



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

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Steps to Scriptural Anger Management

Introduction

We live in a world of uncontrolled emotions; in the families' feuds, church conflicts and office politics. Such emotions fuelled by Satan or self, have often caused great emotional or spiritual disasters to many lives. **The world was shocked recently when they witnessed on TV globally the head butting outburst of anger by the world class French footballer, Zidane, at the finals of the World Cup 2006.** Some employers have done unimaginable things to their domestic maids in an uncontrollable outburst of fury and landed themselves into deep trouble. The speaker has counseled Christian couples involved in spousal violence due to uncontrolled anger as well. **The theme of proper anger management is a real concern today and is covered in the Bible** and it is relevant for all of us. It often is a malady for psychologists and psychiatrists in the world to treat, but the Bible has the antidote for it already. Let us consider scriptural responses to this contemporary concern.

Expressions of Anger and Consequences

There are different ways by which an angry person will express himself or herself. Some People express their Anger by denial or ignoring it or by withdrawal from it with silence. Some use grievance collection method by keeping track of everything that has happened and hope to use it later as a weapon. Others employ passive or aggressive behaviour like pouting, sarcasm, stubbornness, procrastination, (or scolding others mentally) or the raising of their voices in communication. Yet others use the weapon of hatred and gossip and tale bearing about others often with malice and vengeance and even verbal abuse or physical violence for some. The ultimate objective of all forms of anger is to try to control the behavior of the other person. Many think they can use anger to intimidate, manipulate and subdue the other person. All these are unbiblical and unsound and may create more problems than resolve them. Remember that a rage seldom comes from a sage and **those who fly into a rage seldom make a good landing.**

As Christians we are vulnerable too and we need to be vigilant and circumspect to examine ourselves regularly. Satan often gives us false solutions to our problems. A violent outburst of anger is not a divine antidote to solving problems and has often led to further uncalled for problems like:

- Health problems (chest pains, migraine, insomnia, etc.)
- Emotional problems (depression, listlessness and undue stress)
- Spiritual problems (in both church, home and with God)
- Relational problems (i.e. breakdown in communication with our loved ones and friends and reduced effectiveness for Christ).

Continued on Page 2...

Biblical Examples

For Christians, the Bible, the only inerrant, authoritative, providentially preserved and sufficient rule of faith and practice has provided a sure remedy to address this grave concern of anger and its proper management. First, we must recognize that we are helpless and hopeless without God's grace and help. We need to look to the sovereign God, who has given us a perfect example to follow in Psa 103:8-10, which give us a glimpse of whom God is; His nature, character and attributes. God is described as:

- ☞ merciful and gracious
- ☞ slow to anger
- ☞ plenteous in mercy

Unlike us, God is **slow to anger** but **quick to listen**. God had taken a long time to punish the Canaanites as well as the wicked people during Noah's time. He waited for 120 years before punishing the people of Nineveh and is still waiting for men to repent (2 Pet 3:9) before He comes again. On the other hand, man is often impatient and rash. Patience carries with it a lot of WAIT and we need to learn to wait patiently upon the Lord as Psa 27:14 rightly says. If you feel anger brooding within you, pray to the Lord first and do not rush to express it (i.e. with harsh words either verbally or in a written form) but ask God for wisdom to control it and to communicate it later in an edifying manner at the right time with the appropriate words and tone as well.

Many have experienced forgiveness of sins and God given chances when we failed God and messed up our lives. God has been very merciful and gracious to us all and have not dealt with us according to our iniquities. *He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger forever* (Ps 103:9).

Anger becomes dangerous when it hardens our hearts and makes us so self-righteous that we cannot see our own faults. **What we cannot see in ourselves our sinfulness, we cannot repent. When we refuse to acknowledge that our anger is sin, we are incarcerated and we imprison ourselves in our own self-righteousness and fury.** But when the Lord humbles us and we are able to see its utter sinfulness before a thrice holy God and sincerely repent, we begin to unburden our heart and be released from our own imprisonment. We often think the way to deal with angry people is to be angrier at the other person or to inflict greater harm or pain. It is often the manner we speak, not just the content of words we say, that stir up anger. The Bible says, *A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger* (Prov 15:1). Beware of the use of caustic and hurting words that may lead to greater inter-personal problems. Beware of what we say and how we say it as well and refrain from sending out hate emails or letters or articles in a fit of anger which we may live to regret it one day.

