Corona Virus Social Distancing Daily Devotion #3

Righteous Anger vs. Unrighteous Anger

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

Just the other day, one of the families who was on our mission trip told us that they were already irritating each other because of all the frustrations caused by the quarantine.

In Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus he addresses a very important subject. The subject of anger.

Let’s understand some things about anger.

First, anger is an emotion given to us by God, that is clear from what Paul says in verse 26, Be Angry. So clearly, there are times when anger is appropriate. But notice, Paul quickly follows that statement with, but do not let your anger turn to sin. Why? Because it will give the devil an opportunity to create or cause something worse from your anger.

Second, if anger is an emotion from God, why does it cause so many problems? For many people, anger is an emotion that expresses itself over a subject that a person is passionate about. That is not wrong, but too often that emotion is focused on the wrong subject, be it a non-tangible subject or a person or in the way in manifests itself. In other words, anger often comes out in an uncontrolled way. Leaving its’ victim crawling away looking for shelter, if you will.

Anger also is an emotion that is manifested when a person is not in control of a situation that they want to be in control of. For example, some of you are having to change your lives to homeschool your children now that they are not able to go back to school. Some of you are not in control over when you will get paid again because your company in cutting hours. Some of you are not in control of where you want to go and when you want to go. Many of us are feeling out of control of what will happen in the long-term effects of this economically. We are not in control of how people will react if the quarantine continues for a long time. Some of you are not in control of your travel plans that you have spent lots of money and time organizing. And all of us are completely out of control of whether we get the virus. All of those things lend themselves to creating anger. Which can easily turn to ungodly anger.

Then there is righteous anger, that’s what the verse is talking about - being angry over a situation that goes against God and His righteous standards. Jesus displayed righteous anger when His Temple was profaned by the corrupt money changers. Jesus, as God, displayed the way anger should be evoked.

When we are tempted to be angry, we must decide at that moment. First, is it a righteous anger, meaning, is this something God would be angry over? Secondly, what is the best way to show anger over this subject? Never are we to be out of control and in a fit of rage where others are harmed. But there are times when righteous anger needs to be displayed. Specifically, when God’s Word is being maligned.

When you feel yourself getting angry at someone or over a situation, ask yourself, before you get out of control, is this something that goes against God and His Word. If so, then be very cautious how you display your anger, but be truthful, yet kind at the same time.

Also, make sure your feelings are really about the subject and not simply because you are being challenged and your pride is being affected. Anger was given to us defend God, not ourselves.

The best spiritual medicine for anger is prayer! Be conscious of your feelings and pray. With every subject that you are feeling strong emotions over, pray. Give each subject to God and ask for His wisdom and guidance about how to handle them.

James 5:16 “The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”