Johnny
  - Finally go home to find him sitting at the table doing homework – you weren’t at school to pick him up so he walked home on his own
  - What are you going to do?

- d. Note the FACTS – keys, car, stranger you’ll never see again made you angry – you bottle it up long enough to get home where you are comfortable enough to unleash the full force of your wrath on Johnny who thought he did the right thing!
  
- 4. Aristotle once said, “A person that is praised is one who is angry for the right reasons, with the right people and also in the right way and at the right time for right length of time”
  - a. Ask yourself, “Who/what am I angry at and do I have a legitimate reason to be angry?”
    - Too often we are angry for the wrong reasons with the wrong people in the wrong way at the wrong times
  - b. Jesus was a perfect example:
    - Matthew 21:12, 13 He became angry with the money changers
      - A righteous wrath
      - Focused on the right individuals
      - In just the right way
      - For just the right amount of time
    - Mark 3:1 – 5 (READ)
      - Jesus’ anger moved Him to compassion!
  - d. It’s amazing how difficult it is to be angry at those whom we serve with compassion!
  - e. Romans 12:19 – 21
    - Overcome evil with good

### III. Conclusions