

# ***“Speaking from the Heart”***

## **Lesson Five: Those Angry Words**

**Dalraida Church of Christ, Summer 2025**

John L. Kachelman, Jr.

🔑 *“Be angry and yet do not sin” (Ephesians 4:26).*

*“My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned;  
then I spoke with my tongue” (Psalm 39:3).*

🔑 Anger is an emotion associated with negative results. Consequently, anger has been described in terms to moderate the negative emotion enabling people to feel better about being angry.

Some of the more common terms for anger include mad, miffed, irked, irritated, galled, rankled, steamed, frosted, furious, incensed, enraged, exasperated, fed up, put out or ticked off! And there are more, we get our dander up, get hot under the collar, lose our cools, blow our stacks, fly off the handle, have tizzy-fits and conniptions, or the worst yet, have a wall-eyed fit! Entertainers have generated laughter from portraying anger.

Regardless of how entertaining anger is presented, it is a sobering matter. Anger is a deadly emotion both socially and physiologically. 🔑 If it is left unresolved, it feeds hostility that develops into hatred. 🔑 Anger has destroyed friendships, jobs, marriages and lives.

- Anger in the home is destroying the foundation of our nation. Spousal abuse and child abuse are current evils. The majority are left unreported. “Domestic violence” calls result in the deadliest reports received and the most dreaded.
- Over 50% of all homicides involve those who know each other well but anger erupts, a heated argument happens and then murder.

🔑 Anger is a God-given emotion. But it has been corrupted by the Devil’s temptations. Anger has been used many times to further Satan’s purpose rather than God’s purpose! There are times when God commands and expects His People to be angry! The Christian’s communication must decide 🔑 two critical questions:

- How are we to control anger?
- How do we bridle hurtful, cutting, foolish words that initiate anger?

### **The Anger Response**

Why do we get angry? When analyzed, anger is a 🔑 response that occurs when our perceived needs, desires, or goals are frustrated. Our world is knocked out of balance; our comfortable schedules are disrupted; we are inconvenienced!

Often the catalyst for our angry eruptions is because something or someone is not doing things 🔑 the way WE think they should. Anger erupts when we are tired, not feeling well, hunger, slammed with no extra time, and the spark that ignites the angry words is because ME is not being satisfied! It may be a real issue that is unfair, unjust, unchristian. But it happens to ME!

A lady cuts line in front of me. My boss criticizes my work unfairly. The vending machine takes my money and gives me nothing. A terrorist kills an innocent victim. Someone makes a cruel, crude and rude racist remark. Anger is ignited!

🔑 Anger is a physiological catalyst. Emotions cause the physical body to have predictable symptoms. Our system goes on “red alert”: more adrenalin is secreted, more sugar is released, the heart beats faster, blood pressure rises, the pupils of the eye dilate. Our body is preparing for action! We are ready to respond to a perceived threat.

As you become angry, your body’s muscles tense up. Inside your brain, neurotransmitters known as catecholamines, such as adrenaline and noradrenaline, are released, causing you to experience a burst of energy lasting up to several minutes. This is what causes the fight-or-flight response... At the same time, your heart rate accelerates, your blood pressure rises, and your rate of breathing increases. Your face may

flush as increased blood flow enters your limbs and extremities in preparation for physical action. Your attention narrows and becomes locked onto the target of your anger...Soon, you can pay attention to nothing else. In quick succession, additional brain neurotransmitters and hormones (among them adrenaline and noradrenaline) are released, which trigger a lasting state of arousal. You're now ready to fight. ([Physiology Of Anger](#))

☞ God made us this way. BUT our ultimate reaction to anger is not totally physical—☞ God expects us to exercise rational decision-making to restrict the physical! ☞ When it happens step away from "ME" and look at why the situation has angered "ME."

God made us to be responsive to perceived threats. What I do with the anger catalyst is MY decision! There is personal accountability for the way I decide to use anger.

