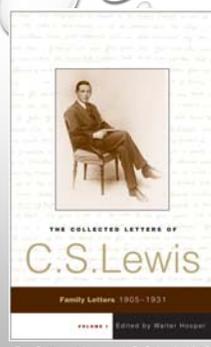


VICE
HABITS OF SIN
ANGER

WEEK 6 FEBRUARY 25, 2018



"The pleasure of anger – the gnawing attraction which makes one return again and again to its theme – lies, I believe, in the fact that **one feels entirely righteous oneself only when one is angry.**

Then the **other person is pure black, and you are pure white.** But in real life sanity always returns to break the dream. In fiction you can put absolutely all the right, with no snags or reservations, on the side of the hero (with whom you identify yourself) and all the wrong on the side of the villain. You thus **revel in unearned self-righteousness, which would be vicious even if it were earned.."**

C. S. Lewis

The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis, Vol. 1, Walter Hooper, ed., pp. 950-951.

WHAT IS ANGER?

Is anger always sinful?
Should we bridle our anger or kill it?

"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice." (Ephesians 4:31)

"Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger..." (Ephesians 4:26)

Hmmmm.....

WHAT IS ANGER?

- 'Unrighteous Anger' / Rage / Wrath / Ire / etc.
 - Anger: "strong feeling of displeasure and usually of antagonism" (merriam-webster.com)
- 'Righteous Anger' / Indignation
 - Indignation: "anger aroused by something unjust, unworthy, or mean" (merriam-webster.com)
- For our purposes...
 - "anger" = **unrighteous anger**
 - "indignation" = **righteous anger**
- Please keep in mind, these are definitions for our class; they do not always correspond to Biblical use.

WHAT IS ANGER?

- Anger is an unrighteous **perversion of a desire for justice.**
 - Anger perverts the **cause.**
 - Anger perverts the **target.**
 - Anger perverts the **timing.**
 - Anger perverts the **expression.**
- Anger may have one, some or all of these perversions.
- Anger **deludes you, by undermining reason and attacking prayer, to think that you are righteously indignant, like God!**

Adapted from DeYoung, *Glittering Vices*

ANGER REVEALED

Anger's unjust cause.

- "Anger's fighting power is directed toward protecting me and my interests, to the exclusion of the claims of others."
- "[Angry] people's need to have their own way and overprotectiveness about their honor and status are clues to [anger's] roots in pride."
- No cause: "mentally magnifying offenses"

DeYoung, Glittering Vices

ANGER REVEALED

Anger's unjust target.

- "the recipient of our anger is [often] the wrong person...the person who happens to be closest, most available, or most readily wounded—the easiest target within range." (DeYoung)
- How often do we lash out at others when we are to blame? or at ourselves, because the real culprit fails to take responsibility? or at everyone because we cannot admit we are angry with God?

ANGER REVEALED

Anger's unjust timing.

- Quick-temper: reaction without due thought and prayer feeds anger
- Resentment: "the [sullen] refusal to forgive or to accept reconciliation, fantasizing about vengeance, or passive-aggressive tactics like spoiling another's pleasure by being uncooperative or disdainful, letting out anger in relentless pinpricks rather than mighty blows and great shouts." (DeYoung)
- Hasty uncharitable judgments and smoldering grudges have no place among Jesus followers.

ANGER REVEALED

Anger's unjust expression.

- Fury: "irrationally expressed or wildly disproportionate" anger. "Blow-up". (DeYoung)
 - Chill-out!
- Apathy or hard-heartedness: to be too little grieved by injustice
- We tend to show "red-hot" anger over personal "injustices" and "cool" indignity over injustice to others.

ANGER REVEALED

Anger deludes you, by undermining reason and attacking prayer, to think that you are righteously indignant, like God!

- "Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly." (Proverbs 14:29)
- "Nothing darkens and so blinds the intellect like an agitated anger." (Evagrius, in Bunge)
- Anger keeps one from rightly seeing God, and therefore, rightly perceiving the created order.

ANGER REVEALED

Anger deludes you, by undermining reason and attacking prayer, to think that you are righteously indignant, like God!

- "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land." (Psalm 37:7-9)
- "I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling..." (1 Timothy 2:8)

ANGER REVEALED

Anger deludes you, by undermining reason and attacking prayer, to think that you are righteously indignant, like God!

- The Sermon on the Mount in general, and Matthew 5:21-24 in particular, teaches that our relationships with one another effects our relationship to God.
- Evagrius had a "strong conviction that anger and prayer—like fire and water—are mutually exclusive..." (Bunge)

ANGER REVEALED

Anger **deludes** you, by undermining reason and attacking prayer, to think that you are **righteously indignant, like God!**

- "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth." (Romans 1:18)
- In our anger we forget "the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." (James 1:20)
- And, unlike us, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." (Psalm 103:8)

ANGER REVEALED

"Of the Seven Deadly Sins, **anger is possibly the most fun**. To lick your wounds, to smack your lips over grievances long past, to roll over your tongue the prospect of bitter confrontations still to come, to savor the last toothsome morsel both the pain you are given and the pain you are giving back—in many ways it is a feast fit for a king. The chief drawback is that **what you are wolfing down is yourself**. The **skeleton at the feast is you**."

Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*

ANGER REVEALED IN US

How might anger be leading us astray?

- Irritability, frustration, bitterness
- Blaming, prejudice
- Unforgiving, grudges
- Self-loathing, depression
- Inappropriate alcohol use
- Cowardice, Passive-aggression, Confrontational
- Impulsive reactions
- Controlling & uncontrolled
- Untrusting, Self-reliant
- Somatization
- Fear, nightmares
- Mean-spiritedness, insulting, vengeful, hatred, violence
- Schism, Heresy, Blasphemy

ANGER LEADS ASTRAY

Following Jesus by loving God, loving one another and serving the world.

