

‘Don’t Partake in this Age of Rage’ Matt. 5:21-26

Series title: What does it mean to live a good life?

I. Why is it important to control one’s anger? Because our anger deeply hurts us. 5:21,22

A. God looks at the heart, not just the external deeds. Murder starts in the _____, not the hands. It starts with evil thoughts. I Jn. 3:15

B. The danger of anger. 5:22a Jesus is talking about selfish anger, a simmering anger, like when we hold a grudge or a bitterness that refuses to forgive and doesn’t want reconciliation.

C. The danger of slander. 5:22b ‘Raca’ was a commonly used term back then. It is a term of abuse, slander. Similar words we have would be a blockhead or a brainless idiot.

D. The danger of condemning someone’s character. 5:22c ‘Moros’. We get our word ‘*moron*’ from it. It means someone stupid, dull, but it also accuses them of being godless, a fool. Notice how in each of these three illustrations Jesus uses, the increasing degree of seriousness. We really do need to take our words more seriously, don’t we? We need to learn to nip anger quickly.

Therefore, a main point here is for us to realize that anger deeply hurts us more than we realize.

II. Why is it important to control one’s anger? Because our anger greatly affects our worship and our relationships with others. 5:23-26

When there is sin or bitterness in our hearts then our worship will lack integrity. The point here is that reconciliation must precede worship.

Integrity in worship needs _____ in our relationships. Don’t think you can be mad at this guy or mad at your husband or upset with your kids and then all of a sudden: ‘*now, let’s all go to worship.*’

Do what you can on your end and then leave the results with God. But a big point here is, seek to do this now. Don’t put it off. The time for reconciliation is now, not in some distant future.

Application: Here’s just a few ways to help control one’s anger.

1. Have a daily devotional time. God can transform your attitudes and your heart as you spend time reading God’s word and praying.

2. Be sure you’re filled, empowered, guided by the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:16, 19-23 Ask God to take charge of your life. Yield your life to Him. ‘Lord, you drive, you’re the pilot, I’m just the co-pilot’.

3. Learn to live for what’s really important. Thus, try to let the little things, the little remarks people might say, to let them slide off you like water off a duck’s back. Let it go, because there will always be an unending supply of little things to irk you. Have you never said something you later regretted? Don’t make _____ out of molehills. Choose your battles carefully.

4. Ask God to make you a lover of people, not a hater. Love one another is God’s command, not a request. Maybe God has put some people in your life who bug you because you haven’t learned yet how to love by faith and God will keep those people there until you do!

5. Each new day, look for the things you can praise God for. Phil. 4:8. Be positive, not a negative person. There will always be plenty of things to gripe about or get angry about if you want to.

6. One more, and there could be many more: when you feel yourself getting angry, quit talking. Otherwise, the odds are very high that you will soon say something you don’t mean. So, go for a walk. Table the issue for now. Count to 100. Come back to it when you’ve cooled off. Pray. I am not saying to just stuff it inside and never talk about it. Eph. 4:26 is wise advice, if it’s possible.

Jesus is reminding us how damaging and serious anger is to all our relationships.