

Facing Your Giants: Anger

by Steven Matthews

Two weeks ago, we looked at the story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17 and how David defeated the physical giant standing in front of him on the battlefield. David listened to God, he reflected on his past victories with God on his side, and he was prepared heading into battle. We may not be staring face to face with a physical giant, but we all deal with hardships and temptations in our lives.

One of those giants is **anger**. We all experience emotions because God created those emotions within us. The question: **What will we do with those emotions?** In particular, anger? Because anger is an emotion with a bad reputation. There are those who believe that anger is reflective of a sinful attitude. But anger isn't necessarily wrong in and of itself.

Let's examine Ephesians 4:26-27 to see what the Bible teaches on anger.

“Be angry”: Anger is appropriate, at times, in our lives. It is not always bad. God has anger. His anger is toward mankind and their continual rebellion against Him (Psalm 7:11). Moses' anger was often justified (Exodus 32:19-20). And Jesus was angered and motivated by the right things (Mark 3:1-5). Are we angry for the right reasons? But there's also a warning.

“And do not sin”: Anger is appropriate when under control, but if we're not careful, there's a line we can cross. We may feel angry, but that does not authorize us to act in a sinful way. God wants us to understand that anger is an emotion that we can control (Galatians 5:22-23). There is no situation where it is OK to sacrifice self-control.

“Do not let the sun go down on your anger”: There's a sense of urgency. Because if we let things fester, they get worse and begin to consume us. The goal is reconciliation (Matthew 5:23-24). Is there a relationship you need to fix today? Now is the time to have a conversation.

“And give no opportunity to the devil”: The devil doesn't want us to rebuild or resolve. He wants us to devour one another (1 Peter 5:8; Galatians 5:15). He will destroy your soul, and anger will be his tool. Decide every day: What am I going to do with the anger in my heart? It's an emotion we can control. It's an emotion we are commanded to control.

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