Remember, "Anger" is one letter short of "Danger". When one is angry, he/ she is a dangerous person. Uncontrolled anger can lead to strained relations, reduced effectiveness, violence, hatred and vengeance if it is not curbed at the right time. Note that technically, no one can make you angry. **Only you can make yourself angry. By God's help, it is possible not to respond to provocations even when we are greatly stimulated to wrath.** The psalmist has a good reminder to us of how God Himself control His anger, for if God does not hold back His anger and deal with us according to our iniquity, who shall stand (Psa 130:1-3)?

Handling anger when it comes first requires us to recognize it as sin and not sugar coat or cover it up with many excuses when we are angry. **The only way to be angry and not sin is to be angry at nothing but sin.** Do not let the grievous sin of anger dominate your life daily. Pray to God to help you to resolve it the same day before you retire at night or you may have the evil one for a strange bed fellow (Eph 4:28-29). We can learn a lesson from two men in the Old Testament, General Naaman of Syria and King David on how they faced and managed anger with some external help.

A General gets a gentle lecture on anger management - 2 Kings 5:11-14

Naaman, a general in the Syrian army, suffered from leprosy, a serious disease during his time. He heard that Prophet Elisha could heal sickness. But Elisha did not see him in person, but only passed a message through a servant asking Naaman to dip himself seven times in River Jordan. Naaman felt humiliated and flew into a rage and refused to do as he was told. His pride was hurt and he was furious. The wise King Solomon in Eccl 7:9 advised, "*Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools*".

If Naaman remained proud and angry and refused to follow Elisha's instructions, he would never be healed of his leprosy and would not be saved. Upon the advice from his prudent servant, he swallowed his pride and anger, and humbled and finally dipped himself in the River Jordan despite his ethnic prejudices against Israel. The dip not only had his leprosy washed and removed, spiritually in a certain sense, also his sins too when he believed in the God of Israel, and he was saved by God's grace. His leprosy and anger were removed for he had been made clean and transformed by the power of God. Thank God for the example of a subdued commander and for a godly domestic help who double up as a spiritual consultant.

A King gets a tactful tutorial on his regrettable sudden outburst in 1 Sam 25:18-26, 32-35

King David's men asked for food from Nabal whom they protected and the latter refused. David was outraged. He gathered 600 men and wanted to kill Nabal for vengeance. The saving grace came in Nabal's wife, Abigail, who asked for forgiveness and sought reconciliation on behalf of her husband. Note the wisdom and choice words of Abigail, the godly wife of a foolish man (thank God for prudent and discreet wives that have saved us for many unnecessary troubles). David was moved in his heart when he was corrected of his wrong-doing. He accepted that God used Abigail to admonish him and prevent murder and David set a good example for us by obeying it. Similarly, we should not act in a fit of fury but be willing to change our course of action if need be. We should take corrective action to control our anger and let the healing process begin in God's own time and will. King David himself said in Psa 37:8, "*Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil*".

The Divine Precept for Anger management

Remember, to forgive someone is to release a prisoner free and discover him to be yourself. Do not get even with people, get above them, and forgive them. What did Solomon say about the problem of anger? *It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling* (Prov 20:3). Strife is sadly prevalent in families, schools, churches and work places. Some people are by nature quarrelsome and like to fight for various causes. We may not be able stop others from fighting and getting angry, but we can stop ourselves from responding in anger (i.e. not responding in indignation to a furious driver on the road or an irate colleague or an indignant boss). We can learn another lesson from Abraham in Gen 13:7-9. There was strife between the herdsmen of Abraham and his nephew Lot. Abraham prudently told Lot that there should be no strife between them and that they should part in peace. If Lot chose to go right, he would go left; if Lot chose to go left, he would go right. Abraham did not want his relationship with Lot and his testimony to be adversely affected by the strife among their herdsmen. Abraham humbled himself and at the end he received much blessings from God whereas his covetous nephew Lot had unwittingly chosen Sodom and Gomorrah which were later destroyed by God.

