Ephesians 4:17-23, 26-27

White Flag: #Anger

Things that will help us live together as a church family.

Last week, surrender our misbelief to God. That we would surrender our lies to God by believing that we are good enough to be loved by God just as we are.

This week, we recognize the need to surrender our anger to God in order to be angry well.

What do I mean by that? I mean, anger is an emotion. It’s unavoidable. It is actually a good thing

Think of anger as your own personal police force or sheriff, riding into town when injustice has been done. The sheriff sends out police bulletins to the effect of, "Hey, that's not right. That's not how we do business around here." That guy is going to show up. There's really no way to not get angry.

The key is to deal with your anger…appropriately.

Before we get there, first I want us to look at why we get angry. What makes you angry?

Q-A’s

Video

I can identify with this anger. I have experienced it, what they call “road rage”. Where does that come from? Why am I acting like that? I don’t even know them.

Why do we get angry?

Like Pastor Andy Stanley has said, Anger says you owe me. When I don’t get it, I get angry instead. Anger says, “That is mine.” It doesn’t even have to really be mine. I get angry when I have a perception of being entitled to something.

Parking space…

Faster checkout…

An A on a test I really studied for…

Good health…

Peace and quiet…

A quick trip across the bay bridge…

Anger **side effects**

When what is mine, or what I believe I am entitled to, is wrongly taken from me, anger results. And unchecked anger leads to destruction. Destruction of relationships, and sometimes belongings.

If anger can be a fire in our belly, this destruction can come on like a smoldering smoker or like a firecracker.

**Ephesians 4:26–27 (NLT) — 26** And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

Either way, it’s a smoldering fire or a firecracker, when we allow anger to grow within us, we are giving the devil a foothold not only in our lives, but into the relationships around us.

That’s one reason that domestic violence occurs on Saturday and Sunday. People have held it in all week, and let go on the weekend…or they dread going back to work that. This is the effect of unresolved anger.

Fire cracker effects

**Proverbs 25:28 (HCSB) — 28** A man who does not control his temper is like a city whose wall is broken down.

Let me ask you something. When you get angry, do you do things you wouldn’t do otherwise? Do you say things that you wouldn’t say otherwise?

Often times we restrain ourselves. We don’t deal with the anger, we simply take it home. We applaud ourselves for showing restraint. It is a good thing to have self-control, but we also need to deal with the anger in an appropriate way.

So, be angry if you have to. If you need to. How do we get angry without destructing the realationships around us? We need to learn to Be angry… well.

How do you do that?

**Trust** surrender

**Ephesians 4:24 (NLT) — 24** Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

IT is a matter of grace and faith. First we need to receive this new nature. By faith we are given a new life, not just an eternal life…but a new way to live. A way to live that reflects God’s love to the world. By grace he gives us the power, strength, endurance, patience of God to live this new life. We can trust that living a life of surrender is better than a life of rebellion and entitlement.

As we live this new life, we can look at ourselves from God’s prespecitve…Love. We can see ourselves as loved just as we are. Passionately loved.

Black dot

From a perspective of a pure love, anger and its effects shows up boldly.

**Identify** it

**Psalm 4:4 (ESV) — 4** Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. Selah

So search your hearts for anger…constangly.

**Ephesians 4:31 (NIV) — 31** Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

Name it for what it is. Not justify it.

**Proverbs 28:13 (NIV) — 13** Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Then tell God. Give god permission to use the anger to disciple you.

**Replace** it.

Anger is an emotion, you can’t avoid. Instead of anger triggering sin in me, I need it to trigger holiness. How does that happen? I have to replace behavior.

**Ephesians 4:32 (NLT) — 32** Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

This may sound impossible, but the Holy Spirit can do this…God is the God of the impossible.

**Romans 12:19 (NLT) — 19** Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the Lord.

What we need to give up trying to be God. We are not the point, God is. It’s not up to me to take revenge, it is God’s. But of course, I don’t do this perfectly.

**Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NLT) — 20** Not a single person on earth is always good and never sins.

Regardless of how we have acted in the past, we can always be forgiven. No anger is bigger than God’s love.

**Luke 6:27–28 (NLT) — 27** “But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. **28** Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.

This is what replacing it comes to. When you want revenge, pray. When you want back what you feel is taken from you, pray. When you feel like you are losing, remember what you have been given.

Sleep well.

You will get angry. Raising a white flag on our anger means we will

Rest with a clean heart. Rest from a perspective of Love.

Have you been blessed by your experience here? Tell someone. Don’t just invite someone to church, bring someone to church.

Take it Home

1. All forms of anger need to be dealt with promptly. Can you remember a time in your life when you didn’t deal with your anger? What happened?

2. Take a moment and reflect silently. Ask God to bring to mind any anger that you are holding on to that needs to be dealt with. What anger are you entertaining?

3. How can you get rid of anger this week? Ephesians 4:25-32 teaches us that rather than being angry, we should practice kindness and forgiveness. Who in your life needs you to practice kindness and forgiveness to them?

4. Read Ephesians 4:26. Do you think that you could practice this verse in your own life? What steps could you take this week to begin living this way?