

Is Anger Your Master?

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Introduction: What kind of religion do you get when you neglect to teach about and make applications to the heart?

- A. This was the major problem of the Pharisees. (**Mat 15:8-9**)
 - 1. Jesus contrasted their teachings with the will of God. (**Mt 5:21-22; Mt 5:43-44**)
 - 2. The same result will occur today if we neglect to teach about the heart.
- B. What does it mean to be a Christian?
 - 1. This is a sermon that I try to preach in every gospel meeting I hold.
 - 2. I believe that the subject of anger is a neglected subject!

I. Is Anger a Sin?

- A. How would you answer?
 - 1. Examples of approved anger.
 - a. **Jesus (Mark 3:5)**
 - b. **God and Jesus (Heb 1:9)**
 - c. **You and I (Eph 4:26-27)**
 - 2. Anger becomes a sin when it leads us away from obeying the will of God, that is when it becomes our master.
- B. The seriousness of unchecked anger.
 - 1. Many brethren treat this as a “small” fault. a “fleabite” so to speak. Some joke and laugh about their anger. (**1 John 3:15**)
 - 2. This one has no eternal life abiding in him! Are you listening? (**Gal 5:19-21**)
 - 3. Compare the “anger family” with the surrounding works of the flesh. Why do we minimize it, God doesn’t!
- C. Anger is a powerful force that must be tamed by God!
 - 1. Who is a strong man? (**Prov 16:32**)
 - 2. How many strong men have destroyed themselves by anger? Example: Woody Hayes, Billy Martin, those with drug and alcohol problems.
 - 3. The fall of Moses (**Psa 106:32-33**)
 - 4. I have seen untold tragedies caused by a moment of anger.

II. The Deception of Anger.

- A. Those with the greatest problem with anger, often do not see it.
 - 1. Example: The man who had his driveway blocked.
 - 2. Many try to bury or deny their anger.
 - 3. Let me warn you plainly, if you do not properly deal with anger there will be problems that will only grow. If you bury anger there will always be a resurrection!
- B. The first step to defeating anger is to recognize it.
- C. People express anger in different ways.
 - 1. **Active and Strong expressions:** Murder, suicide, physical violence, physical damage, bullying, cursing.
 - 2. **Not as Strong expressions:** Slander, ostracize others, provoking others,

humiliate others.

3. **More Subtle expressions:** Gossip, ridicule, sarcasm, criticism, careful revenge.
4. **Unsuspected expressions;** Withdrawal from others or activities, psychosomatic illness, depression.

D. Do people often think I am angry? Maybe I am!

1. The three levels of communication.
 - a. **Content of words** - 7%
 - b. **The tone of voice** - 38%
 - c. **Non-verbal, body language** - 55%
2. How often do people seethe with anger, but then try to deny it?

III. The Self Inflicted Wounds of Anger

A. Anger motivates us **to act and speak foolishly.** (Prov 14:29, 17)

1. Example: My own anger as a youth at a model airplane.
2. Sadly we break much more than models. Those who we love the most are the ones we hurt in our anger.
3. 50% of all murders involve acquaintances.
4. How many have quit the Lord because they were angry in a business meeting? Why not get mad at the dog and kick the cat? It is foolish and distrustful, but many in pride will not repent. Who is the loser?

B. The effects of uncontrolled anger on **the family.** (**Eph 6:4**)

1. The family loses respect for the one controlled by anger.
2. Often an **anger circle** is created in every relationship. Everyone gives in to anger as a **way of life.** Family members are taught to “**dump**” their anger on others.
3. Children take the example they have seen into their own marriage often repeating the pattern for generations and/or resulting in divorce.

C. The effects of uncontrolled anger on **the church.**

1. It can make our worship vain. (**1 Pet 3:7; 1 Tim 2:8**)
2. It can poison the entire congregation. (**Heb 12:15**)
3. Some churches form cliques who live in anger towards those who are not a part of their little “kingdom”.
3. How do we deal with problems of anger in this church? The answer will give insight to why a church **becomes what it is.** Think!
4. The church must protect its elders.

D. The effects of uncontrolled anger in **my life.**

1. I constantly live with the one I hate.
2. My “evangelism” is reduced to talking about my hurts.
3. I lose courage. I do not want to be hurt anymore. Compromise is preferred.
4. Satan in fact does his work through me. (**James 1:20;4:7**)
5. If I do not change, I will be lost.

