

Coach House Church

BEACONS

ANGER

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No one likes a distracted driver. It's the woman looking down at her phone after the light has turned green. It's the guy who cuts across a mother in her SUV while negotiating a business deal. Brakes squeal. The SUV driver lays into the horn. The person who has been waiting to get through the light lets out a few choice words and hand signals.

You see it's easy to let frustration get the better of us on the road. And also on the road of life. But the reality is cursing at other drivers doesn't get us where we are going any faster.

The same is true for any conflict we find ourselves in. To be angry is not a sin, but how we respond to anger can be. Proverbs 15:18 says, "A hot-tempered person starts fights; a cool-tempered person stops them."

Giving full vent to our anger doesn't change the situation. In fact, it can make it worse. Maybe you don't express anger through gestures or words, but instead, choose to bottle it up. Holding anger in is just as sinful as blowing up.

Unconfessed hurt turns to bitterness and resentment, which separate us from God and others

Psalm 66:18,

"If I had not confessed the sin in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened."

Mark 11:25

25 But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.[a]"

True repentance gives us an opportunity for a restart. But true repentance also requires a sincere effort with avoidance of a previous mistake. We need to learn to give ourselves time to listen and measure our response so that we can use our words honourably and to God's glory. I do this, because I sincerely regret many of the words I have spoken in my past.

When a word leaves your mouth it can never be brought back. It is out there as a constant reminder that this word came from you. Does it bless or curse a person? If it hurts someone, it will eventually come back to hurt you. Now I understand that there are some sly people who are skilled in getting gossip or slander out and distancing themselves as the source. They delight in this undermining of a victim. I have known some of these people, and they are lowest on my respect meter because of their practice.

But the truth is, even though they think their sneaky work is toward another person, they are undermining themselves and distancing themselves from the Lord. Don't join that crowd. If we want to be Jesus' disciple. Learning to control our tongue's is essential.

Several years ago when I was in business I was told that people normally put on a front in trying to be the person they would like to be, but under pressure they resort to who they really are. I believe that the scripture in 2 Corinthians 5:17 teaches otherwise. It says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

We say often that the discipleship of the Holy Spirit in reforming a man is an inside out transformation. In other words, it begins in the man's heart, away from the view of others. If it is not in the heart, then our willpower to reflect the character of Christ and make of ourselves something other than who we are deep down will fail.

Under pressure we will resort to our normal personality, which is often destructive. But, if our heart is good because we live in close proximity with Christ, then what people see and hear from our life is a reflection of Christ no matter our circumstances. The reflection of Christ is what the world needs to see. So unveil it and let it shine.

God knows the motives of our hearts; He is not fooled by outward appearances. As we share our struggles and open ourselves to correction, God frees us from sin. Correction may not be easy to hear, but the path without correction is far more dangerous. Proverbs 15:10 says, "Stern discipline awaits anyone who leaves the path; the one who hates correction will die."

It is hard to allow someone to correct us. Pride tells us to be defensive and stand our ground, but through discipline, God draws us closer to Him.

So today as you go about your normal daily lives, here are a few pointers to reflect on:

Think of a time when you acted impulsively. Looking back, how could you have handled the situation differently?

What do you do when someone hurts your feelings? Do people know when you are angry or do you bottle it up?

How do you respond to correction? As you reflect on how you respond, is there anyone you need to apologise to?

Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you.



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