

# Godly Living

## Lesson 2—Dealing with Anger

### OVERVIEW

Background Bible Passage: John 2:13-16

Key Verse: Ephesians 4:25-27—“Since you put away lying, speak the truth, each one to his neighbor, because we are members of one another. Be angry and do not sin. Don’t let the sun go down on your anger, and don’t give the Devil an opportunity.”

### BEFORE CLASS

**Preparation:** *Your preparation will determine the direction your class will go.*

- Consider what makes you angry.
- How do you respond when you are angry or frustrated?
- Study and prepare your lesson so that you are familiar with the teaching outline.
- Pray for each student by name.
- Use the Contact 1-2-3 system to the right to follow up on students who have recently missed on Sunday morning.
- Pray for each student by name.

### CONTACT 1-2-3 SYSTEM

*CONTACT 1--The first time a student is absent, give him a call.*

*CONTACT 2--Following the second absence, send him a postcard.*

*CONTACT 3-- The third week they are absent, pay him a visit.*

*THINK ABOUT IT: What does it say to a student when they miss multiple weeks in a row and are never contacted? It says, “It really doesn’t matter if you’re here or not.” Small things communicate great messages. Let the three “small” things above communicate that you care and miss your students when they are absent.*

### OPENING ACTIVITY

#### Discussion Questions

- *What frustrates you?*
- *What are some of your “hot buttons”? What really makes you mad?*
- *Can you remember a time when you were really angry? What made you angry? Did you do anything because you were angry? Tell me about it.*
- *Is anger a positive or negative emotion? Do you think it is okay to get angry?*

- *Have you ever been around someone who had an explosive anger?*
- *Do you think God gets angry?*
- *Do you think Jesus ever got angry?*

## **BIBLE LESSON**

*SAY:* Let's take a look at a time when Jesus was angry and what the Bible says about anger.

*Choose a volunteer to read—Read John 2:13-16*

- *Why was Jesus angry?* (Because the religious leaders had turned the temple into a marketplace. The problem here wasn't just that they were selling things but that they were using temple worship as an opportunity to extort profit from the people. For example, someone could not sacrifice an animal unless it had first been approved by a priest as appropriately spotless and without blemish, but the priests were purposefully telling people that their animals were not good enough so that they would be forced to buy from the "overpriced" selection in the temple. This is an example of the type of corruption that existed here.)
- *Do you think Jesus was out of control?* (In movies, many times, Jesus is shown in sort of tantrum overturning tables and pouring out the money, but look a little closer at the story. He did overturn tables. He released animals. He poured out money, but He wasn't out of control. Consider the following:
  - (1) He made a whip out of cords. This took time. He didn't "fly" into a rage when He saw what was happening. He was controlled. He knew what He was doing. He had a plan.
  - (2) There is no record that he used the whip on anyone. Most likely it was used to drive out the sheep and oxen.
  - (3) Notice that there is no mention of him releasing the doves. The sheep and oxen that were driven out could be recovered easily and so could the money that was poured out, but if the doves had been released many would have been lost for good. Even in His anger He acted in such a way as to make a strong point but not to cause permanent harm or damage.
- *What can we learn about anger from Jesus' example?*

Consider the following:

- (1) Anger is justified if you are angry for the right reason.
- (2) Just anger isn't a cause for unjust actions.
- (3) Right anger must have the right response.

For example, let's take a look at a modern-day example:

**SAY:** Take, for instance, a Christian who is angry about abortion. His anger is justified concerning the killing of unborn babies. But does this make it right for that person to bomb an abortion clinic. No. This is an extreme example of being angry for the right reason but having the wrong response.

*(NOTE: Don't enter into a debate about what abortion is or its moral implications. If someone disagrees that we shouldn't be angry about abortion, then simply tell them that the class doesn't have time to pursue that discussion today and encourage them to talk to your youth minister.)*

## KEY VERSE

Choose a volunteer to read—Read Ephesians 4:25-27

**SAY:** The Greek word translated “falsehood” or “lying” in verse 25 literally referred to the masks that were used in Greek theatre—of how a person would portray one character, holding up one mask, and then portray an entirely different person behind a second mask.

- *What does this verse say about our need to be real with each other?*
- *Why do we try to hide our hurt or pain sometimes? Why is it sometimes hard to be honest about our feelings? What do you think would happen if we risked being real with others, ourselves and God...instead of hiding behind masks?*

**SAY:** God created us with emotions. He expects and even commands us to drop our masks, to be honest and open about how we're feeling. But there are risks to being real—People may hurt you, but you will enjoy deeper relationships when you are real with others. Few things deepen a relationship more than sharing real needs and feelings.

- *According to what we just read out of the Bible, is anger okay? Does this verse say, “Never be angry?” What does it say about anger?*
- *How can you be angry and not sin? (Make sure that your response is a righteous response.)*
- *What is the importance of not letting the sun go down on your wrath? (Even anger for the right reason must be handled in the right way and in the right time.)*

**SAY:** Say, for example, that someone lies about you and offends you and you're rightfully angry. Then, let's say, you dwell on this anger day after day instead of dealing with the situation correctly. As you stew, your anger will eventually turn into bitterness and unforgiveness, which is a sin and will hinder God's moving in your life.

- *What do you think the Bible means by not letting “the sun go down” on your wrath? Does this mean that if you get angry ten minutes before sunset, that you had better*  
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*get it taken care of before the sun is gone?* (No, this is not a literal formula but an illustration of saying, “Deal with your anger in a timely manner,” or “Don’t let a day go past without dealing with your feelings.”)

How would you deal with feelings of anger in the following scenarios:

- (1) Someone spreads a hurtful rumor about you. You don’t know who did it and you’re afraid that people might believe it. But you don’t even know who knows about it. How would you deal with your anger?
- (2) A guy at school is always teasing you and calling you names. One day he trips you as you are walking down an aisle in the cafeteria. How would you deal with your anger?
- (3) You come home late one night and your mom yells at you because she didn’t know where you were. But you left a note on the refrigerator—she just didn’t see it. Now she’s so angry that she won’t even listen to you. She sends you to your room without giving you a chance to explain yourself. How would you deal with your anger?
- (4) Your iPod disappears from your backpack. Several people who sit near to you in class say that another student, who is always being mean to you, took it. He denies it. How would you deal with your anger?
- (5) A drunk driver hits a close friend and kills her. How would you deal with your anger?

Consider the following:

- (1) In some situations the only way you can deal with your anger is by casting it and the circumstances on God and putting them under His Lordship—for example, how else could you deal with the anger that comes from someone stealing from you but you don’t know who it is. You’re just to feel anger but you must commit the person who sinned against you into God’s care, understanding that though the situation may be “out of your hands,” it’s still in His.
  - (2) But in many cases, you can approach the person who offended you to express your feelings in a righteous way, to forgive them, and to try to reconcile your relationship with them.
- *What is the caution that the Bible gives in verse 27 after saying not to let the sun go down on your wrath?* (“Do not give the Devil an opportunity.” The idea here is that anger, when not dealt with in a timely manner, gives Satan an opportunity for evil in your life.)

Choose a volunteer to read—Read Ephesians 4:31-32

