

Derby Bible Week

Anger

Introduction

Anger and why it matters

Where to find the bible's teaching about anger

Series overview

1. Look around at an angry world
2. Leave room for an angry God
3. Find joy in the peace of Christ
4. Live wisely in an angry world

1. Look around at an angry world

Reading: Genesis 4:1-8

A. Anger and the heart

(1) Control

Examples – loss in the present:

2 Samuel 6:1-8	“Then David was angry...”
Daniel 2:12; 3:13	“This made (Nebuchadnezzar) so angry and furious...” “Furious with rage...”

Examples – fear for the future:

1 Samuel 18:1-9	“Saul was very angry...”
Nehemiah 4:1	“Sanballat became angry and was greatly incensed”
Matthew 2:1-18	“...Herod...was furious...”

(2) Possessions

Example:

1 Kings 21:1-4	“So Ahab went home, sullen and angry...”
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(3) Sexual intimacy

Proverbs 6:34	“For jealousy arouses a husband’s fury...”
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Example:

2 Samuel 13:15	“Then Amnon hated (Tamar) with intense hatred...”
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(4) Reputation

Examples

Numbers 22:21-29	“...Balaam ...was angry...”
1 Samuel 25	“Each of you strap on your sword!”
2 Chronicles 26:16-20	“Uzziah...became angry. While he was raging...”
Esther 1	“Then the king became furious and burned with anger”

The cognitive nature of anger

1. Perception
2. Appraisal
3. Emotion

The moral nature of anger

Genesis 4:5,6 “Why are you angry?”

Jonah 4:4,9 “Are you right to be angry?”

“In our way of thinking...then, we do not ask merely whether a pious soul is angry, but why...” (Augustine, *City of God*, Book 9)

B. Anger and the crowd

Proverbs 22:24,25

“Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person,
do not associate with one easily angered,
or you may learn their ways
and get yourself ensnared.”

Five examples of infectious indignation:

Numbers 16 “They came as a group...”

Luke 4:28,29 “All the people in the synagogue were furious...”

Matthew 20:20-28 “...the ten...were indignant...”

John 12:1-11 “Judas Iscariot...objected...”
& Matthew 26:6-13 “...the disciples...were indignant...”

Acts 19:23-41 “...they were furious...”

C. Anger and harm

Matthew 5:21,22 “You shall not murder...” “...anyone who is angry with...”

Type 1:

Proverbs 19:19

“A hot-tempered person must pay the penalty;
rescue them, and you will have to do it again.”

Examples:

Genesis 39:19 Potiphar... “burned with anger”

Exodus 11:8, Exodus 16:20, Leviticus 10:16, Numbers 16:15,

but Numbers 20:11 “Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice...”

Esther 1:12 and 2:1 “Then the king became furious and burned with anger”
“Later when King Xerxes’ fury had subsided...”

Type 2:

Examples:

Genesis 4:8 “Cain spoke to his brother Abel...”

Genesis 34:7 “...Jacob’s sons were shocked and furious...”
with 49:5-7 “...they have killed men in their anger...Cursed be their anger...”

Esther 3 “Haman...was enraged. Yet...”

2 Samuel 13 “Two years later...”

Exodus 21:12-14 “...But if anyone schemes and kills someone deliberately...”

Type 3:

Example:

1 Kings 21:3 “sullen and angry”

D. Anger and self-righteousness

(1) Anger and religion

Examples:

Acts 7:54 “the Sanhedrin...were furious and gnashed their teeth at him”
Acts 8:3; 9:1 Saul...
Philippians 3:6 “as for zeal, persecuting the church”

(2) Anger at grace

Examples:

2 Kings 5:1-14 “But Naaman went away angry...”
Jonah 4 “I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God...”
Luke 15:28,29 “The elder brother became angry... ‘...All these years I’ve been slaving for you...’”

(3) Anger at correction

Proverbs 9:7,8

“Whoever corrects a mocker invites insults;
whoever rebukes the wicked incurs abuse...”

Examples:

2 Chronicles 16:7-10 “Asa was angry with the seer...”
2 Chronicles 26:1-19 “Uzziah..became angry...”
contrast 2 Samuel 12:13 “I have sinned against the LORD”

E. Anger as anger should be (?)

Examples:

Exodus 32:19 “...Moses’...anger burned...”
1 Samuel 11:6 “...the Spirit of God came powerfully on (Saul), and he burned with anger.”
Matthew 3:7 “You brood of vipers!”
Acts 17:16 “...Paul...was greatly distressed...”
Psalms of Indignation

2. Leave room for an angry God

Readings: Exodus 34:6-7 and Romans 12:17-21

'Sinners in the hands of an angry God'?

