

“You Mad, Bro?”
Ephesians 4:26-27, 31-32
Sermon Series: “The Walk

I. Think biblically in regard to anger.

1. There is righteous anger that is commanded.

Verse 26 tells us to be angry. God is righteously angry with sinners (Romans 1:18, John 3:36). Part of the reason Jesus died is to satisfy the wrath of God (1 John 2:2). Jesus got angry without sinning (Mark 3:1-6, John 2:13-22, see also Nehemiah 5:1-13). Church father John Chrysostom said, “It is true that he that is angry without cause sins, but he who is not angry when there is cause also sins.”

2. There is unrighteous anger that we are commanded to put off.

The Lord commands us in verse 31 to put off anger. The commands seem contradictory, but based on the fact that anger is part of God’s nature and character, the tension is resolved by understanding that there are times and reasons to be righteously angry and other times where our anger comes from pride or selfishness and is sinful. St. Augustine said, “The root of our sinfulness is disordered loves.” J.D. Greer explains this by saying, “If what we love is messed up, then our anger will be messed up too.”

Let’s define the words that are used in verse 31 and their connection to each other.

-Bitterness- This involves harboring resentment about the past.

-Wrath- This is an outburst of anger, like a temper tantrum.

-Anger- This is a general word for anger.

-Clamor- This means yelling.

-Evil Speaking- This word means slander or abusive speech.

-Malice- This refers to a mean-spirited attitude that he would be behind those types of speech.

II. Act biblically in regards to anger. How do we do this?

1. Put off unrighteous anger.

We are to ask for God’s forgiveness and deal with the root issues that are producing unrighteous anger. We are to repent of bitterness, outbursts of temper, evil speaking, and malice towards others. Sometimes we need to apologize to others. Sometimes we need to share something that we have bottled up that is producing bitterness. Sometimes, we need godly counsel to help us work through issues.

2. Put off wrong expressions of righteous anger.

There are three qualifiers for expressing righteous anger given in verses 26-27.

A. Do not sin. It is possible to be righteously angry and express it in an unrighteous way. We are not to act in the way that is described by verse 31.

B. Do not continue being angry.

C. Do not give Satan an opportunity through the anger.

3. Put on kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiveness in place of unrighteous anger.

Kindness speaks of unconditional kindness or grace.

Tenderheartedness is being compassionate.

Forgiveness is choosing to not hold something against someone.

How do we do this? Here are some convictions to live by.

A. We see ourselves as sinners first and then sinned against (J.D. Greear).

B. We stop playing judge and let the judge of the universe do His job (Romans 12:19-21).

C. We obey Jesus because He is our Lord.

D. We graciously forgive because we have graciously been forgiven.

E. We live out what Jesus expects of us by living out of what Jesus has done for us. (Galatians 2:20; 5:16-25)

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