

LAST WEEK

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE *of you* WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, **for we are members of one another.** (NASB)

Last week we looked at honesty and we asked the hard question – is it every ok to lie.

Ultimately this passage is a warning for us that we are a body of believers and we must work together. And we cannot work together if we do not trust one another. Therefore, we need to stop lying, telling white lies, and stretching the truth – but be honest with one another so that we have a clean conscious with one another, and have integrity - to be a good example of what a body of believers should look like and so all we have to say is “Yes” or “No” and everyone will know without a shadow of a doubt – we are telling the truth because of our testimony.

Ephesians 4:26-27 BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. (NASB)

Here we see a second characteristic we need to change. We need to be angry, and not to sin. This raises an excellent question, “*Is it ever ok to be angry?*”. The answer is yes, in fact it is Godly to be angry. However, it is how you handle your anger that really counts.

WITH THAT SAID, LET US LOOK AT SOME BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF “GODLY ANGER”.

- **Mark 3:5**
 - A man came to Jesus with a withered hand on the Sabbath, and the Pharisees watched to see if Jesus would heal on the Sabbath, so they can see if Jesus would sin on the Sabbath, because Jews were not to do any work on the Sabbath. Mark gives us a Biblical account of this event:
 - **Mark 3:5** After looking around at them with **anger**, grieved at their hardness of heart, He *said to the man, "**Stretch out your hand.**" And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored." [NASB - Emphasis mine]
- **Mathew 21:12 & John 2:13**
 - Jesus got mad when He came into the synagogue and saw men selling in the temple as if it were a store for robbers. So he became angry and chased out those who were making the House of God look bad.
- **Galatians**
 - Paul seems pretty angry throughout the book of Galatians.
 - **Galatians 1:6**
 - Amazed that the Galatians are deserting Jesus for another Gospel.
 - **Galatians 2:7 – 16**
 - Paul was angry at Peter when Paul confronted Peter to his face because Peter would have dinner with the gentiles (non Jews) and then when the Jews would come by and have the opportunity to see Peter eating with gentiles, Peter

would remove himself from the gentiles and go be with the Jews. Paul called Peter out on his hypocrisy in

- **Galatians 3:1**
 - Paul says to them *"You Foolish Galatians!"* because he is angry with the Galatians for being eye witnesses of Jesus and they still allowed to be swayed.
- **Galatians 4:11**
 - Paul explains that at one point he thought the Galatians were so lost in their legalism that they weren't even saved and for that reason all of his work was thrown away because it had no affect on those people
- **Galatians 6:11**
 - Paul states *"See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand."* This reminds me of writing an email, when we write in all CAPS it shows we are serious and actually "yelling".
- **Exodus 11**
 - Moses was angry by the hardened heart of Pharaoh
- **Exodus 32**
 - Moses became angry when he saw the sin of his people worshipping a golden cow other than God – who just parted the red sea to save the Jews from enslavement! This all happened when Moses went to get the 10 commandments from God Himself
- **1Samuel 17:26**
 - David seemed angry when Goliath came forward talking trash about God. You can see it in David's words: Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this ***uncircumcised Philistine***, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?" (NASB)
 - I don't know about you but *"uncircumcised Philistine"* doesn't sound like an endearing term.

AT TIMES GOD EVEN GOT ANGRY

- **Numbers 22:20 – 23**
 - God got angry at Balaam for not following His commands.
- **2 Samuel 6:6-7**
 - God was angry at Uzzah for touching the ark when it was going to fall to the ground after being commanded not to touch.
- **Romans 1:18**
 - Paul tells us that God is angry at us because God's righteousness is revealed from heaven in the form the glory of creation.

So we can see that there are Godly, righteous me who have been angry and it was not sinful.

We can see that God has been angry and He is not sinful.

Therefore, we know that being angry is not inherently sinful, but it is how you handle your anger.

THIS LEADS US TO THE NEXT QUESTION, "HOW DO I KNOW IF MY ANGER IS RIGHTEOUS OR UNRIGHTEOUS?"

To answer this I want to take you to the book of James. He gives us a good indication in verse 19 - 20

James 1:19-20 *This* you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak *and* slow to anger; for the anger of man does not **achieve the righteousness of God**. (NASB)

The first question I ask is, whose anger is mentioned in this verse? Is it God's or man's? It is man's anger that is described directly and God's indirectly. For instance if verse 19 tells us that man must be "SLOW TO ANGER" and verse 20 tells us that the anger of Man "does not achieve righteousness"; therefore, the anger you are experiencing is not righteous or of God it is sinful, evil and demonic. Because, God's anger is "slow to anger" it does "achieve righteousness" and the reason it does, it is filled with mercy (the taking away the punishment you do deserve) and grace (the giving you of something you do not deserve).

