

HAVING SELF-CONTROL OVER MY ANGER
Sermon Series: Building Godly Values That Last
Next Steps Devotional Guide
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Instructions: This devotional guide can be used individually, by families or in a small group as a way to reinforce the biblical truth you learned from the sermon. If you are using this at home, spread the points throughout the whole week. If you are using this in a small group, divide people up into sub-groups to discuss and share and bring them back to the whole group to share. Do not force anyone to share. Be sure to pray in your group.

1. When we look at our country today, if we could use one emotion to characterize it, it would be anger. We see politicians angry at each other. We see protests, demonstrations and violent outburst against businesses and institutions, including churches. Ever since the George Floyd incident, the pandemic, masks, school and the economy shutdowns, CRT and gender identity lessons in our public schools, inflation, rising gas and food prices and etc., America seems to be a power keg that is about to explode. Anger is an emotion we all experience at different times for different reasons. Let's do some introspection and reflection. When have been the times in your life you experienced intense anger, even rage over something? How did you handle it?
2. When it comes to anger, would you say you blow up or clam up? Are you a skunk with your anger — you stink up the whole place or a turtle, you just go into your “shell”? Both of these are wrong and sinful. Both are forms of inappropriate anger. Read Proverbs 25:28 in your sermon notes. This verse uses a picture — a city with broken down wall is defenseless. How does this apply to anger and why?
3. Anger is a normal human emotion. God gets angry and because we are created in God's image, that explains why we get angry. Yet, all of us have witness out of control anger in some form. To get a handle or control of our anger, we must first have a passionate desire to get control over it.
 - a. Read Proverbs 29:11 in point #1 in your sermon notes. As hard as it may be to believe, anger is optional. You can put several people in the same situation and some will get angry and some will not. Why? I have to choose to get angry. So, when we say, “*He or she made me so angry*,” that is not being totally truthful. Whether we want to admit it or not, we have more control over our anger than we want to honestly admit. In what ways do you try to control or manage your own anger?
 - b. Read Philippians 4:13 in point #1 in your sermon notes. When we make a covenant with God to learn how to control our anger, we rely on His strength do this. This means we have to have some biblical strategies and procedures in place prior when we choose to get angry. What are yours?
4. Read Proverbs 29:22 in your sermon notes in point #2. Anger has a price tag. Based on Proverbs 29:22, where have you seen people pay a horrible price for uncontrolled anger?
 - a. Read Proverbs 11:29 in your sermon notes in point #2. You are never going to get the top if you keep blowing yours. It is like in whaling. The whale gets harpooned when it comes up to blow. Uncontrolled anger can cause you to lose your reputation, job, marriage, family and friends. Where have you seen this in your own life and/or in the life of someone else? What did you learn from this?
 - b. Uncontrolled anger always causes us to lose. You lose the people closest to you because you alienate them. The result of uncontrolled anger is more anger is directed back at you. Which long term, can result in apathy — “*I just don't care anymore. I can't please them. So, I give up.*” Have you ever seen this or experienced this? How did it play out?
5. Have you noticed that you cannot put your foot in your mouth when your mouth is closed? Read Proverbs 21:23 and Proverbs 17:28 in your sermon notes in point #2. We put muzzles on dogs so they cannot bite. This means, you cannot put your foot in your mouth when it is closed. What are some things you have said in anger that you later regretted? Looking back, what would you do differently if you had a second chance and why?
 - a. Read James 1:19 in your sermon notes in point #3. In James 1:19, when we do the first two, the third one is inevitable. The Bible is clear that we cannot muzzle our mouth on our own because it takes the power of the Holy Spirit to do this. Do you depend on the Holy Spirit to help you do this or do you typically do whatever comes to your mind? Why?
 - b. Read Proverbs 16:32 in point #3 in your sermon notes. In our American culture, we use the phrase, “*dumped his or her bucket*” to refer to someone getting angry. The implication is that when they do that, they feel better. It is the idea, “*When my bucket gets filled to brim, if I dump it — I will feel better.*” That is not true. We don't have a bucket of anger. We have a whole factory or reservoir of anger. How do you typically express your own anger to others and what are the results?

