

one another.

Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. - Colossians 3:9

5 If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. - James 1:5 NLT

There are many sources of information that twist the truth and fuel our rage. Those lies can launch us on a destructive path if we allow them to. But it is difficult to see the truth when we are being deceived.

How do you determine if the source of your information is trustworthy? James tells us to go to God when we need wisdom, knowing God will give it to us. Pause for a moment and ask God to show you areas you haven't seen clearly from His perspective. Allow Him to reveal truth to you where you believed a lie.

WRAP-UP

Anger has the potential to lead us down a destructive path. It will control us if we don't control it. But the key to controlling anger is not found in our own strength, it is by growing in our dependence on God. He is the one to whom vengeance belongs. He is the one who exercises righteous anger. But he is also the one who is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Thank God that He drew us to repentance with his loving kindness, and not His fiery wrath. Let us follow His example.

MEMORY VERSE

4 And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. 5 So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. 6 Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming.

- Colossians 3:4-6 NLT

Challenge-

Join us in prayer and fasting during Lent. Visit the prayer room in the lobby between 8 am and 6 pm daily for a quiet time with God.

Anger Exposes Our Heart Hunger for Holiness Week 2

INTRODUCTION

During the season of Lent at New Life we are focusing on a passage from Colossians chapter 3. In it, Paul gives us insights into our new lives in Christ. Last week we read that we are to focus on heavenly, not earthly things and we are to "put to death" the sinful things lurking within us. This week we zero in on anger and the behavior associated with it. What does God really say about anger?

Ice Breaker

What is one thing that tends to bring out your anger?

Key Passage

But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. 9 Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds.

- Colossians 3:8-9

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Anger opens the door

In our key passage Paul says to get rid of anger. If we can get rid of anger, then anger must be something we can have control over. Jesus taught about anger as part of His sermon on the mount.

21 "You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.' 22 But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell. - Matthew 5:21-22 NLT

It is clear that anger is no small matter from God's viewpoint. It is the seed from which the malignancy of sin grows.

8 Stop being angry! Turn from your rage! Do not lose your temper--it only leads to harm. - Psalm 37:8 NLT

26 And "don't sin by letting anger control you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 for anger gives a foothold to the devil. - Ephesians 4:26-27 NLT

In the passages above, how is sin related to anger? How can trusting God be the antidote to anger? If anger is the foothold, what further damage would we expect to follow?

Consider that Colossians 3:8 contains many Greek words that list a progression of actions that may stem from anger. First anger (orgē) takes root when we are agitated and indignant (thymos), then our agitation turns to ill-will and a desire to injure (kakia-malice). Next, we speak evil about the subject of our anger to others through railings and slander (blasphēmia), followed by shameful and vile communication about them (aischrologia) -perhaps thru social media.

What is the effect of this path of sin on the unity of the church? Why do you think it is so easy to find support for our angry accusations?

2. But I was wronged!

One of things that provokes us to anger is when a sin has been done to us. If we have been wronged, then we have a choice. We can become bitter and seek retaliation, or we can forgive.

19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD. 20 Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." 21 Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good. - Romans 12:19-21 NLT

We can attempt to pay back someone for hurting us or we can trust God. Has there been an instance where you chose to trust God rather than retaliate? If so, share the experience with your group. What

happens if your anger remains, but you simply don't act on it? How does it impact them,... how does it impact you? If we believe our anger will produce righteousness, we need to consider James 1:20.

*19 Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. 20 Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.
- James 1:19-20 NLT*

What is human anger incapable of producing?

3. The Fuel for Anger

1 What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? 2 You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. 3 And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong--you want only what will give you pleasure. - James 4:1-3 NLT

James tells us one source of strife and fighting. It comes from unmet expectations, the things we desire but we don't have, or the things we would like to see happen but haven't.

What are the two reasons James gives that we don't have the things we want? Can you think of an instance when you wanted something that was good, but you had the wrong motive in seeking it? For example- What if we pray for an unsaved family member to attend church but we are motivated by our own embarrassment rather than concern for the salvation of their soul?

Even if the source of our anger and strife is an evil desire, God can use the temptation to reveal our heart, our motives and through that revelation, to shape our character. But we need to bring our desires before God and trust that He will provide. We must rely less on ourselves and more on Him.

Another source of fuel for anger are the lies of the enemy. The devil has many titles, including the deceiver, Father of Lies, and accuser. Our key passage concludes with the admonishment not to lie to