

Daily Devotional, July 7, 2020

'Bible Principles for Managing Anger', (Matthew 5:21-22)

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.” (Matthew 5:21-22, NKJV)

The Bible gives us a number of ways to deal with our anger. ****Keep these pages handy. You will probably get angry one day soon, and these ten biblically based principles will help you in any situation.*

Live close to the Lord. *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing”* (John 15:5). If you are living near to the Lord, you are more likely to be spiritually attuned, and less prone to sinful anger. Also remember that our teaching is from a biblical perspective, not from humanistic psychology. You do not have the power to change yourself without the help of Jesus.

Pray. *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:6-7). Seek the Lord in prayer. Be honest about your feelings to your heavenly Father, and you will be blessed.

What does the Bible say? *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ”* (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). The Bible is your handbook for life. It is your friend, and it will never steer you wrong. The more Scripture you know, the more prepared you are when the temptation to sinful anger comes.

Is it worth being angry about? *“Then the LORD said, ‘Is it right for you to be angry?’”* (Jonah 4:4). Many things in life just are not worth getting angry over. Ask yourself if it will really matter next week, or next year. Why lose your peace over something unimportant in the overall scheme of things? It’s also quite possible that all you are doing is pouting.

Take time to think things through. *“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God”* (James 1:19-20). Instead of lashing out impulsively, take some time to calm down first.

Evaluate the consequences. “*An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression*” (Proverbs 29:22). Everything we do sets other things in motion. You do not want to get into a ‘this for that’ grudge match if you can help it. Sinful anger adds fuel to a fire that is already burning. Bear in mind also that the other person or people involved may not even know you are angry, and your lashing out at them may be looking for trouble where there was none before.

Seek godly counsel. “*Get wisdom! Get understanding!*” (Proverbs 4:5a). Sometimes you are too involved in a situation to see it clearly. Seek out your pastor or a trusted mature Christian for advice. They may be able to point you in the right direction before you make a horrible mistake.

Tame your tongue. “*But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison*” (James 3:8). We cannot take back the words spoken or written in anger. Think before opening your mouth. Your words have the power to build someone up or to tear someone down. If you are going to say something nasty, close your mouth before it opens.

Be respectful. “*A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger*” (Proverbs 15:1). This goes along with our last point, and it is worth the double emphasis. When we speak to another kindly and respectfully, that goes a long way towards reconciliation, and it shows maturity and Christ-like character.

Forgive. “*And be kind to one another, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you*” (Ephesians 4:32). Sinful anger, just like any other sinful emotion, is based in pride. Forgiving others costs you your pride, but it earns you peace and God’s approval. Weigh the benefits.