



## “God > Anger/Rage”

Ephesians 4

### Small Group Plan

Maybe you have heard the saying: “Anger is just one letter short of Danger.” Here’s why. Essentially, there are two kinds of anger.

There’s the **REVEALED** anger, the hot, fiery, exploding kind that is often loud, aggressive and usually thoughtless (having no real thought leading it). We describe these people as “blowing up” as they fume and seethe and usually loses control of their temper.

*A fool gives full vent to his anger,  
but a wise man keeps himself under control.*

— Proverbs 29:11 —

Then, there is the **CONCEALED** anger that quietly smolders, burning down into a bitter spirit. This person may seem emotionless, but in reality their emotion is deep and cold. If you look carefully you may see their eyes narrow and their voice drop as it becomes level but not loud. They will speak slowly and deliberately and yet you can sense the inferno raging beneath the surface. This is concealed anger.

*Do not hate your brother in your heart.  
Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt.  
Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people,  
but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.*

— Leviticus 19:17-18 —

The command “Do not bear a grudge” comes from a single Hebrew verb that means to “keep” or to “harbor.” Grudge-bearers “keep” the offender and the offense continually alive in their hearts. Because they give their anger a “harbor” in their hearts, the damage burns both ways.

### **OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...**

- Do you think anger is increasing or decreasing in our culture today? Explain.
- What has been the contemporary response to anger?

## LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

### — Telling The Truth —

#### Ephesians 4:25

<sup>25</sup> Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

- What is the connection between lying and being trapped by anger?
- How are “speaking the truth” to each other and managing our anger against each other, related?

### — Controlling Our Anger —

#### Ephesians 4:26-27

<sup>26</sup> “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold.

- When is anger not a sin?
- When does anger become a sin?
- How can just one day of unresolved anger give Satan “a foothold” into our lives and relationships?

### — Working To Share —

#### Ephesians 4:28

<sup>28</sup> Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands that they may have something to share with those in need.

- How can manual labor help to drain the emotion of anger?
- Describe the satisfaction of creating something “useful”?
- Describe the joy of giving something you have made to someone in need?
- How does the act of sharing guard against the trap of anger?

### — Giving Our Words To God —

#### Ephesians 4:29-32

<sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- Why does it “grieve the Holy Spirit of God” when our words hurt others?
- Describe the kind of words that will “build others up”?
- What comes to mind as you ponder how God has forgiven you (v. 32)?
- How can pondering God’s compassion give you the power to forgive others?
- Why is it difficult for forgiveness and anger to exist in the same heart at the same time?

### **USE IT / APPLY IT ...**

- What does anger in your life usually look like? How does it show itself?
- How can hurt or frustration cause anger to rise up inside?
- When would fear be a cause of anger?
- How can injustice bring about a righteous anger?  
How is it different from a selfish anger?
- When someone wrongs you, is it difficult for you to overlook their offense?  
Explain.
- Close by reading aloud Ephesians 4:32 together – slowly and carefully.

*Be kind and compassionate to one another,  
forgiving each other,  
just as in Christ God forgave you.*

- In prayer thank God for his disposition of love ... and for his moments of righteous anger that remind us of the seriousness of sin.