

BELOVED
BE LOVED
BE L♥VE

Growing Further Discussion Guide

Be Love

Part 5: Love is Not Easily Angered

Pastor Rick Long

Love is not easily angered.

1 Corinthians 13:5

Anger is one of the most misunderstood of all emotions. Many believe anger is a sin. That's not necessarily true. In fact, anger can sometimes be the appropriate response to a situation when it is managed properly. In other words, in the proper place, at the proper time, anger under control can be the correct choice. When anger is managed properly, it can produce greatness in marriages, athletes, business people, ministry, and so much more. However, unmanaged anger can lead to sin. In our society, we deal with anger in extremes: we either clam up or blow up. We either go mute or turn into a maniac. Neither is appropriate. In this study, through the six points below, we are going to learn the answer to a very important question: "How do you tame your temper?"

OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

1. RESOLVE TO MANAGE MY TEMPER.

What does Proverb 29:11 say a fool does? What does a wise man do?

- Anger is a choice. Why is it important to decide to manage it in advance?
- Most people don't admit anger can be controlled. What are some excuses for denying we can manage anger?
- No one can make us mad without our consent. Why do people often blame others for their uncontrolled anger?

Discipleship—We can choose to change, sometimes more than we want to admit. Just as uncontrolled anger is a learned behavior; it can be unlearned and managed. It's a choice that requires commitment. Before examining the next five steps, ask yourself three questions: (1) Will I decide to manage my anger? (2) Will I commit to the necessary actions below to make this happen? (3) How will I rely on my small group or others to support these decisions?

2. REMEMBER THE COST OF UNCONTROLLED ANGER.

What happens to a hot tempered man, according to Proverb 29:22?

- When we remember the cost, we are motivated to manage anger. What are some of the costs when this is forgotten?
- What are some ways unmanaged anger destroys relationships?
- What are some potential consequences in business and the community of a hot temper?

According to Proverbs 14:17, 14:29, and 15:18, what are the results of a hot temper?

- Hot tempers hurt relationships. What are some of the effects anger has on those who are close to us?
- Out of control anger leads to foolishness. What kind of impression does this leave on people?

Read Proverbs 11:29. What happens to the person who provokes his family?

- How can a hot temper affect a family and children? How do children often learn to develop a bad temper?
- Parents' anger toward their children will negatively affect their behavior and lead to three things: more anger, apathy, and finally, alienation. What are some of the affects of this we see in society today?

Fellowship—When we're angry, we do things that we would never do and we say things that we would never say. A good reminder of the cost of a hot temper is: "I always lose when I lose my temper." Which relationships in your life are more important than a hot temper? Who do you love enough and value over angry feelings? Identify several people or a group with whom you can safely share the challenges you face managing your anger, people who you can rely on for fellowship and to help remind you of the cost.

3. REFLECT BEFORE REACTING.

What is the difference between how a stupid man and a wise man react in Proverbs 29:11?

- Anger control is mouth control. How can waiting to act be better than reacting immediately?
- Delay is a great remedy. What can change in a situation when we use delay to pause and reflect?

In Proverbs 19:11, what does a man's wisdom give?

- For wisdom about anger we need to reflect on Pastor Rick's three questions from the sermon:
 - ⇒ Why am I angry? Anger is a symptom.
 - ⇒ What do I really want? Is it what I'm mad about or is it control?
 - ⇒ How can I get it? What should be the right action to attain the objective?

What is the prayer in Psalm 141:3?

- How can the prayer above change reactions to anger when put into practice?

Discipleship—The more we understand anger, the more understanding we will be. There are three root causes of anger: (1) hurt—when someone or something causes us pain; (2) frustration—we feel out of control and we get irritated; and (3) fear—we feel trapped, threatened, or insecure.

Reflecting before reacting is not letting something go unresolved. What actions can you take that will allow for reflection before reaction? You can count to ten slowly, you can pray, you can memorize Scripture, and you can forgive or ask for forgiveness.

Identify at least three commitments you will make to control reactions and write them down.

4. RELEASE MY ANGER APPROPRIATELY.

What does Ephesians 4:26 say about anger?

- Aggression only produces more anger. Why does just "letting it out" never work?
- It's all about how people release anger. What are some right ways? What are some wrong ways?

In Proverb 15:1, what does a gentle answer do? What does a harsh answer do?

