

Identity Crisis: Slow to Anger

#TargetPractice: How does God want me to handle my anger?

Intro game

Play a listening game with your group. Divide into teams and spread each member of the team out throughout your space. Have the first person from each team meet with you at a certain spot and give him a sentence (orally) that he has to convey to the rest of his team. Only repeat the sentence once – this is a listening game, after all! The first person must then run to the next person of the team, whisper the sentence in his ear, and then take that person's place. That person then runs to the next person on the team, whispers the sentence in his ear and takes that person's place. This continues until the last person returns to you. The last person then tells you the sentence. The team that is closest to the original sentence and gets back first gets a point. The person who returned to you and told you the sentence is now the first person on the team. Continue this until all the kids have had a chance to be the first person. (Note: be sure the kids are spread out far enough – perhaps one in each corner of a room and one in the middle. Also, be sure that each kid only repeats the sentence one time.)

Possible sentences to use include the following:

-The old, ugly cat clawed the big, black dog on his nose.

-People don't usually eat pickles for breakfast, but sometimes they eat eggs.

-There was a white seagull that soared through the sky and grabbed a piece of bread from the small child.

-How many sentences are we going to have?

-Who ate all the tomatoes that were set out on the purple tablecloth?

-The weather was about to turn nasty – just in time for the crazy class picnic.

-Do you know how many oranges it takes to feed a finicky four year old?

Did any team get the sentence right every single time? Did any team NEVER get the sentence right? What made it hard to get the sentence right?

This was a listening game – you had to listen very carefully to have any chance at getting the sentence right.

Did anything make it difficult for you to listen? Explain.

James 1:19-20 “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.”

How do you think this game relates to James 1:19-20?

In this game, you had to be very QUICK to listen. You had to listen carefully the first time, and then you had to remember what was said! In the same way, we need to listen very carefully to what people say to us. We should not be always thinking about what we want to say next – instead we should be listening to what other people say to us. Listening is a very important skill, and a very important part of being a good friend to others and a devoted follower of Jesus!

Do you remember this verse? **Romans 12:18 “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”** What does this have to do with anger? If we don’t listen closely to

others, we can become angry because we misunderstand a situation. Or we could even cause the other person to become angry when they are not being listened to. If we do what it says in James 1:19, be quick to listen and slow to speak, then we can avoid anger.

But sometimes anger happens anyway. All of a sudden, it hits and sometimes we don't even know why. Does this mean we are terrible? No. Anger is an emotion that we have sometimes. The Bible tells us that Jesus was angry at times too. But how we handle our anger and react to it is what is so important. We have to learn how to control our anger so that we don't hurt others or ourselves. What are some ways we can control and help calm our anger?

We are going to read a book to get some ideas. As we read, listen for ways to control or help calm down anger. Read *I Am Stronger Than Anger* by Elizabeth Cole.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeJqxL86vfQ> As reading, stop and discuss at marked spots.

Also, make a list of ways to calm down when feeling angry instead of blowing up.

- *Pause video at 2:00 minutes. Ask: **Have you ever felt like this? What did you do?***
- *Pause video after each strategy to calm down and write it down. (minute 3:13, 3:36, 3:56, 5:07)*
- *Pause video at 5:48 minutes. Say: **When he stopped and thought, Nick realized he was wrong! Could all of the anger been avoided if he had been slower to speak and quicker to listen?***
- *Pause video at 6:07 minutes. Ask: **Do you remember how to apologize from our lesson a few weeks ago? Say sorry, I shouldn't have....., and would you forgive me.** (see link below for this lesson if interested in looking at it further)*

- *Pause video at 6:29 minutes. Ask: **Do you remember last week when we talked about grace? Do you think Nick deserved a toy? Why do you think Mom offered it? Do you think she was showing him grace because he realized he was wrong and apologized?** (see link below for lesson on grace in interested)*
- *Finish story*

We came up with a lot of different ways to calm down when we start feeling angry. What are some other ways that weren't in the book? (some other ideas are pray, doing something you enjoy, time alone....)

Which of these strategies help you or could help you control your anger?

Dear God,

Thank you for understanding us and still loving us.

You know how hard it is for us to control ourselves sometimes.

Please forgive us for the times we lose control.

Help us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.

Please help us to learn to control anger when it shows up.

Help us to keep peace with everyone.

Thank you God.

Amen

Additional Resources:

Source of game. Also has a couple more games and a lesson

<https://cherigamble.com/2015/08/13/a-lesson-for-children-on-anger-from-james-119-21/>

Link to Video used in lesson on Forgiveness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32ptBpaHisw>

Link to Lesson Notes on Grace

[https://dq5pwpq1q8ru0.cloudfront.net/2023/03/14/07/30/34/eb50c1ff-185e-4260-b3f3-aebc5bd2bf77/Kid%20Lesson%20Notes%20\(Grace\).pdf](https://dq5pwpq1q8ru0.cloudfront.net/2023/03/14/07/30/34/eb50c1ff-185e-4260-b3f3-aebc5bd2bf77/Kid%20Lesson%20Notes%20(Grace).pdf)

Books on Anger:

Everyone Feels Angry Sometimes by Dr. Daniela Owen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gf7OFp6fvM>

A Little Spot of Anger by Diane Alber

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfK9ROg02ik>

I Was So Mad by Mercer Mayer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xec0MvTNegc>