What about righteous indignation? Our Lord overturning the tables of godless money changers outside the temple (Matt 21:12-13) is often quoted here (note the scarcity of such incidents) and there is a proper place for that but one has to be careful that we do not use this to justify or use as an excuse for personal feuds and conflicts. One must ensure that it does not hinder or impede our effective ministry of the Lord to others subsequently (note that the Lord also healed the sick and lame immediately in vs. 14 after the incident showing that this anger did not adversely affect His ministry to others and our Lord was not obsessed with it all the time either). When we serve the King of kings and the Lord of Lords, we will have to do all things in a right and edifying manner to be pleasing and acceptable and glorifying before Him without compromise of the truth.

Continued on Page 4...

Do not allow Satan to gain an upper hand over us but rather as Paul exhorts us to *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice* (Eph 4:31).

True biblical wisdom does not abide in pride, anger and strife but meekness, peace, gentleness, impartiality and good fruits (Jas 3:17). Our answer to provocations to strife and anger is the reverential fear of God (and not men) and patience (2 Pet 1:6) amidst temptations and testings in the wisdom of God (Prov 9:10). When we put Christ at the centre of our lives and submit to Him first, we would be able to pray sincerely for the well-being of the people who made us angry and not sin in our indignation.

Consider God's instructions to us on how to handle anger, found in Col 3:8-15.

- ✓ consciously and prayerfully put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication
- ✓ lie not one to another i.e. speak the truth in love
- ✓ put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him
- ✓ put on mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering
- ✓ learn to forbear one another and forgive one another
- ✓ put on charity or love for the brethren (and not hatred and animosity), which is the bond of perfectness
- ✓ let the peace of God rule in your hearts and be ye thankful.

In practice, consider the pragmatic directions in the following suggested six steps:

- 1. Be still and Quiet before the Lord in prayer first;**
- 2. Be Temperate and meditate on His holy Word;**
- 3. Examine Yourself first and let the Lord try our hearts;**
- 4. Do not compromise God's spiritual, doctrinal and moral principles as well in the process.**
- 5. Be patient and do not respond immediately with self-imposed harshness and indignation which undermines our credibility;**
- 6. Ask the Lord for Wisdom to deal with the situation with calmness and serenity according to His sovereign will and in His own good time.**

Our power and victory to overcome any sin comes from God alone. Everyone should be reconciled with God first and become a child of His by believing in Jesus Christ, who is the only mediator between God and men (1 Tim 2:5) and repent of our sins. He paid the ransom for our souls. Jesus Christ is the only solution to the problem of anger and sin. We need to repent of our sins and be washed clean with the precious blood of Christ and come to God today. How one handles anger is directly related to how one understands his or her relationship with Christ and the strength and maturity of that person. Thus, obedience to His Word and prayer will shape us greatly, and help us behave as a discreet and prudent person, and not the fool mentioned in Proverbs. If we want to change our emotions, then we need to change our thinking process first (Romans 12:2) by the renewing of our minds through the humble meditation and the obedient application of the word of God.

Conclusion

Redeemed men are still vulnerable to uncontrollable outbursts of anger and Satan can capitalise on this weakness to cause us much unnecessary troubles. **We need to pray to God for Spirit filled discipline, patience and temperance to manage and control our temper under the power of the Holy Spirit yet maintaining sound godly principles.** Let us strive to be a good example and humbly learn from the Word of God to have a proper God honouring management of our temper before it manages us. **Do we need a spiritual makeover or genuine repentance or revival of a divine nature;** to remove anger, hatred, strife, vengeance, bitterness and malice out of our lives and be victorious as we submit to Christ as the Lord of our lives? Are we willing to do it now before the Lord and experience the joy and peace of heart and mind again? Something to think and pray about.

Greetings from Rev. Jack Sin

Dear leaders and members of New life BPC London. Greetings in the blessed name of our risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It is heartening to read and hear of the church ministry and service growing vibrantly, and to see the photos in the weekly of your new students outreach and family worship at members' home, led by Pr. Mok and various members.

There is a grave need to consciously reach out and touch lives and minister to one another with the love of Christ (peradventure to the saving of souls) and share the word of God and to strengthen and support this vital ministry of New Life BPC. We are mindful of you in our prayers and we still cherished fond memories of a pleasant and edifying stay in New Life London a few months ago.

We had good fellowship with Jonathan, Yoong Chiang and Mag over a delectable oriental meal and recollected God's faithfulness in our midst as we shared and sought Him together while they were here in Singapore. Let us all come regularly for the morning and evening services and PM and BS and grow together in the fear and nurture of the Lord till we meet again God willing. In the meantime, keep on keeping on in the fervent and faithful service of the most high and sovereign God.