Why not start with the anger of God?

Truth A:

1.

Genesis 39:19,20

Potiphar... "burned with anger..."

Genesis 4:10

"Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground"

Acts 1:24

"Lord, you know everyone's heart"

2.

3.

Genesis 18:25

"Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

4.

2 Chronicles 34:21

"...what is written in this book...Great is the LORD's anger..."

5.

Truth B:

1.

Romans 13:1-5 "...rulers do not bear the sword for no reason"

2.

Psalm 7:10-16 "a God who displays his wrath every day"

3.

Exodus 34:7 "...for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation"

Romans 1:18-32 "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven..."

Romans 8:20-21 "For the creation was subjected to frustration..."

Ecclesiastes 9:11 "The race is not to the swift... time and chance happen to them all"

Truth C:

Deuteronomy 4:21-24 "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God"

Hebrews 12:29 "...for our 'God is a consuming fire'"

Truth D:

1.

Exodus 34:6-7 "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger..."

Matthew 3:7 "Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

1 Thessalonians 1:10 "...from the coming wrath"

Colossians 3:6 "Because of these, the wrath of God is coming"

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord...is patient with you..."

2.

Romans 2:5 "...you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed."

1 Thessalonians 2:16 "...they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last"

Psalms 2:12 "his wrath can flare up in a moment"

Revelation 15:1 "...with them God's wrath is completed"

Truth E:

John 1:18 "the one and only Son...has made (the Father) known"

1.

Mark 3:1-5 "Jesus looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts..."

2.

John 2:13-17 "Zeal for your house..."

3.

John 11:33,38 "...deeply moved in spirit..."

Truth F:

Revelation 6:16 “the wrath of the Lamb”

How to respond to the anger of God

1.

Psalm 119:53 “Indignation grips me because of the wicked”

2.

Romans 2:1-4 “...you are condemning yourself...”

Ephesians 2:3 “...by nature deserving of wrath”

Galatians 2:20 “...the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me”

John 3:36 “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life,
but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them”

3.

Romans 12:19 “but leave room for God’s wrath...”

3. Find Joy in the Peace of Christ

Readings: Psalm 4 and Ephesians 4:15-5:2

A sixfold problem needs a sixfold solution

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Part 1

The problem

Ephesians 2:1-3 “...cravings...desires...thoughts”

Ephesians 4:17-19,22

“...thinking...understanding...ignorance...hardening of ...hearts...deceitful desires”

‘affections are in the soul as the helm in the ship’ (John Owen)

Affections are ‘the springs that set men a-going’ (Jonathan Edwards)

‘the affections are the soul’s horses that draw her as it were in a coach to the things that’ she desires (William Fenner)

The redirection

Ephesians 4:20,21,23,24 (and 1:13)

“...learned Christ...made new...put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness”

Colossians 3:10

“...have put on the new self,
which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator”

Part 2

Ephesians 4:15,16,25 “...the mature body...the whole body...members of one body”

Matthew 5:21-26 “...reconciled...”

Part 3

Ephesians 4:26 “ ‘In your anger do not sin’; do not let the sun go while you are still angry”

Psalm 4

For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm of David.

¹ Answer me when I call to you,
my righteous God.

Give me relief from my distress;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

² How long will you people turn my glory into shame?
How long will you love delusions and seek false gods^[b]?^[c]

³ Know that the LORD has set apart his faithful servant for himself;
the Lord hears when I call to him.

⁴ Tremble [Be angry] and do not sin;
when you are on your beds,
search your hearts and be silent.

⁵ Offer the sacrifices of the righteous
and trust in the LORD.

⁶ Many, LORD, are asking, “Who will bring us prosperity?”
Let the light of your face shine on us.

⁷ Fill my heart with joy
when their grain and new wine abound.

⁸ In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, LORD,
make me dwell in safety.

Numbers 20:12 “Because you did not trust in me enough...”

Part 4

The problem

Ephesians 4:27 “...and do not give the devil a foothold.”

Ephesians 6:10-20 “the devil’s schemes...”

Revelation 12:17 “Then the dragon was enraged...and went off to wage war...”

2 Corinthians 2:5-11

“...in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.”