- ☞ "(T)he Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why is your face gloomy?'" (Genesis 4:6).
- ☞ "God said to Jonah, 'Do you have a good reason to be angry...?' And he said, 'I have good reason to be angry, even to the point of death!'" (Jonah 4:9).
- ☞ "Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be answerable to the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell" (Matthew 5:22).

### When Anger Becomes Sin

The Bible does NOT equate the emotion of anger as an automatic sin.

- ☞ Sometime anger is justified (Matthew 18:34, "And his master, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers").
- ☞ Sometimes it is a sin NOT to become angry (Mark 3:5, "After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart").

Inspiration clarifies the issue about appropriate and inappropriate anger.

☞ Christians are to be "angry" and not sin (Ephesians 4:26). God does NOT say, "Anger is a sin."

- There is a clear distinction between the anger that leads to sin and the anger that does not lead to sin.
- Some want the Christian to never be angry—regardless of the situation. They contort and abuse Matthew 5:39, "I say to you, do not show opposition against an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other toward him also").
- ☞ God does NOT command His People to be passively compliant when evil is present!

The Appropriate Response: ☞ God expects us to be angry at actions of injustice and unkindness, to the acts of sin, to those furthering false doctrine (Romans 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth in unrighteousness).

- ☞ God DEMANDS His People to be angry in certain situations and with those who justify and rationalize sin. We must understand a very blunt point: God is angry at the sin and angry at the sinner! (Romans 2:5, "(B)ecause of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.")
- ☞ Christians are required to express "righteous anger" IF they follow God's example in speaking from the heart.
- This is neither ☞ a convenient nor a comfortable fact. So ☞ many refuse to speak words/rebuke of "righteous anger." By saying nothing they offer encouragement to the sinner and accept the sin! ☞ Many rationalize and excuse their failure to obey the command to express anger at the sinner and his actions. Their "words" will come back to them on the Judgment Day (Matthew 12:36-37, "by YOUR words...").

- If our anger arises because of frustrated goals or the fact that "my way" is not being followed, the key query asks— "Why am I angry?" "Whose goals are being frustrated God's or mine?"

☞ "Righteous anger" is the emotion directed toward those who violate God's will. "Unrighteous anger" (man's anger) is the emotion directed at someone or something because our selfish expectations are not met (James 1:19-20, "Now everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for a man's anger does not bring about the righteousness of God").

### Understanding the Anger of God

The anger emotion of God is expressed by a number of words, ☞ but the most recognized is the word translated as "wrath."

Nahum 1:6, "Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath gushes forth like fire.

Some object to saying that God possesses anger/wrath. Often these are the very ones who also assert that God has no commands and no pattern for obedient compliance in order to be saved. These assert ☞ that God's grace is greater than man's choice and so we should not condemn anyone but embrace everyone. Their objections are groundless and are based upon mortal wishful thinking instead of God's revelation. These are fools not recognizing the consequences of sin (Proverbs 6:27, "Can anyone take fire in his lap and his clothes not be burned?").

☞ Anger is a part of God and those who follow God will also demonstrate anger!

- Man's wrath is fickle, impulsive, arbitrary, foolish, prejudiced, and proud.
- God's wrath is always consistent, just, wise and righteous.
- The anger/wrath of God is the revulsion of those who corrupt the "holy." They take the definition of what is pure from God and remake it into "their" understanding. This rejection of God's holiness incenses His displeasure with the sinners who accept sin. This rejection ruins relationships, empties hearts, distorts values, destroys love, wounds the human spirit, and separates man from God!

### Understanding the Anger of Christ

☞ Anger's emotion is a "moral emotion." It can be used for good or evil. When used for moral right, anger brings admiration because it challenges the sins of society. Moral anger speaks out when others cower saying "Shush!" to any voices not submissive to evil's presence.

☞ Christ's anger was morally right. He was "consumed" with a zeal for righteous Truth that He demonstrated righteous anger!

"(W)ithin the temple grounds He found those who were selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a whip of cords, and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, 'Take these things away from here; stop making My Father's house a place of business!'" (John 2:13-16).