So your anger that is "quick" does not achieve God's righteousness, because it is harsh and unloving, without mercy or grace.

So anger is good, if it is Godly. If it is not Godly then well – you are in trouble.

THIS LEADS US TO THE NEXT QUESTION "WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER?"

Here are two results of unrighteous anger

1. Unrighteous Anger Blinds Us of Our Own Wrongdoing & Seeks to Blame Others

o **Genesis 25:31-34**

- Here we see that Esau was out all day, came home and was famished! Instead of getting up making his own food he thought he would die if he didn't get a bowl of Jacob's awesome stew. When he asked Jacob for some stew, Jacob told Esau he needed to give up his birthright. Esau gave it up for some stew and thus Verse 34 says "Thus Esau despised his birthright"
- Doesn't this amaze you? Esau worked all day and came home and "valued" his birthright so much that he gave it up for stew! Seriously? All those blessings for a short-term, immediate gratification of FOOD!
- But it gets better, as time goes on and Isaac (The father of Jacob and Esau) he was going to bless his firstborn son – Esau. However, Jacob again, put one over on Esau, and tricked Isaac into blessing Jacob instead of Esau. The scripture goes on to say:
 - **Genesis 27:41** ...Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and

Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob." (NASB)

- Do you see the problem here? Esau was so angry at Jacob that he failed to see his own wrong. Esau first gave away his birthright for some of Jacobs awesome stew and therefore showing he truly did not value his standing as first born; however, when he didn't receive the blessings he was frustrated and upset.
- This kind of anger is *Jealous Anger*. It blinds us from seeing the truth. It seeks to push blame onto other people and makes us dwell on what we *don't have* .
- This leads me to ask you, Have you ever done something wrong and was so angry that you didn't see your own fault?

2. Unrighteous Anger Results from Pride & seeks to Attacks Others

- **Numbers 22**
 - Here we have a Guy named Balaam who was asked to do a favor by a guy named Moab. Moab asked Balaam for help because he heard and knew the power of the God of Balaam.
 - However, God the spoke to Balaam and told him not to do the favor for Moab.
 - So Balaam agreed with God, broke the news to Moab and Moab said persisted in pushing Balaam
 - Balaam said He couldn't but then let "peer pressure" get to him and went against God's commands.
 - This brings us to verses 19 - 29
 - Here we have Balaam on his way to Moab riding a donkey and God keeps sending angels in the way to scare the donkey, so the donkey Balaam is riding keeps going off the path.
 - Balaam gets mad and starts hitting the donkey.
 - Balaam gets upset and starts talking to the Donkey and Donkey begins to argue back asking "*What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?*"and Balaam responds "*Because you have made a mockery of me! If there had been a sword in my hand, I would have killed you by now.*"
 - Here we see that Balaam took his anger out on a neutral 3rd party who did not deserve it and then proceeded to argue with the 3rd party, when he was the one who was disobeying God.
- So I ask you, have you ever been mad that you took it out on someone who did not deserve it, because you had no one else to blame for your wrong doing?
- Both of these examples create evil and that is exactly what we do not want to do. We do not want to be blind but we want to see; we don't to blame others but take responsibility; we don't want to attack and hurt others but show love, mercy, and grace.

THIS BRINGS ME TO SOME EVERYDAY EXAMPLES OF UNGODLY ANGER

- *Fight with Parents*
 - Sometimes our parents are trying to instill wisdom into their kids and they hold us back from something bad we want to do. However, we are blind to our wrong doing – so we try to blame our parents for something such as “*If you would just let me do ‘this’ then I wouldn’t have to act this way*” or we end up telling our parents we “*hate them*” or “*I can’t stand you*”. Therefore, we are being blind to their wisdom, or that what we are doing (or want to do) is sinful and disobedient to God.
 - Then we don’t even think about how God could be using our parents to change us, mold us, instill wisdom into us and make us more like Jesus because we think we are right in this given situation. Therefore, we are filled with pride and begin to attack others in our angers.

- *When confronted with Sin*
 - Then there are times we are blind to our wrongdoing and when a friend comes to us trying to be a Godly brother or sister in Christ, confronting us about our sin, we begin to think “*who is this person, that they think they are so ‘Holy’ and do no wrong to judge me*” or “*this person has no right to tell me what I am doing wrong*”; and we try to “justify it” by using the famous verse **Mathew 7:3** “**Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?**” (NASB)
 - When the truth is, we are naturally prideful people – so when we are told we are doing something wrong, we store up anger and want to take it out on someone. That is what we naturally want to do. We tend to take our eyes off God and that is why we hurt others.

