**Smoke Signals**

**Anger- Week 4**

**Small Group Notes**

**October 31 and November 3**

**Main Point:** One of the smoke signals that is present in our life is anger. While there are things that we get angry about, we are going to see today how anger points to how we relate with others and Christ.

**Introduction:**

**The American Psychological Association says, “The underlying message of highly angry people is that things should go my way.” Do you agree or disagree with this quote? Why?**

**When is the last time you can remember something not going your way? At work? In a relationship? With something you really wanted to see happen?**

**What was your response in anger? How do you wish you had responded?**

Anger can be destructive when it is focused in the wrong area and has the wrong motivation. There are things that we should be angry about: injustices, the abuses of people, the taking advantage of others. However, there are real things that we get angry about and hold on in our lives that eats away at our life and reveals deeper issues going on.

**Discuss:**

1. Read Matthew 21:12-13

Explain: They originally had been set up to aid those pilgrims from foreign lands who were unable to bring sacrificial animals and the right type of money (shekel) that the Temple required. These booths charged outrageous prices. If a man did bring his own animal, the priestly inspectors would find some defect in it so that they had to purchase an animal from the booth operator for a highly inflated price. This is an example of Jesus’ anger at the religious exploitation by the Jewish leaders of His day. If anger is a sin, Jesus would have sinned (cf. Eph. 4:26).

**Given the emotion and implications of Jesus’ reaction, what do we learn about the significance and reverence with which He views His church—both as a body of believers and a place of worship?**

**How can you be angry without sinning? What does that tell you about how anger works?**

2. Read Ephesians 4:22-27

Explain: Not losing one’s temper is a way that we can demonstrate righteous anger. We are to be angry at sin and injustice, just as Jesus was (Mark 3:5). Yet in such cases, we are to be sure that our anger doesn’t stem from wounded pride or ill-will. We are to monitor our motives carefully so that we do not sin. We must not nurse anger. Not letting the sun go down on your anger means that we deal with it quickly. If we don’t, this can be just what the devil uses to tempt us into words or deeds that we come to regret.

**What are ways that we often let the sun go down on our anger? How is this not healthy in our relationships?**

**Why does it seem that the time that the devil has the greatest opportunity to hurt our witness is when we are angry?**

**What are ways that you have learned to deal with your anger quickly that encourages restoration?**

3. Read Ephesians 4:30-32

Explain: In verses 22-24 Paul had used the notion of taking off (the old man) and putting on (the new man) in reference to the decisive change that happened at conversion. Here he used similar language to speak of six sinful attitudes and actions. Believers constantly seek to keep these removed from their lives.

**How do you go about getting rid of wrath, malice, rage, and bitterness?**

**Why do you think Paul chose “get rid of” instead of “stop”?**

**How does dealing with our anger correctly impact how we view the time that we have here on earth?**

**Seeing that Paul places the emphasis on forgiveness at the end of this passage, how does that help you to not just deal with anger but to overcome it ?**

**Dig Deeper:**

***Matthew 21:12-13***

***12Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. 13“It is written,” he said to them, “‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’[***[***e***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23840e)***] but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’[***[***f***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23840f)***]”***

* Anger is a neutral emotion.
* Anger can be a catalyst or a catalyst for destruction.
* Righteous anger is surgical anger focused on protecting the oppressed and exposing sin.
* Unrighteous anger comes from loving the wrong things or love the right things out of proportion. Read James 4:1
* The way to deal with unrighteous anger is to first confess and repent of unrighteous desires that are fueling my anger. Read Galatians 5:25-26.

When is a time that you have seen righteous anger bring about positive change? When have you seen unrighteous anger provoke further problems?

How do we try to justify unrighteous anger to be righteous anger?

How does reading and knowing God’s Word help us to know the difference between righteous and unrighteous anger?

Is there something that you have posted on social media in anger? How can you try to redeem what you have said?

Not only do we need to see the difference in anger but also we need to see the reasons we need to let go of anger.

***Ephesians 4:22-27:***

***22You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. 25Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26“In your anger do not sin”[***[***d***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29299d)***]: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27and do not give the devil a foothold.***

* We must resign as judge of our world. Read Romans 12:17-21
* Righteous anger release to God while unrighteous anger chooses revenge. Read James 5: 7-11.

How do these verses affirm that in our life we are going to have times of anger and conflict? How do these verses help us to grow in those moments?

The picture in these verses and in other places of Paul’s letters is the idea of putting off the old man and putting on the new self. How does the change from the old to new help us to understand how to deal with anger when it arises?

In James 5, we see the call to patiently endure as a way to deal with anger or times of suffering. How does patience and endurance work together to overcome anger?

**Ephesians 4:30-32**

***30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.***

* We must recognize that we are first sinner and only secondly sinned against. Read James 1:20.
* Unrighteous anger rejects the Gospel because it puts my way above God’s way. Read Proverbs 19:11.

How does the gospel help us to understand our anger?

Is there something in your life that you have held onto that is grieving the Holy Spirit in your life? How can you let it go?

**Do:**

**What form does wrath most frequently take in your life? Spend some time in prayer surrendering this wrath to the Lord.**

**Is there anyone in your life who you need to forgive right now? What is keeping you from forgiving them?**

**What can you do this week to help you focus on the grace God has given you?**