The Lord's angry outburst and actions caused His Disciples to remark, "His disciples remembered that it was written: 'Zeal for Your house will consume me'" (John 2:17).

"Consume" is from the Greek word καταθίω, katesthió. It translates the idea that one is totally "eaten up leaving nothing." Figuratively, this term communicates that Christ was wholly consumed with devotion to God and there was no part of himself left! It speaks of devotion's greatest intensity—utterly devoured, leaving nothing; ferociously consumed all the way down, with a rapacious, voracious appetite.

The Lord teaches us that the ☞ right response to irreverence is an all-consuming, voracious and active anger! Anger was the Lord's holy response. ☞ Christ thus stresses there are times when it is not only right to be angry, but it is wrong *not* to be angry!

### ☞ Understanding Unrighteous Anger

Study the anger of Cain (Genesis 4). Cain is the first birth on record, the first recorded fit of anger and the first murderer prodded by anger! Cain demonstrated “unchecked” and “unreasoned” anger. Inspiration describes him as “very angry and his face was downcast (Genesis 4:5).

God’s response to Cain’s self-centered anger was “you must master it” (Genesis 4:6-7). But Cain’s pride and selfishness ruled his choices. His anger turned violent, and he murdered his brother. Here are the symptoms of unrighteous anger:

- Angry out of jealousy and resentment over another’s success.
- Refused to accept responsibility and blamed another.
- Did not think through his feelings.
- Did not heed God’s warnings.
- Hurt his family.
- Allowed anger to master him.

### Analysis of “Angry Words”

🔑 There is a “savage power” in angry words.

When anger is present, 🔑 effective controls must be in place to govern the tongue. Nothing can quickly destroy a healthy communication relationship as angry words. We must 🔑 guard against “snarl words” that launch verbal projectiles in temperamental outbursts. As a consequence...

- “We tell one another off.”
- “We let them have it.”
- “We give them a piece of our minds.” (Note: Before you give someone a piece of your mind, make sure you have enough left to function yourself!)
- We are controlled by emotions and focused on self-protection. We give our adversary “a verbal left and right to the ear”!
- And... 🔑 “Angry words desolate and mar.”

🔑 Unrighteous anger is a learned behavior, and it must be “unlearned”! It is undisciplined behavior and must be controlled. Angry speech should not be ignored; the speaker should not be excused. How tragic that some are known (by spouses, children, grandchildren, friends) as “angry all the time.” Tim McGraw (2001 with Faith Hill, released “Angry all the time.”) Chorus: *“I don’t know why you gotta be angry all the time.”* Interesting activity is to search “angry all the time” and see the amazing hits! This is a BIG problem in our nation.

- 🔑 Remember Matthew 12:36-37, “I tell you that for every careless word that people speak, they will give an account of it on the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”
- The inexcusable anger cannot remain in the Christian’s life. If it does, that one has fallen away from salvation. “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander must be removed from you, along with all malice” (Ephesians 4:30-31).

### Dealing with Anger

Various behaviors are associated with anger management. Some of these behaviors do not “put away” the angry words but keep the sin alive and ready to pounce! A failure to deal properly with anger will invite sin to dominate and corrupt your inner man. Angry emotions are like cancer. This is why commands regarding it are so blunt.

- Ephesians 4:31, “All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander must be removed from you, along with all malice.”

- Ephesians 4:26-27, "Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity."

What are some ways of dealing with angry emotions?

#### Nursing Anger.

This is when we deliberately focus on the action, words, or person who is greatly resented. We feed it with a regular pattern of recollection. We delight in thoughts of "justice" being meted—sweet revenge corrupts our thoughts. We wait for just the "right time" to hurl a rock in retaliation.

We sit down to a savory feast where our anger object has been sliced, diced and BBQ'd—BUT the tragic irony is we are consuming ourselves

Unresolved anger erases our kindness, patience, joy and our very faith! When we fail to resolve anger, we not only leave anger's evil buried deeply inside our psyches but we surrender to its evil! We allow anger to deal with us and life become painful and ugly. This manner of dealing with anger is seldom confessed.