SO WHAT IS GODLY ANGER?

Righteous Anger always seeks to protect the Holiness of God; such as, Jesus throwing the robbers out of the temple because when people look at the church and they see robbery, cheating, in a place that is made especially for God, the people began to equate the church with robbery, cheating and evil. This mars God’s image and makes Him look bad by making Him look unrighteous and evil. So when someone is marring the image of God it is good and righteous to be angry about. If you ever see a church with a casino, and strippers – be angry about that and kick those people out.

Another example, a body of believers that willfully hurt the Gospel is something worth to be angry of, just like Paul writing the Galatians.

Another example, be angry about divorce, a man who does not try to provide for his household. Because they are marring the image and purposes of God. Those examples are focused on the righteousness of God and the defection from His original purposes.

WHY DOES ANGER BECOME SIN?

Eph 4:26 BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN; **do not let the sun go down on your anger,** (NASB)

Here you see that it is ok to be angry but do not sin – we covered that. That part of the verse is followed by an example “*Do not let the sun go down on your anger*” – that means you **have to take care of it TAKE ACTION!**

So far, we have focused on what is and is not righteous, and how to know what to be angry about. But we have not answered the question, “*How do we handle our anger*” It is important to handle it correctly. One reason anger becomes sin, YOU DON'T HANDLE IT and take care of it when it needs to be take care of.

We already looked at when we don't handle anger correctly we tend to : *Blame others, Attack others;* which both *Create Evil.*

We “let it blow over” and then it builds up and we begin to see flaws in others, and attack them, become bitter and create little anger groups which begin to talk behind other people's backs and say hurtful evil things we shouldn't say – all that is evil and demonic - and that is why the next verse ends the thought of not letting the sun go down on your anger

Ephesians 4:27 and do not give the devil an opportunity. (NASB)

When you do not handle your anger correctly – you give the devil the opportunity to put a wedge in the body of believers and thus dividing ourselves against ourselves. This results in unchristian looking at the church and saying “*You bunch of hypocrites, you can't even get along and I thought Jesus was all about 'Love, and Peace and Togetherness'*”. That is why we cannot become calloused and “loose feeling” toward one another. We cannot become bitter toward one another or give the devil the opportunity to create a callousness in our hearts. Because that allows Satan to feed off our pride and build ourselves up and causes division. When Jesus has made it clear, He wants us unified.

We need to lay aside anger, and that begins with speaking the truth. If we just spoke the truth we would confront our issues then our anger would not be an opportunity for the Devil but an opportunity to bring God glory.

CONCLUSION

We are called to speak the truth, and in doing so we confront issues instead of burying them. We may become angry in our lives; however, in our Christian walks we confront our issues and put sin to death by taking up our cross, taking up our responsibility and working things out.

Let us look at a worldly example of anger should be handled.

Biblical Anger***"Before He Cheats" by Carrie Underwood*****[VERSE I]**

*Right now he's probably slow dancing with a bleach blonde tramp,
and she's probably getting frisky...
right now, he's probably buying her some fruity little drink cause she can't shoot whiskey...*

Right now, he's probably up behind her with a pool-stick, showing her how to shoot a combo...

And he don't know...

[CHORUS]

*That I dug my key into the side of his pretty little souped up 4 wheel drive,
carved my name into his leather seats...
I took a Louisville slugger to both headlights,
slashed a hole in all 4 tires...*

Maybe next time he'll think before he cheats.

[VERSE II]

*Right now, she's probably up singing some
white-trash version of Shania karaoke..
Right now, she's probably saying "I'm drunk"
and he's a thinking that he's gonna get lucky,
Right now, he's probably dabbing on 3 dollars worth of that bathroom polo
And he don't know...*

*I might've saved a little trouble for the next girl,
Cause the next time that he cheats...*

Oh, you know it won't be on me! Ohh... not on me...

1. Does this girl have the right to be angry? If so, why or why not?
2. What does the Bible say about revenge? **Romans 12:17-21; Leviticus 19:18; Psalm 58:9-11**
3. What does Jesus say about the importance of confronting issues? **Mathew 5:21 – 25; 1 Peter 3:8-9**
4. Was this girl's actions justified? What does the Bible say about how a Christian needs to handle issues?
Mathew 18:15-17; Leviticus 19:17
5. In this song, this girl's actions really show her anger and her desire for revenge/vengeance. Sometimes it is not our actions that take revenge, but our words. What does the Bible say about our words and how important is it to keep this in mind when confronting someone with an issue? **James 3:5-6; Proverbs 15:1**
6. Write out how this situation should have been handled according to the Bible.