- How can talking low and slow calm a situation?
- Why does loud only seem to escalate a situation?

Discipleship—There are three ways not to release anger. The first way is to suppress it or store it up inside. It will eventually blow up. The second way not to release it is to repress it. That is denying it even exists. This can often lead to depression which is not good. The last way is expressing it which comes out in the form of sarcasm or manipulation. The right way to release anger is to confess it. Is there anything that is making you angry? If so, what do you need to confess? Pray about it and take action. Confess this to a trusted individual and God. It needs to be released appropriately.

5. REFORM MY MIND.

According to Romans 12:2 what are we not to follow? How can God transform us?

- What are some examples of changing the way we think?
- Anger is learned. How can we unlearn it?

Who should we stay away from, according to Proverb 22:24–25? What will happen if we don't?

- What are some of the challenges that can keep people in situations that make them angry?
- Why is anger contagious?

Discipleship—When we change the way we think, it will change the way we feel and it will change our behavior. Sometimes we think we can change others, but we can't; however, we can change ourselves. Look at what happens to an angry man, according to Proverb 11:29. Then, in Colossians 3:19, read how a man should treat his wife. The Bible is filled with instructions for changing our thought patterns and what the results are when we do or don't follow these ways.

Is there an angry person or people you need to get away from? If so, get guidance and do it. What behaviors and customs of the world might be influencing your anger? How can you remove these from your life? What action can you take to change the thought patterns of your mind? Pray about it and write down three commitments for change.

6. RELY ON GOD'S HELP.

Read Romans 15:5. Where do patience and encouragement come from? What is Paul's prayer?

- What are some ways God can help us with patience?

In Galatians 5:22, what is the fruit of the Spirit?

- Why is patience the outer result when God's Spirit is inside us?
- How can patience affect others we are close to?

What does Matthew 12:34 say about what is in your heart?

- Tension and temper go together. Why should our faith in Christ release tension?
- The words we speak come from what is in our heart! So, how does God help me with what comes from my heart?

According to Ezekiel 36:26, what is given? What is removed?

- Why is it important to have a heart that is, "God-willed" instead of "self-willed"?

Worship—The real secret for love that is not easily angered is the power of God to change us inside and our close relationship with Jesus Christ. We need a heart transplant. That means giving our heart to God so He can transform us. How can you worship God more? What can you do to praise Him more? Take the action step to commit or re-commit yourself to Jesus right now.

Take a moment to review any assignments/challenges made during the personal application and commitment section of your previous meeting. Seeing God at work in the lives of those who commit to him is essential for growth.

PERSONAL APPLICATION AND COMMITMENT:

It's sad but true that we often get angry at those who are closest to us. It's hard to admit we have an anger problem. However, wise people know that releasing anger appropriately is essential to avoid sin, so they learn to control their tongue and depend on God to help increase their patience.

There are several steps to taming our temper. We need to resolve to manage our anger according to God's ways and not the world's. We need to remember the cost and the damage anger can cause. We need to seek fellowship with others who can hold us accountable. We need to reflect before reacting. We must re-pattern our minds by changing the way we think. Lastly, and most importantly, we must rely on God's help. Review the points, notes, and commitments from this lesson, and take the necessary steps to practice them. If you know of someone who has unmanaged anger, share this guide with them.

Growing Further Discussion Guide Leader Notes

Goals for this Week's Study

- Open with the point that anger is not always a sin. God gets angry and God is love.
- Learn and discuss the six points in the guide along with how they work in the member's lives.
- Encourage your group to implement each point of this week's study and then share this guide with someone in their life.

Preparing to Lead Your Group

✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.

✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group in the next 60–90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God's five purposes for the church: Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Mission and Worship, and make a plan to encourage your group members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.

At **GRACE** we use our name for the 5 purposes:

Glorify God

Relate to everyone

Act like Jesus

Care for other

Express God's love

✓ **PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

Using This Growing Further Discussion Guide

⇒ This Growing Further Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups there are too many questions to answer in one session together. After considering the needs of your group you may choose one of the following options:

- One section of questions;
- One or two questions from each section

⇒ Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.

⇒ The questions relating to the five purposes are helpful to develop balance and spiritual maturity in our lives. You can bring your group to an awareness of their needs in these areas by using these questions as a regular part of each discussion.

- ⇒ Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.

- ⇒ As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.