



John on Jesus

What Makes Jesus Angry?

Small Group Work Sheet

June 17, 2012

Part 1 - Ice Breaker

What do you like most about the lakes region in the summer? What do you like least?

Part 2 - Sermon Review

1. What is dangerous about removing a Bible story from its context? What is dangerous about blending similar stories from the Gospels?
2. What is the history behind the Passover? What part of God's character does it celebrate?
3. What about worship in the temple made it a worship of convenience rather than sacrifice? In what ways can modern worship cultivate a consumer attitude in God's people? (Ex. Pew Bibles are a convenience but people become lazy and stop bringing their own. People are critical of church problems but don't get in the trenches to be part of the solution. People withhold their giving because they don't like changes in the church. People criticize a sermon like they were reviewing a movie rather than asking God to apply it to their heart.)
4. How were people taken advantage of during Passover worship? How has religion in the name of Jesus taken advantage of people today? (Ex. Televangelists promise a healing if a donation is sent to their ministry. In some churches, people get their name engraved on items when they give to the church.)
5. What kind of anger is right? What kind of anger is wrong? What does Ephesians 4:26 teach us about anger?
6. Why was selling in the Court of the Gentiles so offensive to Jesus? What does Luke 15 teach us about Jesus' attitude towards saving those who don't know him?

Part 3 - Digging Deeper - Is Your Anger Righteous?¹

Some thoughts about obeying the biblical command to "be angry, and sin not." by Jonathan Edwards

¹ Paraphrased by Paul Thigpen from *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 8, Ethical Writings, John E. Smith, general editor (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 272-82.

Love . . . is not easily angered (1 Cor. 13:5).

A Christian spirit is contrary to an angry disposition. But we know that Christianity isn't contrary to every kind of anger, because Eph. 4:26 says, "Be angry and sin not"—which assumes that there is such a thing as anger without sin.

Actually, a Christian spirit is opposite to all *unsuitable* anger. Anger may be unsuitable in four respects: with respect to its *nature, occasion, purpose, or measure.*

First, anger may be unsuitable with respect to its *nature.* All anger is unsuitable that contains ill will or a desire of revenge. We aren't allowed to entertain ill will toward others under any circumstances, but rather good will to all.

What's the Occasion?

Second, anger may be unChristian with respect to its occasion. Unsuitableness of anger in this respect consists in its being without a just cause.

This kind of anger may arise on one of two occasions: *When the occasion of anger is something that is not the fault of the person who is the object of anger.* Many people are of such a proud and peevish disposition that they will be angry at anything that is in any respect against them, or troublesome to them, or contrary to their minds, whether anybody is at fault or not. For example, sometimes people are angry with others for consequences that come, not from the others' faults, but rather from an ignorance or inability the others can't help.

Often people's spirits are kept in a fit because things go against them, and they meet with many crosses, disappointments, and entanglements in their affairs. They won't admit—or may not even realize—that God is actually the one with whom they're angry. But in fact such fretfulness can be interpreted in no other way. Whatever they pretend to be the case, their anger is ultimately leveled against the Author of providence, against the God who orders these unwelcome events; so their anger is a murmuring and fretting against God.

It is also a common thing for people to be *angry with others for doing well, for doing nothing but their duty.* Consider, for example, how enraged were the Scribes and Pharisees with Christ for doing the will of His Father in what He said and did!

Anger is undue with regard to its occasion when people are angry over small and trivial matters. Some people are of such an angry spirit that they are put out of temper by every little thing, by faults that are no greater than the ones they themselves demonstrate every day. People who are angry at every fault they see in others will always be kept in a fret. Their minds will never be at rest, for we can only expect in this world to continually see faults in others, as there are continually faults in ourselves.

People sin with respect to the occasion of anger when their spirits are stirred at the faults of others chiefly as they affect themselves, and not as the faults are against God. We should never be angry except at sin.

People sin in their anger when they are selfish in it. The kind of unselfish anger that is virtuous is what we call "zeal." Our anger should be like Christ's anger in driving the moneychangers

out of the temple, when the zeal of God consumed Him. Yet He was like a lamb when He received personal injuries, and we never read of His being angry except in the cause of God against sin.

Anger without Benefit

Third, anger may be undue and sinful with respect to its purpose. That happens in two ways: *When people are angry without considering whether any useful purpose will be obtained by their anger.* They allow anger to arise before they even think, *What advantage or benefit will there be for me to be angry in this case?*

When they allow their anger for the wrong purpose. Sometimes reason would tell people, if they only consulted it, that their anger cannot be for the glory of God nor of any benefit to Him—in fact, it would be much to the detriment of others. Yet because they want to gratify their own pride, they let themselves get angry.

Fourth, anger may be undue and sinful with respect to its *measure*—either the measure of its intensity, or the measure of how long it lasts. Anger is sinful when expressed in an immoderate intensity, far beyond what the case requires, so that the people getting angry lose control of themselves. Then passion prevails to such an extent that they come under the power of it. When anger is long continued it becomes sinful, because if anger lasts it eventually degenerates into malice. If a man allows himself long to hold anger toward another, he will quickly come to hate that man.

Let these considerations, then, prevail with all and lead them to avoid an angry spirit and temper, and to cultivate the spirit of gentleness and kindness and love, which is the spirit of Heaven.