

Home Builder's

Making Marriage Work in a Broken World

Lesson 4: Why Are You So Mad? Anger and the Christian Marriage

Text(s): James 4:1-10 | Ephesians 4:26-27 | James 1:19-20

Outline:

- I. What is anger?
 - A. Anger is a response to a perceived wrong or injustice.
 1. The key word here is “perceived”.
 2. Human perception is faulty and sin tainted.
 - B. Anger can be righteous or sinful.
 1. Righteous anger has three criteria.
 - a. It reacts against actual sin (as defined by the Bible).
 - b. It focuses on God and His concerns (not me and my concerns).
 - c. It coexists with other godly qualities and expresses itself in godly ways.
 - C. Most human anger is sinful.
 1. Most of the time, human anger does not fit all these categories.
- II. Why do you get angry?
 - A. You get angry because you have a sinful heart.
 1. The heart is a biblical term for a person's thoughts, will, affections, and emotions.
 2. Your heart is your “control center”.
 3. It is the center of your beliefs and motives. (Hebrews 4:12)
 - a. As sinners we often believe the wrong things and want the wrong things.
 - B. You become angry when life does not meet your expectations.
 1. We have warring desires (wants/loves). (James 4:1)
 2. We get angry when something threatens our desires, wants, or loves.
 - a. The opposite of being angry is not being nice or loving (that opposite would be hatred).
 - b. The opposite of being angry is being indifferent.
 - C. Anger is often sinful because we want and love the wrong things.
 1. Our desires are disordered.
 2. We elevate our desires to levels that God never intended.
 - a. Think about it this way, after a long tiring week at work, you want to sleep in on your day off. Your kids, however, have different plans and wake you up. You get angry because you want something good—sleep—but you want it more than you want to serve you kids or your spouse.
 - b. We get angry in traffic because we want to get to work on time.
 - c. We get angry when someone track mud in the house.
 - D. Ask yourself, “am I angry because this person broke God's Law or am I angry because they broke mine?”
 1. See most of our sinful anger is a result of me being consumed by self-love.
 2. We want what we want when we want it.
 - E. “What am I loving so much right now that my heart is moved to feel angry?”
 1. Often, our anger is really an attempt for us to defend our egos, pride, or self-esteem.

- a. When you get angry because your kid acts out in public, are you angry because they broke God's Law?
- b. Or are you angry because they made you look bad?
- c. It is likely because they broke the law of "don't embarrass your parents in public".

III. How do I overcome my anger?

- A. Remember God's grace. (James 4:6)
 1. The Gospel brings hope to angry people.
- B. Humble yourself to view things the way God views them.
 1. Stop the blame game.
 - a. I was born this way so I can't help it.
 - b. I didn't have a good role model growing up.
 2. Am I responding in anger out of a desire to:
 - a. Control?
 - b. Protect my ego?
 - c. Project competence?
- C. Repent of angry, sinful desires.
 1. Turn from your sinful desires to embrace God's desires.
 - a. We must forsake "my rights, my will, my kingdom, etc."
 2. Receive God's grace for change.
 3. Fight for holiness.

Application:

- Remember that our anger is rarely righteous. (James 1:19-20)
- Determine to deal with our anger early on. (Ephesians 4:26-27)
- Live a lifestyle of repentance.
 - Acknowledgement—we must honestly admit our sin.
 - Remorse—no fake repenting.
 - Turn—we must stop the sinful behavior.
- Remember the Gospel.

For Next Week:

Lesson Title: Fighting Fair: Conflict Resolution

Text(s): Luke 17:1-4 | Ephesians 4:25-32

For next week: Read the passages listed above. What are some barriers to conflict resolution in your marriage?