How might anger be compromising the mission of God at ECC?

BATTLING ANGER

FLEEING: What? How?

- Flee the people & situations that prompt you to anger.
- *Should we do this with anger? Can we do this?*
- "If you want to put the enemy [of anger] to flight, pray without ceasing." (Evagrius, quoted in Bunge)
 - Short, wrote prayers.
 - e.g., The Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner."
- Pre-emptive strike: anticipate and prevent.
 - e.g., my Sunday morning sanctification: getting up early, humor

BATTLING ANGER

TALKING BACK: What to say to yourself?

"...be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." (James 1:19-20)

BATTLING ANGER

REMEMBER YOUR DEATH

- "I tell you, **on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak...**" (Matthew 12:36)
- Anger creates enduring memories. How will you be remembered?

BATTLING ANGER

REMEMBER GOD'S PROMISES

- When you grieve your sinful anger, remember:
"The Lord is **merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**" (Psalm 103:8)
- When you unrighteously thirst for righteous justice, remember:
"Beloved, **never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'**" (Romans 12:19)

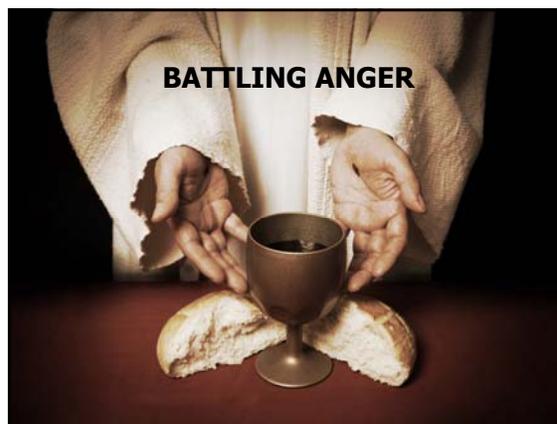
BATTLING ANGER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

"Father, our anger and our desire for vengeance create walls among us, your people—walls that we cannot see. And rather than looking for ways to take those walls down, we pile more them up with stones of grudges held together by the mortar of resentment. Our anger and resentments build a wall between us and your grace. We are blinded by the plank in our own eye as we seek to remove a speck from the eye of another. We are self-righteous in our attitudes. We are quick to lay blame at the feet of another and slow to accept our part in conflicts. We fail to see the hurt and loss inflicted on others by our attitudes and actions. Forgive us for our anger, we beg of you. Forgive us because we deserve it, but because Jesus paid for all our sins on the cross, in his precious name, Amen."

Kraan L, "Confession, Assurance and the Seven Deadly Sins." Reformed Worship, December 2015 (Issue #118).

BATTLING ANGER



BATTLING ANGER: WORK

What can you do to battle your anger?

- **Walk away.** Run if necessary. (Exercise helps too).
- **Forgiveness.** Readily give and accept forgiveness. Keep short accounts.
- **Surrender.** Your 'rights', your priorities, your desires, your time. Die to self.
- **Self-control.** Do not act in anger. Be gentle.
- **Calibrate your temper.** Philippians 4:8
- **Direct anger 'upward'.** Not outward. Not inward.
- **Tame your thoughts.** Take them captive to Christ in prayer, writing, talking.

BATTLING GREED: COMMUNITY

What can we do to help another battle anger?

- **Be kind and just.** Don't provoke anger.
- **Apologize.** Say "I'm sorry," when it's due. Mean it.
- **Listen.** Never underestimate the power of listening.
- **Assume responsibility.** Be a scapegoat if necessary.
- **Intercede.** Minister reconciliation and justice.
- **Help them laugh.** if appropriate and if you can...
- **Gracious intolerance.** Gently disapprove. Cautiously correct. Remember the plank in your eye...
- **Be patient.** Outlast anger.

BATTLING ANGER: SABBATH

"God's purpose for us on the sabbath is that we experience the highest and most intense joy that can be experienced, namely, that we 'take delight in the Lord.' And yet what he finds again and again is professing Christians who prefer little human-sized pleasures from things that have no close relation to God at all.

...would you consider it burdensome if your God came to you with omnipotent authority and said, 'I don't want you to have to work so much. I want you to have a day a week to rest and enjoy what really counts in life. I promise to meet your needs with just six days of work?' That is not a cruel command. It is a gracious gift."

John Piper, "Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep it Holy"
(<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/remember-the-sabbath-day-to-keep-it-holy>)

MISSION: FOLLOWING JESUS



**ANGER
LEADS
ASTRAY**

CHARITY RIGHTS THE WAY

"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be **kind** to one another, **tenderhearted, forgiving** one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And **walk in love**, as Christ loved us and **gave himself up** for us..."

"Love is **patient** and **kind**; love does **not envy or boast**; it is **not arrogant or rude**. It does **not insist** on its own way; it is **not irritable or resentful**; it does **not celebrate unrighteousness**, but **rejoices with the truth**. Love **bears** all things, **believes** all things, **hopes** all things, **endures** all things.

Love **never ends**...So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the **greatest** of these is **love. Pursue love...**"

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 & 1 Corinthians 13:1-8,13; 14:1.

GRACE TO HELP IN A TIME OF NEED

HEBREWS 4:14-16

Rich Lanning	Colleen Grogan
Michael Lyons	Erin Lyons
Rick Schatz	Sharon Schatz
Mark Verhagen	Becky Verhagen
Steve Langdon	Stephanie Langdon
	Sue Crosset

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