

Be Real

Put on Both Anger and Self-Control

We cannot be like God and not be angry (Ephesians 4:26-27). In fact, we are commanded in Ephesians 4:26 to be angry and to not sin. Anger is either a destructive or protective energy released in defense of something we love. Jesus – who was without sin – became angry at religious leaders for keeping people away from God (Mark 3:5). Loving, righteous anger is redemptive and zealously seeks to act on behalf of the orphan, the unborn, the exploited, and the lost. However, losing control in our anger is far from being like God. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can absolutely control what we say and do when we become angry. God calls us to aggressively repent of the sins we do when we are angry, to repent of the things we say and of the destructive chaos that erupts. He longs to fill us with His Spirit that produces the fruit of peace and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

GET THINGS STARTED

What is your story with anger? What did you see and experience growing up, and how has anger manifested in you – righteously or sinfully – as an adult?

GO DEEPER

1. John Chrysostom writes that *he who is angry without cause sins, but he who is not angry where there is cause also sins*. What does he mean by this statement, and do you agree? Why or why not? What causes or situations, as followers of Jesus, should stir anger in us?
2. How do we have loving anger or zeal (like God in Isaiah 9:7), and avoid sin? Why is losing control when angry (e.g., violent outbursts, passive aggression, etc.) not like God?
3. According to 2 Timothy 1:7, God's Spirit enables us to have self-control. How do we *put on* the Spirit that empowers that self-control? How do we access the power and fruit of the Spirit in angering situations?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. Is uncontrolled anger a part of your generational family lineage? What steps do you possibly need to take to break that curse off you and your family?
2. In the aftermath of uncontrolled anger, what is your default response? Do you tend to minimize it by saying that *they are just words, and it is no big deal*? Or do you tend to capitulate and say that *it is just who I am* (or just who they are)?
3. To what degree do you embrace or avoid righteous, loving anger when a legitimate cause or situation presents itself? What cause is stirring in you right now, and how is it breaking your heart?

PRACTICE IT NOW

As a group, take time in prayer to ask God for a Spirit-led willingness to address the issue of anger in our own lives and within our family. Ask God to give you a heart of radical repentance for uncontrolled anger. And ask Him to stir in you righteous, loving anger towards the things that anger His heart. Take time to purposefully break the curse of generational, uncontrolled anger (regardless of how it is expressed).