



Part 8: A Fine Line: What's Anger Got to Do With It

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"You ALMOST killed me and my baby! Don't YOU know what you did? How DARE you, lady? You are crazy, CRAZY!!!! "

Well, these were just a few brief statements from a lady who thought I had cut her off in traffic when in fact she had cut me off. I watched her stop her car, engine running, child inside, door wide open, and walk over to my car. She was screaming like a lunatic, barely making any sense. I kept asking her to calm down:

ïYou have me mixed up with someone else, you actually cut me off in your anger. Maíam, maíam, do you really want your daughter to see your behavior right now? Do you really want the world to see your behavior? Maíam, calm down.î

As she drove off I could feel that my blood pressure had raised, my heart was pounding, and my mind was swirling. I was so proud of myself! She had road rage and I had none. She lost it and I kept my cool. She made a fool of herself and risked the life of her child by leaving her car running and unattended. I was able to talk quietly and firmly without responding back in a defensive and angry manner. So, great, I have come a long way. But what also hit me was that I could have been her. I have been in her shoes. I have felt violated, harmed, attacked, accused, cut off, and stolen from, whether it was all in truth or what I thought was truth. And even though, in your deepest desires you hope to act like Christ and only get angry when it's the right time, your flesh is weak. I have made a fool out of myself many times. Yes, I am better than I was because of Christ but each circumstance the Lord allows me to go through only test me, grows me and matures me.

So how do you know when it's ok to be angry? I mean, this woman felt, due to having her child in her car, she had a right to verbally attack someone she thought had almost harmed her. Is anger ok as long as you believe it was out of truth? And what about people who frustrate you in general, such as your neighbor, work mate, or those you live with you? Maybe they haven't done anything big like damage your car or cause you harm. Maybe they have a barking dog, they don't pick up their clothes, they're in a bad mood in the morning, or they talk too much in meetings. When is anger good... and when can it cause more problems? We must first start with the source.

SOURCE OF ANGER:

I have found over the years that 9 times out 10 my anger (from my sudden outburst to my times of anger, frustration, and irritation) stems from some underlying issue. Yes, it's so easy to get mad at family (and expect full forgiveness). It's so easy to talk about workmates/your boss to others (that's gossip). It's easy to avoid a neighbor or call the police about their dog, but if you take the time to really peel back the layers of how you are feeling, you will begin to see what the source of the anger truly is. This source will lead



to a solution. You will be able to discern righteous anger from unrighteous. And then you will know the next step.

UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER IS:

Unrighteous anger is anger that is self-focused - about winning your way whether or not it's based on truth. Your goal is to control. Unrighteous anger reveals insecurities, selfishness, and fear in life around you. You can't fix it, so you yell at it, throw things at it, hit it, and ultimately destroy it. Bottom line: we hate that someone else has control of our situation. We hate that life didn't turn out the way we wanted it to, that we didn't get the job, the mate, or the promotion.

Unrighteous anger can also show up in unforgiveness of others as well as yourself. God is not saying that we have to forget what someone may have done to us (or even what we have done to ourselves). But holding onto that anger, that unforgiveness, will slowly kill you and others around you.

RIGHTEOUS ANGER IS:

I hear these words and think, can anger really be a good thing? Thank you Jesus that some people are willing to stand up and say no to things. They are willing to fight for the unborn, the neglected, and the ignored. When you are concerned over a situation, sometimes you reach the point when you know there needs to be action to make changes. This righteous anger keeps the situation, the problem, on the front lines. You don't give up in the fight towards truth.

Righteous anger can also be about your own situations when you are harmed, abused, or robbed. You have a right to be mad. It comes down more to how you react, how you verbally and emotionally respond. Sin is in this world. People are going to steal from us, the washing machine is going to break down after having it for one day, the line is still going to be long at Walmart, your food order is going to be wrong for the 3rd time and yes, they should have done this or that but didn't. The question to start asking yourself is: †how do you plan on dealing with it?†

The Fine Line Revealed:

Test Your Anger:

When you find yourself angry, aggravated, or frustrated, ask yourself where it's coming from. Take the time to count to 10 if need be, praying and thinking about how you are feeling. Vent in such a way that shares your frustration (to others or God as needed) in a healthy way. I can not tell you how many emails I have put in my draft folder due to anger, only to delete them later once I cooled off.

Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you yourself will be just like him ().

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness ()'.



If It's Unrighteous, Go Deep and Find Out Why:

I get so overwhelmed by the many things I have to do. I feel like a rubber band pulled every which way. This feeling (based on truth sometimes and also based on my own failure to plan better, say no, etc.) can quickly cause me to get angry with family, friends and even total strangers. Unfortunately I have burned some bridges with people due to my anger. Anger that has been my own fault. I am thankful that over time I find myself in those same places, I recognize the source and I can quickly calm down. And when I find out the source, I choose how to fix or manage it.

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires ().

(Note: Sometimes our anger is so deep, from so much hurt, there is not quick solution. This is when it's critical to get some professional help. I love counselors and think everyone should take the time to see one. Don't let them enemy continue to control your life. Do what you need to do to get better.)

If It's Righteous, Have A Plan:

When you are righteously angry, have a plan of how to handle things so God gets the glory. Make sure your anger is consistent with the holy and righteous character of God. I like to use Facebook to share my agreement with how abortion is wrong. I am known to like or share anything against those who support abortion. Also, as a teacher of God's word, I do not have a problem speaking out against certain lifestyles, such as sex outside of or any other sin that is in the Bible. Not to condemn or destroy people but to draw them to Christ. To show them the freedom in following Christ and doing things His way.

But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity, and did not destroy them; And often He restrained His anger, And did not arouse all His wrath ().

The Solution:†

Anger should not be sinful. Don't allow the enemy to take control by submitting to your flesh. Our goal as Christians is always to do the Father's will. As we spend time with the Lord, reading and studying his word, praying, serving and tithing, you will begin to see how your anger will change from being all about you to being all about God. From being about loving only you to loving others.

in your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you ().

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs ().

This mom who went super nova nuts on me was probably late getting to the store. She might have had a fight with her husband, got a bill she wasn't expecting, or found out her mom has cancer. The true anger wasn't what she thought I had done but in fact, the pressure value to unresolved anger. By not



dealing with her anger, she allowed it to build up. I am just thankful that God had placed me her life that day to remind her to calm down and realized what she was doing. Did she get my address so she could write me a thankful note? Uhhh, no. But I did pray that she got somewhere and thought about what I said, even going to God to asking forgiveness and help with what was really wrong. Then she, like us all, will begin to heal.

Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of and . Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 25 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is the author of three books: (co-authored with Dick Purnell of); ; and the most recent, with Study Questions (includes a leader's guide and of the same name). Kris is currently working on her fourth book: FAQ's of Singles Ministry coming 2013.

The Singles Network helps churches, and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

From His Hands is Kris' speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!