Regards to all.

Jack and Angie Sin
(Maranatha BPC)

In Green Pastures Devotional Readings for Every Day of the Year

By J.R. Miller, D.D.

**3 December 2006
MORNING**

MARK 11:2 "And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him."

JESUS always knows what we will find on any road we may take. He knows what each and every tomorrow will be for us. We cannot map out a single day, but He knows all. Our life is not a haphazard thing. The events and incidents of our days are not accidents. They are all foreseen by our Lord, and are part of His plan for us. We meet a stranger. We say we met him by chance; but that chance meeting shapes all our future. Christ knew about it.

If we understand this it cannot but give confidence to us as we go out day by day into life's unopened paths. We do not know what lies before us—what experiences, duties, obstacles and hindrances, what sorrows and trials; but there is One who sees and knows it all, and He is our Friend and Guide. If we are ready simply to do His will, to follow His instructions, we shall find all prepared for our coming.

EVENING

CERTAINTY OF REWARD

WE need give ourselves no trouble about the reward of our life. Be it ours only to do our duty faithfully, sweetly, lovingly, all the days; then God will see that we do not miss the reward of fidelity. Our Lord suggests that the righteous will be surprised at the Judgment to learn of the glory and greatness of the services of love they have rendered to needy ones. Supposing only that they were showing kindness to the poor, they will learn that they were serving the King Himself. Thus the smallest and obscurest ministry will flash out in splendid radiance in the day of final revealing. No true service done in this world in Christ's name will fail of blessing and reward. Even the acts which seem to have been of no avail will leave a benediction somewhere. If your kind word or deed blesses no other, the doing of it will bless your own heart. Though your effort do no good to the one you meant to help, it may touch another life. Our wayside seed-sowing is not lost.

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: STRIVING TO LIVE ABOVE OUR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS
IN CHRIST (Ephesians 1:3)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
<i>Morning</i>	Today: 03/12/2006	Next Week: 10/12/2006	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day and a special welcome to Tan Chuan Seng (S'pore) & Eva Gara.
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	Consecrated & Commitment Part 1	Consecrated & Commitment Part 2	
<i>Text:</i>	Romans 12:1-2	Romans 12:1-2	
<i>Organist:</i>	Yanning	Anthony	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
Evening			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evening Service: Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) Q. 149. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God? Q. 150. Are all transgressions of the law of God equally heinous in themselves, and in the sight of God? Q. 151. What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others? Q. 152. What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God? <p>Do stay back and find out the answers from the Word of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of Service: For those who are interested to help in the kitchen ministry, Pre-worship singing, musicians, or post lunch washing-up and Library, please see Jonathan/Mok. • Family Worship: The next meeting will be in Dec 06. Those who like to open their home for worship can contact Pr. Mok. • Our Deepest Condolences to Daniel, Maureen and their families on the demise of Daniel's sister in-law, Theresa, after a long struggle with paralysis & brain tumour. • Pray for Jonathan Kim whose left knee swelled again. Pray that he will be able to return to UK on 9 Dec 06 for follow-up treatment.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	John Poh	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	Our Lost Condition	Repentance, Faith, and use of the Word	
<i>Text:</i>	WLC Questions 149-152	WLC Questions 153-155	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Feng Qian	Anthony	
Other Duties			
	Today	Next Week	
<i>Ushers</i>	Daniel / Joyce	John / Evelyn	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	-	Joyce	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Constance	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	YAF Group 2/Volunteers	YAF Group 1/Volunteers	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	Video	Video	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 8 Dec	7.00 pm	Young Adults Fellowship: BS Leader: Esmeralda	
Sat 9 Dec	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Spkr/C'man: Pr Mok	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering:	£277.85	Love gift: £285.00 Lunch: £37.15	
<u>"Not-being-able-to-think-of-it-anymore"</u>			
<p>In a recent chapel service bulletin from Chaplin Wendell C. Hawley, comes a classic illustration of forgiveness. When the Moravian missionaries first went to the Eskimos, they could not find a word in their language for forgiveness, so that they had to compound one. This turned out to be - Isumagijoujungnainermik. It is a formidable looking assembly of letters, but an expression that has a beautiful connotation for those who understand it. It means : "Not-being-able-to-think-about-it-anymore." - Minister's Research Service</p>			