



James

Living Right in a Wrong World!

Living Right when Angry!

James 1:19-20

Message #4 of 15 – S965

Sermon given on October 3, 2021



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Turn to **James 1**
- Today, we continue the series: **James - Living Right in a Wrong World!**
- One of the things that I love about the gospel and God and His Word is the power it has to change people
- I am not the same person I was when I got saved 24 years ago
- I was not a bad guy before I got saved, but I was far from perfect
- I considered myself to be a loving husband and good father
- Kelly threw a rock into my glass house the day she worked up the courage to tell me that my children were afraid of me
- They never knew when I was going to lose my temper and explode at them
- The Bible says **Proverbs 27:6**

Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend...

- Her words wounded me deeply
- To this day I don't think anyone has said something that wounded me more than that
- I don't recall how I responded to her words, but I do remember the pain of the idea that I was harming my children, not physically, but emotionally – it broke my heart
- I had a problem with anger and my problem was hurting my family
- If we took a survey of what emotion best describes our culture today, anger may not be at the top of the list, but it would be pretty high
- The democrats are angry with the republicans
- The vaccinated are angry with the unvaccinated
- There is animosity between the races, or the genders, or those with different views on sexual identity or immigration or abortion
- It used to be that people could disagree passionately and not devolve to angry outbursts
- Many people in the world are angry and it seems to be getting worse

- It shouldn't surprise you to hear that God has an opinion on the topic of anger
- This message is for everyone
- Whether you were like me and had or have a problem with anger, or you have someone close to you who does, you will encounter someone who is angry
- We need to understand anger and know how God would call us to live right
- Let's pray and learn better how to do that
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Living Right when Angry!**
- The book of James is filled with practical topics that we can apply to everyday life
- **James 1:19**
- Instructions for every man and woman
- First – '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 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.
- It could also mean that we should be listening to what others have to say before we speak
- Second – 'be...slow to speak'
- It has been said that God gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason – listen more than you speak – seek to understand

- Being slow to speak means not reacting verbally to the things going on around you before taking them to the Lord **Proverbs 10:19**
In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise.
- Sometimes the wisest thing you can say is nothing
- Third – ‘be...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.
- Wrath is an extreme expression of anger and can include violence
- Anger is what I am feeling – wrath is what I do when I am angry
- It can include yelling, or the passive aggressive version – the silent treatment
- It can include using hurtful or demeaning words or calling names
- It is typically meant to punish another person for a wrong, either real or perceived
- There are many who would say that anger is a natural feeling – and they are right
- Human anger is a natural feeling for a fallen being in a fallen world – but that doesn’t make it right
- When we are saved, the Holy Spirit takes up residence within us and gives us the spiritual gifts we need to live the Christian life **Galatians 5:22-23**
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
- When someone is angry none of the fruit of the Spirit is active
- Self-control is given to us so that we can override our natural fallen tendencies with God-glorifying behaviors
- Paul says one of those things to overcome is anger **Ephesians 4:31-32**
Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.
- Every true believer can put those wrong things away and replace them with right things because they have the God the Holy Spirit and His spiritual gifts to enable and empower us
- It is possible to be angry and not sin **Ephesians 4:26-27**
“Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil.

- Paul is telling us to be careful about letting our anger out for others to see - Most people can't do that without sinning
- Why is anger a sin?
- Behavioral scientists tell us that this type of wrath or anger comes as a result of frustration and that most frustration is caused simply by our not getting our own way.

Frustration = the feeling of being upset or annoyed, especially because of inability to change or achieve something.

- Frustration arises from the perceived resistance to the fulfillment of an individual's will or goal and is likely to increase when a will or goal is denied or blocked.
 - I have been heard to say regularly when faced with something that I cannot change, 'It is what it is!'
 - In those circumstances that I have no power to change, I have to choose to trust God or choose to trust in something else that is probably powerless to change the circumstances.
 - This leads to frustration which leads to anger and wrath.
 - Anger and wrath are signs of spiritual immaturity.
 - It is the opposite of the patience and endurance that God is trying to grow within us through the trials and temptations of life
 - **James 1:2-4**
 - Anger and wrath are signs of spiritual weakness – a spiritual failing
 - A spiritually mature person, when angry, doesn't express their anger as we see so commonly in our world
 - James also explains why anger is so harmful
 - **James 1:20**
 - 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 – called to be right in this wrong world. **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.**
- Righteousness and wrath are incompatible.
 - You cannot be acting angry and righteous at the same time.

- And, if you are not righteous then you are unrighteous and you need to repent.
- Human 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 and will inevitably do fallen things, like acting 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 and wrath, 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?
- Four things - **How to live right when angry!**
- First - **Shut up!** –
- If anger and wrath 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 it in anger, it might change, but it won't change in the right way – it can't – it is not righteous.

- 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!
- Second - **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 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.
- Third - **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.
- Fourth - **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 from all sin, including anger, to live lives of peace bearing good fruit
- **Pray**