

## James 1:19-20 – Living Right when Angry!

<sup>19</sup> So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be

27 -

80 -

swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;

5036 -  
prompt

191 -

1021 - sluggish 2980 -

3709 – anger, fury  
– “wrath n. — a  
feeling of intense  
anger that does  
not subside; often  
on an epic scale.”

God’s voice over the noise of this world. James says, ‘be swift to hear’ because the longer you are being exposed to the lies of this world the more likely you are to start believing them and be lured away from God and His good gifts for you.

‘slow to speak’ – In verse 2 James said, ‘count it all joy...’ He was telling us to think about what was happening to us in light of God’s work, word, and will. Instead of simply reacting to the difficult thing going on, pause and reflect upon what God is doing through it. Think about God’s presence to help you through it. Meditate on the good that God will do on the other side of it. Being slow to speak means not reacting verbally to the things going on around you before taking them to the Lord ([Prov. 10:19; 17:27-28](#)).

‘slow to wrath’ – wrath = strong vengeful anger or indignation; retributory punishment for an offense or a crime: divine chastisement. Other words for wrath = rage, fury.

There are a lot of things in this wrong way world that can make us angry. Abortion, true injustice, human trafficking, terrorism. Typically, people get angry over much less important matters than these. Anger by itself may not be a sin ([Eph. 4:26](#)). But it usually is ([Col.3:8](#)).

Some say anger is a natural expression. One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is self-control ([Gal. 5:23](#)).

### Notes:

‘So then...’ – summarize what this is referring to (v1-18). Trials and temptations are inevitable while we live in a wrong world. God is using those things to make us better people – perfect and complete. God invites us to come to him for the wisdom we need to go through trials and endure temptation. James warns us to watch out for our own desires that can be used to deceive us and lure us away from trusting God. God has given us His Word so that we can trust Him. To experience the good that God intends on the other side of trials and to endure temptation, we must know, believe, and obey God’s Word.

“Ultimately, the key both to responding to trials and resisting temptation is to be found in one’s reaction to God’s Word.” (Blue, 2004) page ??

‘my beloved brethren’ – James is not speaking as some distant, detached spiritual expert. What he is saying is learned from personal experience and connection to the Lord during his trials and through temptations in his own life.

‘swift to hear’ – hear what? In context, it is likely the ‘word of truth’ in verse 18. Trials and temptations can become so loud that it makes it difficult to hear the Spirit speaking to us. Because we live in a fallen world that is going the wrong way and because we have an enemy that is seeking to steal, kill, and destroy all that is good and God in our lives, we must seek diligently to hear

Scriptures:

2 Timothy 2:22 - Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

John 10:10b - I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Philippians 4:6-7 - Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> for the wrath of man does not produce

2716 –  
accomplish

the righteousness of God.

1343 – what is right, justice – “righteousness n. — adherence to what is required according to a standard; for example, a moral standard, though not always.

to others, you will continue to be unrighteous, and your life will bear unrighteous fruit. Repent to God first, and then to the person you were angry with.

3. Ask God to change your heart! – The problem of anger is not external – it is in your heart. Others may draw it out of you, but the problem is in you – not them. Only God can change a human heart. Must be willing to change.
4. Seek help from God’s people! – If anger has been a problem for a while, it may take time and accountability to overcome it. God put you into a body of believers so that they could use their God-given gifts to help you.

Jesus came so that we would have a good life (John 10:10b). One of the characteristics of the abundant life is peace (John 14:27). The peace of God guards the hearts of those who put their trust in Him (Phil. 4:6-7). Anger in our heart shatters the peace of God in our heart and in the hearts of all those it touches. Thankfully, anger is not an incurable disease. God can set us free to live lives of peace bearing good fruit

Notes:

This world is not right. It has rejected God and His Word and therefore has no basis by which to do what is right. Everything a God-rejecting world does is wrong.

As God’s people we are called to walk in righteousness (2 Tim. 2:22) – called to be right in this wrong world. Righteousness and wrath are incompatible. You cannot be angry and righteous at the same time. If you are not righteous then you are unrighteous and you need to repent.

It is verses like this should cause us to be opposed to any group that divides and focuses on hate. Ideologies like Critical Theory and Critical Race Theory ought to be opposed because they are creating division within people groups that is producing anger and violence within those groups. Anything that sets one group against another should be opposed. All humanity is one tribe – divine image-bearers of a loving, holy God. Everything about our lives should be working toward the unity God created us to have with Him and each other.

Anger is natural but it not right. The wrong things in this world might make us angry. Or the other sinners we are living with might make us angry. In reality, no one can make you angry. Anger is a choice. The right choice is to respond with a different emotion than anger, like compassion, love, forgiveness, gentleness, and many others that Jesus modeled for us during His time on this wrong way world.

We are all fallen creatures living in a fallen world will inevitably do fallen things, like get angry. But as Christians, we are not doomed to keep making the same fallen mistakes for our whole lives. Through the power of the Holy Spirit and the truth of God’s Word we can be different than this world. We must be different! The world is in darkness racing toward destruction. God put His light inside of each of His people so that those in the darkness would see it, and so that some might escape the darkness and the destruction they are headed toward. By dealing with things like anger, we shine brighter in the darkness – God is glorified, people are blessed, and the gospel of Jesus is proclaimed.

So, what do we do when we get angry, or struggle with anger?

How to live right when angry:

1. Shut up! – If anger cannot produce the righteousness of God, then any words spoken in anger are unrighteous = sinful. Just stop talking until you get your anger under control. [Story of woman in front of Budget last Sunday] Some will say that if they don’t talk about it, nothing will change. If you talk about in anger, it might change, but it won’t change in the right way. Words are powerful. They can build up or tear down. Angry words cannot build up, only tear down. Your words declare your faith – they are a witness of what you believe about God. Angry words from a believer may say to the world that God is an angry God! – blasphemy!
2. Repent! – Satan has convinced people that anger is natural and constructive – he is a liar, and he is seeking to steal, kill, and destroy the good God intends for your life! To be healed of our anger, we must confess it to God and repent – it is sin. As long as you justify your anger as right and shift the blame