Genesis 4:6-7, "The Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why is your face gloomy? If you do well, will your face not be cheerful? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.'"

#### Suppressing Anger.

This action recognizes the angry emotion and deals with it. This keeps anger under control. We are not denying but managing our anger.

Proverbs 29:11, "A fool always loses his temper, but a wise person holds it back."

Proverbs 10:19, "(H)e who restrains his lips is wise."

Sage advice is used to suppress anger's evil, "Bite your tongue!" or "Count to 10 before speaking." When we are tempted to verbalize our anger, we must control it. Our angry words can be "sparks" that ignite the fires of evil in our speech.

Suppression guards us against silly, unkind, unfair responses made in the emotional heat of the moment. Suppression slows the fuel to our anger's fire. It gives us time to examine why we are angry and to consider the kindest and most effective way of expressing our anger.

Suppression asks: "Why am I feeling angry?" "Do I have righteous anger or unrighteous anger?"

#### Repressing Anger.

This is a negative response to anger. This is when we deny the existence of anger. Some think they should never be angry and ignore it. Repressed anger causes serious physical and psychological damage. Some possible evidence of repressed anger: headaches, hypertension and ulcers. Unresolved inner conflicts poison our physical systems and make us more susceptible to bodily troubles and can prevent healing of the physical! It surfaces later in depression, sarcasm, bitter retorts, general irritability and even in murderous attacks. Repressed anger can exist for decades inside the Christian's thoughts!!

"Bury your anger and it may bury you!"

#### Expressing Anger.

Many advocate today that a cleansing of anger, and a satisfaction comes from "venting." "Get it off your chest!" "Vent your spleen!"

Really? Does "telling someone off" while you are in a state of fury, help? There may be momentary satisfaction but afterwards studies show that people feel low self-esteem and depression for days after their explosion.

Expression that becomes explosive achieves a short-term gain, but will find a long-term loss of self-esteem, physical health, friendships and godly communication.

Expressing anger almost always makes us feel MORE anger! Words uttered in angry retorts and explosions are seldom, fair, loving and well-reasoned.

Proverbs 14:29, “A quick-tempered man displays folly.”

Anger is a high-energy emotion. You need to find a release for that energy that will allow you a healthy “release valve.” “Some need to clobber a punching bag or jog themselves to exhaustion; others find a quiet game of chess or a Beethoven symphony just as effective.”

### 🔑 Confessing Anger.

This is the best 🔑 strategy for dealing with anger. Here is the order: first, confess it personally, next to the person who is the object and finally to God!

*To ourselves.* Admit that you are angry. Accept neither excuses nor rationalizations for your anger. The initial response to anger may be instinctive but sustaining that anger is a choice we make.

🔑 *To the object (person).* This may not be necessary once we examine the anger we feel. “Love is not easily angered” (1 Corinthians 13:5). Love is also “patient kind, not rude.” And “love does NOT KEEP A RECORD OF WRONGS!” There is no accounting record! (1 Corinthians 13:4-5).

The Christian must never carry around a bag of resentments that fester and poison his speech. The Christian will forego the urge to report every frustration that provokes anger!

Bearing grudges prolongs frustration and gives Satan “rent-free” living in our minds! Dishing out hostility in bitter, sarcastic verbal jabs makes our life miserable. The biblical mandate is blunt—Christians need to resolve anger immediately (Matthew 18:15).

In this second step of the process of reconciliation, we must stop and consider that WE might have a sin to confess and an apology that needs to be made FIRST! (James 5:16, “(C)onfess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.” The “confessing” is to be reciprocal—you do not restrict it to confessing the other person’s sin!).

🔑 *To God.* Often when we are angry, we convince ourselves that our anger is righteous. Pride hinders us from accepting that our anger can be evil and damnable!

When the other guy takes his time, he is slow; when I take my time, I am careful. When the other guy criticizes, he is negative; when I criticize, I am discerning.

The best cure for unrighteous anger is a long, thoughtful prayer! Such will clarify our vision and help us distinguish the righteous from the unrighteous. Faithful, sincere, honest praying will help us remove the destructive baggage (empty the rock sack) that comes from unrighteous anger.

