

TODAY’S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor Opening Prayer by: Daniel Balch  
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#2 We Praise Thee, O God  
#719 Love One Another

Scripture Reading by: Matthew Girard  
#478 Nearer, Still Nearer

Communion Devotional by: Daniel Balch  
**Lord’s Supper and Contribution**

# To the Work, To the Work  
**Sermon: “Faith Obeys ”**  
**James 1:19-26**

#643 Sowing the Seed of the Kingdom  
#634 We’ll Work Till Jesus Comes  
Closing Prayer by: Craig Girard

**Small Groups**

Our Small Groups will meet tonight.  
Robert Ward’s group will meet at the building  
at 5:00 p.m. If you have signed up and not  
been contacted, get with Bryant or one of the

**Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth**

**Sunday:** 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship  
**Wednesday:** 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Feb. 26, 2023

**“Stand Firm in...Liberty”**

Galatians 5:1

**Be Angry and Do Not Sin**

Another everyday problem we all face is anger. We will talk about it in our sermon this morning. But because we all struggle with it, it seemed good to me to have an article exploring it a bit more deeply. We all know the type of pithy little sayings that you find on church signs sometimes. Perhaps you have seen this one: “Anger is just one letter short of being danger.” It’s true; anger can be dangerous. And I imagine most of us experience times when we lose our tempers, because anger is one of the most difficult emotions to control.

It’s like the comic book character, the Incredible Hulk. Normally he is a mild-mannered scientist, Dr. Bruce Banner—until someone makes him angry. You won’t like him when he’s angry. Then his muscles grow, his shirt rips (though, for some reason, not his pants) and he turns into a giant, green rage monster. He is out of control, and, even though he’s a “good guy,” sometimes really bad consequences result from his escapades.

There is metaphorical truth in that. Anger can be disastrous. Yet we live in a culture that seems to exalt it in many ways (in the form of a superhero, for instance). Do you realize how bombarded we are on a daily basis with pictures of rage? Beatings, shootings, chases scenes where people are running each other down, and all kinds of violence are common on our TV and computer screens. Some of the most popular “law and order” programs glorify the idea that it is all right for the “good guys” to be mean and violent too, just as long as it is for a good purpose. And that attitude seeps from entertainment to news and the reaction that many have online to real world events and people.

In contrast to this attitude, consider the words of Paul in **Ephesians 4:26-27**: *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.* If you can be angry without sinning then, logically, there is anger that is acceptable to God. What would that look like?

There are at least 2 types of anger presented as valid in Scripture. The first is when God’s Word has been violated. Remember when Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with the 10 commandments? You can find this story in **Exodus 32**. He discovered that, in his absence, the people had erected a golden calf as an idol and were wildly worshipping it. In response, he threw down the stone tablets and broke them in his fury. He was angry because God’s Word—one of the commandments he brought down with him, in fact!—was being violated.

# Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

## Our Sick

**Ken Coleman** had surgery Thursday.

## Upcoming Activities

**Elders, Minister** meet Monday, Feb. 27th at 5:30 p.m.

We will have a meal this Wednesday night at 5:30 p.m. in the family life center.

We will have a Blood Drive on Monday, March 6th from 4-8 p.m. in the fellowship room. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, March 7th at 8:00 a.m.

Primetimers will meet to Las Compadres in Hardin on Tuesday, March 14th at 6:00 p.m.

## Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to Gloria McKelroy and her family on the death of her grandson, Felix Davila. He passed away early Thursday morning.

## Shut Ins

### (Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

## Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Closely related, Scripture presents anger as justifiable when God's people are being abused. Saul had just been crowned King of Israel when he received word that Jabesh-gilead was besieged by the Ammonites; the enemy boasted they would gouge out the right eye of every man. *And the Spirit of God rushed upon Saul when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled. (1 Samuel 11:6).* When God's people are violated, that is a time to be angry. Both of these instances fall under the category of what we normally call "righteous indignation."

But most of our anger isn't like that. More often than not, it arises from wrong motives. Perhaps we are jealous, like the older brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son (**Luke 15:29-30**). Or maybe we are upset things didn't go our way, like Jonah having to preach to Israel's enemies in Nineveh (and angry all over again when they actually repented!). Sometimes we might just be frustrated; we gave Moses as a positive example above, but his burst of anger in frustration with the murmuring of the people cost him the opportunity to enter the Promised Land (**Numbers 20:7-11**). We could multiply this list, because there are only a couple of reasons that justify anger, but a nearly endless catalogue of things that might make us angry. How can we control our anger?

Paul gives a couple of warnings in the text we noted. *Do not let the sun go down on your anger.* This is good, practical advice that would serve us well in our homes. If you go to be angry, it can fester and grow within, resulting in what Paul warns about next. *Do not give an opportunity to the Devil.* In our response to the gospel for faith, repentance, and baptism, we are made a new creation and begin to be refashioned by God into the image of Christ. But when we give an opportunity to the Devil, he does the opposite; he tries to make us more and more like him. If we go to bed with anger present, that gives him a foothold to do just that.

We must endeavor to avoid that. So, on a practical level: 1) Let's not allow minor irritations to become rage. If you're looking for something to be angry about, rest assured, you will find it. But remember that most of our anger isn't justified to begin with. 2) Let's be careful about the kind of people with whom we associate. *Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared (Proverbs 22:24-25).* In contemporary terms, this might include the online communities we are involved in too. Angry people will form us as angry people. 3) Let's control what we say. Scripture warns us not to speak until we first think about what we say. James warns us at length about the dangers of the tongue and how we need to bridle it. An angry tongue gets sharper with use, and it can cut into the lives of others.

Above all else, we need to commit our lives so much to Jesus that he controls our temperament. We need to cultivate self-control rather than rage. That is one of the fruits of the Spirit, you know (**Gal 5:22**). May we all strive to grow it rather than letting anger take root.

**Bryant Perkins**

### ***"Stand Firm in...Liberty"***

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