IV. How to make Anger your Ally.

- A. Have a firm understanding of the Jesus Christ, the author of your salvation.
 - 1. How did He respond when hurt? **(1 Pet 2:21-23)**
 - 2. Can we be like Jesus? **(Luke 23:34)**
- B. Seek to be honest at all costs and admit any anger in your life.
 - 1. Ask those who love you to tell you the truth.
 - 2. Be prepared to make any changes necessary.
 - 3. Be the first to break the anger circle.
- C. Seek to forgive all those who repent. **(Eph 4:30-32; Mt 6:12)**
 - 1. If we refuse to see our anger, then God cannot forgive us.
 - 2. Can you trust God enough to let go and forgive? What has God forgiven you of? **(Matt 18:21-35)**
- D. Release all desire for personal vengeance to God. **(Rom 12:19-21)**
- E. Learn how to stop the escalation of anger.
 - 1. Change how you speak. **(Prov 15:1)**
 - 2. Change how quickly you speak. **(James 1:19-20)**
 - 3. Seek to engage your mind with the question: "What would Jesus do?"
- F. Let anger be your ally.
 - 1. Be angry at things that God is also angry with.
 - 2. Let anger move you to do good. **(Rom 12:21)**

Conclusion: The conversion process moves us out of the world and into a new way of thinking and living. Why not give up your learned way of life for God's? **(Titus 3:3-5)**

WARNING: Subtle hate

Dee Bowman

This will be a rather unusual article I guess. It won't have anything to say about fishing, hunting, or driving to class on a slick highway, or even training your dog, nor how the Romans and cowboys have vast similarities. I just want to cite a warning. A warning about hate. Subtle hate.

I fear hate. It's everywhere. People are angry. There is malecontentment in lots of places. And hate is the cause of a considerable amount of unrest, not to mention a fomenter or wars of all kinds.

Hate is condemned by God. We are not allowed to hate our brother **(1 Jn. 4:20)**. In fact, we are not even allowed to hate our enemies **(Matt. 5:44)**. And there's a reason for it. Hate is not good fodder for human reasoning; the mind doesn't operate efficiently on hate. It clogs things up, causes problems.

First of all, hate is not in our best interests. When we hate someone we likely will not help them. In fact, we are more apt to do them harm. The Lord said, "...whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." Furthermore, we will not likely derive any good from those whom we hate. They will disquiet us, cause us to be uneasy, and otherwise cause general disruption in our lives. Hate has little value when it is harbored in the human heart.

But that does not mean that hate has no value. We must hate certain things. We must hate ungodliness, unrighteousness, impiety, injustice, lawlessness, and a host of other things.

But our disdain for these things does not give us the right to hate the sinner. We must love him, care for him, provide for him, even if he seeks to do us harm. Now that's hard, but it's also disarming to the enemy.

Envy is a kind of hate. When we are agitated at the success of others, or when someone has more ability than do we, or when we are dissatisfied at the allotments of Divine Providence, we are in dangerous territory, for envy is right around the corner. And envy will tie you up. She will render you helpless under her spell. Cain slew Able out of envy. And so did King Saul seek David's life out of resentment over his acceptance as a national hero. Such grudging resentment should be given no residence in the mind of a Christian. And I know it's a trite expression, but love is the answer to this subtle form of hate. If someone you love profits, or is honored, or is used, it's hard to envy.

And what about vengeance? Isn't that ugly, time-consuming, mind-ruling vice just another subtle form of hatred? Surely it is so. We are not fitted for such activity. We are prejudiced. Toward those we love, and toward those we don't particularly like (even though we have learned that we can't hate, nobody has said everybody has to be liked the same).

Reprisal is not part of our job, nor is revenge. Those things are the private property of God and we should leave them to Him. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord" (**Rom. 13:19**). We are to "recompense to no man evil for evil." Many a life has been ruined because some good person could not get out of his mind some bad experience of his past.

The Christian would always do well to remember that he should be angry short, that he should "not let the sun go down on his wrath" (**Eph. 4:26**).

But I'll tell you what's the saddest subtle form of hate. It's disregard. There is no more heinous crime than to recognize a need, to be aware of an opportunity, and still not respond. It's no fun to be overlooked, or to be taken for granted. And there can be sin in that. When we see people day after day that are not ready for judgment and do nothing at all about it, we hate them. I know we do, because we wouldn't treat someone we love that way. It's not going to be enough to say "he got what was coming to him," at judgment time if we have done nothing with our opportunities to help. Fact is, we might end up getting what's coming to US. To ignore our responsibilities will not make them go away. If you know a bank note is coming due, will it go away if you just pay it no attention? You know better!

The Devil is cunning, artful. His is a master at his craft. And one of the things he does best is bring subtle forms of hate into the world.

No, they don't come dressed in a sandwich board sign which says, "Beware, I'm hate, and dangerous." But they come in disguised fashion. In ways that are so simple that they are easily overlooked. Some forms of hate even taste kind of good; they have a way of seeming right--even just.

But they are still hate. And we need to be careful about them.