

BE ANGRY AND SIN NOT!

Eph. 4:26

Intro.

I. In the midst of a series of Scriptural thoughts about putting off the old man and putting on the new man, Paul deals with one's temper or anger. We are warned about anger. We are warned about the wrath of man—"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." James 1:19-20.

II. Wrath and righteousness are not compatible. However, anger and righteousness can be compatible. Our Lord, for instance, manifested a righteous anger whenever he drove the money changers from the temple courtyard. John 2:13-17; Mk. 11:15-19. See also Mk. 3:5—angry at those who would question His authority to heal on the Sabbath day.

1. When our emotions are stirred for a righteous cause, God does not restrain us in His law from acting to correct wrongs.

2. When our emotions get out of control or are emotionally harmful to self or to others, we are restrained by God's law. Anger must not become destructive. Blowing up and clamming up are two ways that anger becomes harmful. When does anger become sinful?

Dis.

I. IMAGINED INJURY.

A. When, to favor a resentment or feud, we imagine an injury done to us.

1. There is a difference between an imagined injury or trespass and a real one. We cannot make up or create a situation in which we take offence. We have either been sinned against or we have not been sinned against.

2. Distorted perceptions or taking offence when no offence is accomplished indicates the wrong spirit.

B. If a brother fails to shake your hand, it does not necessarily constitute an offense (trespass) of withholding fellowship. It may be that he was distracted or pre-occupied with something else. Don't wear your emotions on your sleeve!

II. OVER-REACTION.

A. When an injury done to us becomes, in our minds, greater than it really is.

1. This is "making a mountain out of a molehill."

2. Some exaggerate the wrong done. A minor trespass (mispronounce your name) can be blown into a big problem (he always makes fun of me). We tend to impute motives to others that we don't like and put a negative twist to them.

B. People who over-react may be overly sensitive.

III. UNFOUNDED RESENTMENT.

A. When, without real injury, we feel resentment on account of pain or inconvenience.

1. We get upset whenever someone asks us to do something we did not want to do in the first place.

2. We get upset when we see someone else prosper and we feel envy. We have no basis for our pain.

B. Jesus was delivered to be crucified because of envy. Matt. 27:18. What was the foundation for the hatred of the Jews against Christ?

IV. UNCONTROLLED ANGER.

- A. When indignation rises too high, and overwhelms our ability to restrain.
1. A good example of this is Cain. Gen. 4:6-8. Cain could have ruled over his anger. God warned him. He gave in to these lusts of the flesh rather than overcoming them and he committed the first murder as a result.
 2. Anger must be controlled.
- B. “Be ye angry and sin not.” This statement indicates self-control.

V. SEEK REVENGE.

- A. When we gratify resentments by causing pain or harm out of revenge.
1. Vengeance belongs to God. He will repay.
 2. Some people believe that they have to act to right every wrong done to them. Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.
- B. God desires that we be merciful. He wants us to be peacemakers not war-mongers. Sometimes we have to turn injustices over to God. “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” Rom. 12:19-21. We do not take the law into our own hands.

VI. TRANSFERENCE FROM SELF TO OTHERS.

- A. When we are so perplexed and angry at sin in our own lives that we readily project anger at the sin we find in others.
1. We may be upset with ourselves because of our own sin and take it out on others when we see the same failings in them that we know we possess. Parents may be susceptible to this behavior. They see their own shortcomings in their children and discipline them harder because of it. Eph. 6:4.
- B. We need to deal with sin in our own lives. I John 1:7-9.

VII. STORE IT UP AND SEETHE.

- A. When we clam-up, internalize anger, and let it grow into hatred, variance, wrath, strife etc.
1. Paul teaches, “let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” Resolve conflicts daily. Reconcile when needed on a daily basis. Do not return to the past with the idea of calling to remembrance every trespass one can remember in order to attack the person in front of you.
 2. Forgiveness means “to dismiss the debt” The trespasser is forgiven and the deeds he did in the past must be dismissed and not brought up again. Love does not keep an ongoing ledger of all the evil done to it. The reason: love forgives. I Cor. 13:4-8.
- B. Anger can progress into even more ugly conditions of heart—malice, variance and strife. Gal. 5:20.

Conclusion.

Be angry, but don't sin! This is easier said than done. But, we are not out to please ourselves. We are out to please God. God demands hard work from us sometimes and we must be committed to Him and accomplish it.