- c. Study after study shows that releasing anger only creates more anger. Being aggressive actually creates more aggression. You'll never be persuasive when you are abrasive. Being loud and angry, creates more anger back at you. It does not relieve or reduce anger; it multiplies it. Where have you experienced this personally and how did you handle it?
6. Everyone has regrets. All of us wish we had handled some or more situations differently or better. Read Proverbs 29:11 in your sermon notes in point #4. When we choose to get angry, God wants us to cool down before we react.
 - a. God does not want us to put off our anger indefinitely because that can lead to more anger and a bitter heart. God wants us to pause just temporarily before we react so that we do not sin with our anger. In what ways have you seen people and yourself sin with anger?
 - b. When it comes to anger, we can choose to either become better because of it or bitter. Responding impulsively and not responding at all, simply creates more problems. Look at the acrostic on the word: T.H.I.N.K. in your sermon notes. Now read the Proverbs 19:11a in your sermon notes. How does restraining rather than immediately responding show wisdom and help?
 - c. Most people never figure out why they are angry. They simply react. God wants us to be proactive, especially with anger. The more you understand, the more understanding you can be. You were given in your sermon notes 3 key questions to ask yourself under the heading, "How Do I Understand What Really Is the Issue?" How can asking these 3 questions help you with anger?
 - d. It has been said, "*Anger is a symptom of a deeper problem.*" Meaning — anger is not the real problem. It is warning light of the problem. In your sermon notes you were given questions to ask under the heading, "Three Basic Reasons For Anger." Read each of these. How does each of these help you with dealing, understanding and reacting with your anger?
7. All of us have seen and witnessed the wrong expression of anger. Read Ephesians 4:26 in your sermon notes in point #5. This verse says there are right ways and wrong ways to express our anger.
 - a. Read the first wrong way to deal with your anger in your sermon notes under the heading, "Three Wrong Ways To Deal With Your Anger." When you swallow your anger, your body keeps score. You can develop backaches, headaches, ulcers and other physical problems. If you do not talk it out, you will take it out on your body. Jesus did not suppress His anger. When are you more inclined to suppress your anger and why?
 - b. Read the second wrong way to deal with your anger under the heading, "Three Wrong Ways To Deal With Your Anger." Denial never works. Have you ever said when angry, "*Oh, I'm not angry.*" Denying your anger is lying to yourself, which is a sin. Jesus said, "*The truth will set you free.*" So, lying to yourself does not free you — it imprisons you. How is denial harmful rather than helpful? Long term repressed anger, which is anger you have frozen, leads to depression. Have you ever made this connection and how can this help you?
 - c. Read the third wrong way to deal with anger under the heading, "Three Wrong Ways To Deal With Your Anger." Many people, when angry, resort to pouting, or sarcasm, or manipulation or, passivity or they storm away or they turn to destructive behaviors. Anger can make you senseless. Have you ever shown your anger in any of these three wrong ways? What were the results?
 - d. Read Job 18:4 and Proverbs 22:24 in your sermon notes in point #5. How we express our anger is a learned behavior. How was anger expressed in your home growing up and are you the same way or different? The Bible tells us that the best way of dealing with our anger is to admit it when we are angry — "*I'm upset and here's why. I'm hurting or frustrated and here's why. I feel threatened and here's why.*" Do you do this in a biblical way or do you just attack or unload or clam up? Why?
8. Read Romans 12:17-19a, 21 and Romans 12:19b in your sermon notes in point #6. When someone hurts us, our natural desire is to hurt them back. When that happens, do you leave it to God to settle the score or do you? Why and what have been the results?
9. Read Psalms 141:3 and Matthew 12:34 in your sermon notes in point #7. The heart of the issue is an issue of the heart. Meaning — it is not our mouths that get us in trouble. It's our heart. Whatever is inside our heart comes out of our mouths. You may have heard or even said yourself, "*I don't know what got into me. I'm not that kind of person. It's not like me to say that or do that when angry.*" One of the worst things about what comes out, just like toothpaste, it cannot be put back inside again. It's out there. When someone puts the squeeze on you as if you were toothpaste tube, what comes out?
10. Unfortunately, our mouths betray us. They simply reveal what is already in our heart. This is why you cannot clean up the well simply by painting the pump. If the water is contaminated, you've got to get to the source. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Psalms 51:10a in your sermon notes in point #7. God specializes in "heart transplants." When it comes to your anger and how you deal with it, what kind of "heart transplant" do you need God to give you with your anger? Ask Him today. Read Galatians 5:22-23a in your sermon notes in point #7. What does this tell you about your anger?