### 🔑 **Breaking the Angry-Word Cycle**

A middle-aged man jogged around a high school football field. The team was practicing. When the team started running sprints up and down the field, he told himself, “I’ll just keep running until they quit.” They ran and ran, and he jogged and jogged. Finally, in exhaustion, he stopped. An equally exhausted football player walked to him and said, “Mister, I am glad you finally stopped. Coach told us we had to keep running wind sprints as long as the old guy was jogging.”

Sometimes we find ourselves caught in a self-defeating cycle of anger. 🔑 No one involved wants to be “the first” to give in. Pride keeps stoking the cycle. On and on we go even though we are emotionally and physically exhausted by our personal, pride filled animosity.

The retaliatory cycle—angry words always provoke more angry words. One raised voice is met with another raised voice. A shouting match never has a winner. The “air is not cleared” and is only filled with noxious fumes of a verbal warfare.

🔑 We take pride in “not getting mad but getting even”! This is pride’s controlling intent.

Christ’s commands Christians to speak from a devoted heart and NOT become part of retaliation. “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be answerable to the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell” (Matthew 5:22).



✞ Christ stresses that His Followers are NOT to play the retaliation game, "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I say to you, do not show opposition against an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other toward him also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you" (Matthew 5:38-42).

Specific actions stopping the cycle:

✞ *"Turn the other cheek."* This has historically expressed the greatest possible personal insult. The Lord is NOT saying to stand and let someone do physical harm to you. The Lord is saying, do not return insult for insult. If you must surrender some of your personal rights to keep from drifting deeper into conflict, then do so. Accept the blame and walk away! Do not slander them in return. Break the angry-word cycle—Remember Matthew 12:36-37.

✞ *"Love your enemies."* This does not identify those in an opposing military. This is referring to those whose actions are like an enemy! This is love-action is not determined by emotions but by decisions. When one is angry at us, spouting insults, insinuating slander and acting ugly, they are seldom "lovable."

✞ *"Do good to those who hate you."* Deeds of love will extinguish the fires of anger. Good for good and evil for evil is natural. Evil for good is devilish. But, good for evil is divine! Be honest and answer which of these is your response when angry?

✞ *"Bless those who curse you."* Counter their angry accusations with constructive words. Be sure your tone level is low. Ancient Jews were known for their curses upon those who angered them. One most memorable was, "May every tooth in your head fall out except one and may that one have a cavity!"

Understand the damning consequences of using retaliatory words that do not work ("careless words"). "When you throw dirt at another you only lose ground!"

✞ *"Pray for those who mistreat you."* Talk to God about the issue. Take refuge in the promise of Romans 12:19, "Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." A loose translation says, "Give God a chance."

### ✞ The Proactive Response

There are early warning signals that alert us to anger danger. Learn your own personal emotional patterns and use that to prevent committing the sin of uncontrolled anger. When you recognize your anger rising then...

*Hesitation!* The Roman Philosopher Seneca said, "Hesitation is the best cure for anger." If an answer is needed then excuse yourself until you are more rested, hunger is satisfied, tempers have cooled, and you can answer calmly.

*Listen!* Hear what the other says to explain what happened.

*Evaluate!* Do a mental analysis of your emotions. "Why am I angry?" "Exactly WHO is initiating this anger?" "Do I have a good reason to be angry?"

*Calm!* "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). What do you expect to happen when you respond with an equally loud, sarcastic tone? The Hebrew word translated as "harsh" means, "pain, hurt, toil, sorrow, labor, hardship, offense, toil, hardship; associated with worldliness."

*Pray!* Ask God for providential ways that your patience, kindness, courtesy, and self-control will increase. Ask God's forgiveness for YOUR unrighteous anger. Ask that you will choose to turn your angry feelings into positive energy for justice, servanthood, and love.

✞ "Beware that wrath does not entice you to scoffing...be careful, do not turn to evil" (Job 36:18, 21).