

AND GOD SAYS . . .

Sponsored by the Melrose Alliance Church

David says in Psalm 39: 1, “I said, I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin.” Paul instructs us in Ephesians 4:26, “In your anger do not sin.” When these two statements are taken together it is readily apparent that in our anger we often sin with our tongue. We say mean and hurtful things and then later apologize by saying, “I didn’t mean the things I said.” But that apology does not take back the words nor does it remove the hurt. As time goes by and more and more words are spoken the hurt builds up and turns to bitterness, resulting in broken relationships.

How different was the way that Jesus dealt with angry and bitter words. He was falsely accused, mocked, beaten, and then crucified. Yet we are told that “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth” (Acts 8:32). Jesus did not defend himself nor did he strike back with mean accusatory words. Rather he said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).

How could Jesus respond this way? How could he just ignore the injustice served on him? How could he respond in kindness when his accusers treated him so badly?

Because he came in love, representing the love of his Father. Love does not think about oneself but of the needs of others. Thus Jesus came demonstrating that love by dying for us on the cross (Romans 5:8). He “is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his [God’s] being” (Hebrew 1:3). God is love (1 John 4:16). And Jesus responded with perfect love.

The truth is, he continues to respond in love when we are willing to confess our sins and put our faith in him. In love and mercy, he says, he will “forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Jesus has reached out in love to you. Will you receive his love and put your faith in him? If you will, you be able to experience the fullness of his love through his forgiveness and also have the hope of eternal life.