



June 14, 2020

Discussion Guide

Face the Issue:

This week, Brian addressed a very relevant topic in our world. With the current events of the day, it is easy for us to become angry. We see situations that we have no control over and it is natural to become upset and that can easily convert to anger.

The Bible does not shrink from dealing with the realities of anger. In addition to the example that Brian used (Cain killing Abel out of jealousy), the Bible has much to teach us about how to handle our anger and what might be appropriate or inappropriate forms of anger.

Into the Word

The purpose of our Christian walk is to become more and more Christ-like in all that we do. Scripture also says that when we see Christ, we see the Father. That doesn't mean that our goal is to become gods but the goal is to have many of the same qualities of the Father.

One of these qualities is to handle anger in the same way. Scripture tells us that God does indeed become angry but that He is slow to anger. God is merciful and gracious and abounding in steadfast love. If God does get angry, his anger lasts only for a moment. Psalm 30:5- "For His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor lasts a lifetime"

Take a look at these verses:

Exodus 34:6-7 "And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished; He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

Numbers 14:18 "The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

Nehemiah 9:16-17 "But they, our ancestors, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and they did not obey your commands. They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them,"

Psalms 86:15 "But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness."

Joel 2:12-14 "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who

knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing— grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God.”

What do these texts have in common? How do they differ?

These texts emphasize God’s mercy but what warning do they have for the guilty?

What human responsibility do we have based on Joel?

Apply The Word

Read James 1:19–20 “My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

Here is very practical advice on human relationships: first, be ready (“quick”) to listen to others; second, be slow to speak; and third, be slow to anger.

If we were to apply this formula in all our relationships, how much less pain would we cause others and ourselves? How often do we wish we could take back some harsh words we spewed on impulse? As is sometimes said, we were given two ears and one mouth for a purpose; we should listen at least double the amount of time that we speak.

Acting out our anger doesn’t lead to the righteousness of God. All good gifts come from God (James 1:17). These good gifts from God include kindness and generosity and mercy. Too often when we act out our anger, we are not producing these “fruits” but just their opposite.