The new power

Ephesians 1:13,14,17; 3:16,17

Ephesians 4:30,31

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger...”

Galatians 5:16-26 “...live by the Spirit...The fruit of the Spirit...”

Part 5

Ephesians 4:32 “...forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you”

Matthew 18:21-35

“ten thousand talents... a hundred denarii...”

Part 6

Ephesians 5:1,2 "...live a life of love, just as Christ loved us..."

1 Corinthians 13:5 "love is...not easily angered..."

Ephesians 3:17-19 "...to grasp...the love of Christ..."

Conclusion: how Christ changes anger

4. Live wisely in an angry world

Reading: James 1:13-21

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this:
everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,
because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. (James 1:19,20)

Proverbs 29:20

Do you see someone who speaks in haste?
There is more hope for a fool than for them.

The circumstances of the people to whom James writes

Clue 1 James 1:2,3,12 'trials...the testing of your faith...trial...the test...'

Clue 2 James 1:9,10 'in humble circumstances...the rich...'

Clue 3 James 1:27 'orphans and widows in their distress'

Clue 4 James 2:1-7
'...exploiting you...dragging you into court...
blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong...'

Clue 5 James 2:15 'a brother or sister...without clothes and daily food'

Clue 6 James 4:13-5:6 'the wages you failed to pay the workers...'

A. An honest diagnosis

James 1:13-15

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ...

¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin;

and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Proverbs 16:14

A king's rage is a messenger of death...

Proverbs 19:12

A king's rage is like the roar of a lion...

Proverbs 17:14

Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam...

Proverbs 15:18

A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict..

Proverbs 29:22

An angry person stirs up conflict
and a hot-tempered person commits many sins.

Proverbs 30:32,33

If you play the fool and exalt yourself,
or if you plan evil,
clap your hand over your mouth!
For as churning cream produces butter,
and as twisting the nose produces blood,
so stirring up anger produces strife.

Proverbs 26:21

As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire,
so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife.

Matthew 5:21,22

'You shall not murder' ...
'...anyone who is angry with a brother or sister...'
'anyone who says to a brother or sister, "Raca" ...'

James 4:1-3

'...from your desires...You desire...'
...you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures'

B. An Urgent Search

James 1:5

'If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God,
who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.'

James 3:13-18

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

¹⁴But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

¹⁷But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

'slow to anger' in Proverbs (14:29; 15:18; 19:11; 25:15, NIV 'patient')

Proverbs 16:32

Better a patient person than a warrior,
one with self-control than one who takes a city.

Anger in the church

1 Corinthians 13:5 'not easily angered'

1 Timothy 2:8

I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.

Anger in the pastor

Titus 1:7,8

'not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent...
Rather, he must be...self-controlled'

Psalms 141:3

Set a guard over my mouth, LORD;
keep watch over the door of my lips.

C. An Attentive Listening

James 1:19 ‘...be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry’

Lucian ‘Don’t lose your temper! Do little talking and much listening!’

James 1:16-18

‘He chose to give us birth through the word of truth...’

James 1:21

‘...humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you’

James 1:22

‘Do not merely listen to the word...’

D. A Careful Speaking

James 1:19,20

'...slow to speak and slow to become angry,
because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires'

James 3:1-12

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. **2** We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

3 When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. **4** Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. **5** Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. **6** The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, **8** but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. **10** Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. **11** Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? **12** My brothers and sisters, can a fig-tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Matthew 5:21,22

James 4:2 '...desire...kill...covet...quarrel...fight...'

James 5:9 'Don't grumble'

Restraint in what we say

Proverbs 14:3

'A fool's mouth lashes out with pride,
but the lips of the wise protect them'

Proverbs 12:18

'The words of the reckless pierce like swords
but the tongue of the wise brings healing'

Restraint in how we respond

Proverbs 19:11

A person's wisdom yields patience (slowness-to-anger)
it is to one's glory to overlook an offence

Proverbs 15:1

A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger

Ecclesiastes 7:9

Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit,
for anger resides in the lap of fools

Proverbs 12:16

Fools show their annoyance at once,
but the prudent overlook an insult.

Proverbs 29:11

Fools give vent to their rage,
but the wise bring calm in the end.

Proverbs 17:27

The one who has knowledge uses words with restraint,
and whoever has understanding is even-tempered.

The misery of close proximity to angry words

Proverbs 19:13; 27:15; 21:9; 25:24; 21:19

E. A Patient Waiting

James 5:7-11

⁷Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

Conclusion