

Westland Free Methodist Church
Life Management Series: Anger management
(Video from Meatloaf Ministries)
October 28, 2007

- November 4** **Life Management Series: Managing Pain(Drama)**
- November 11** **Life Management Series: Managing Conflict**
- November 18** **Life Management Series: Managing Failure**
- November 25** **Life Management Series: Managing Loneliness(Drama)**
- December 2** **Life Management Series: Managing Fear**

Video – “Pause”

Ever had one of those days that if you could have a do over, you'd take it. There are times aren't there when we really would love to rewind our life, and figure out a better way.

What do you get angry at?

What is worth getting angry at?

Anger is an amazing emotion wouldn't you say? It has the potential to make a wrong a right, yet it also has the potential to steal, mame or even kill.

We see evidence of anger all around us. The news is based on it, shows feature it, and we if not careful get caught up in it.

In this series, I want look with you at a number of ways you can manage your life. We have been talking in the last series on the Holy Spirit on how we can better serve God, allowing his Holy Spirit to come into our hearts and really do something significant. In this series of Life Management I want to help you look at areas of your life where you might need to grow. You see growing in Christ is important, so looking at certain issues in your life might be of help.

Anger

Joke: A "Do it yourself" catalog firm received the following letter from one of its customers: "I built a birdhouse according to your stupid plans, and not only is it much too big, it keeps blowing out of the tree. Signed, Unhappy.

The firm replied: "Dear Unhappy, We're sorry about the mix-up. We accidentally sent you a sailboat blueprint. But if you think you are unhappy, you should read the letter from the guy who came in last in the yacht club regatta."

Let's look first of all at God's definition of anger:

In the Hebrew/Aramaic world we find anger show up first between Cain and Able. In Genesis God is having a conversation with Cain, before anything disastrous happens between these two brothers. Cain and Able are the two sons of Adam and Eve after they were removed from the garden of Eden. I pick up in verse 6 of Genesis 4.(verses 6-7)

God says this to Cain before Cain kills his brother.

The Hebrew word for anger is *khaw-raw'* - to glow or grow warm; figuratively to blaze up, of anger, zeal, jealousy; to be hot, to be incensed.

In the end, Cain ended up killing his brother. Look at verse 7b *“If you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.”*

First things first, anger in and of itself is not sin. Ephesians says, “Be angry, but do not sin.” But what you do next could be. Anger can head into the acts of the sinful nature, or the fruit of the spirit. Ahhhhh There’s that fruit again. Look at Galatians 5:19-21. It says, *“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies and the like.*

These are serious things to God. He says they are sin. But what one word is omitted from this list of sins? Anger. Why? Because anger is not sin.

In fact, God gets angry at sin wrongdoing too. In Isaiah 5:25 the people were so disobedient the text says, *“Therefore the Lord’s anger burns against his people; his hand is raised and he strikes them down.”*

Let me ask you a question. Are there some things in life worth getting angry about?

Yes. But are we to let anger end up in these sins illustrated above? No

We’ll come back to this later.

Let’s talk about anger in the NT. In the new testament God also speaks of anger management.

After the triumphal entry of Jesus we now call Palm Sunday, Jesus goes into the Jewish Synagogue and turns over the tables. He’s good and angry, isn’t he?

Read Matthew 21:12-13

The real question then is how did Jesus control his anger yet not sin.

Steps to Managing Your Anger:

1. Recognize the problem for what it is – Desire to know the truth.

There is this injustice. There is reason to respond to what is going on.

Anger is in the teetering balance between good and evil. This is why there are so many warnings about it. Yet, anger also reveals the injustices of our world.

It takes a discerning heart to know what truth is, even when the Bible says it. The truth of God’s Word is a living truth, so that what is written may be understood. Phillippians 1:9-10 says, *“and this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Jesus Christ.”*

We need to make sure it is godly motives that brings us to our actions. James 1:19 says, *“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”*

It doesn't seem that anger is either good or bad at this point, just be careful with your next steps. Anger is a reaction, and has to come under the control of the spirit.

2. **Check your motives:**

Consider the consequences – sins of the flesh

Consider the Potential Outcome – fruit of the Spirit

Get your heart right with God. Do I want to help 'em or shot 'em?

Let me tell you. In most every situation, there is always more than one issue, or problem. It is often multilayered. Deal with one at a time. Sometimes it gets so enmeshed that we just give up and quit. Pull every issue, each problem a part and find the best outcome for each.

This is a very important step. What is your motive? Are you just mad at a person or situation, and you want to get even? Ever find yourself in the middle of dressing a person up and down, giving them both barrels from your discipline gun, yet catching yourself in the middle realizing that most of what you are talking about has absolutely nothing to do with what the person did? We call that “projecting”. In other words, you are projecting your issues on that person. We do this all the time.

You want to know the difference between a vibrant Christian and a failing one? It's simply this. A vibrant Christian will back up and check themselves when they realize they are on dangerous ground. They will seek to know truth, even if it means being wrong or in error at some point. And if there are things projected on you that are not meant for you, do your best to help the person see that. Hey, if they walk away from you angry themselves, then that is for them to deal with. And when they finally come around again, be ready to pick where they left off, and love at what place they give you to love them.

The truth is this. There are things you are angry about, and there are things that others are angry about. If we are ever going to get any where with the body of Christ, then we are going to have to meet people where they are at. If you meet someone very angry, what should you do? What do you do when your child comes to with many math problems to solve, and they are overwhelmed? We deal with one at a time, right. The same with anger issues.

3. **Follow God's example – Love and Trust** (emeshed they destroy, but separated they work like harmony) Love is unconditional and trust is earned, earned, earned.

Proverbs 15:1 Answer softly. If you cannot you may be stepping from anger to sin.

Proverbs 24:18 – Control Anger, do not let it control you.

4. Allow your anger emotions to lead you to positive reactions.

What good will come from my actions? Well, at least I'll feel better. Maybe for a moment in your rage, but a few minutes later you will be sorry, won't you? That is of course, if your conscience isn't seared. Then none of this matters anyway.

Now there are quite a few times in the new testament that the writer warns us to stay away from any anger, and I did not check every reference where it appeared, but for those I checked, the different words meant more of an enraging kind of definition. So none are in conflict with the kind of anger that motivates one to good judgment of wrongs being made right.

“Anger is a divinely implanted emotion. Closely allied to our instinct for right, it is designed to be used for constructive spiritual purposes. The person who cannot feel anger at evil is a person who lacks enthusiasm for good. If you cannot hate wrong, it's very questionable whether you really love righteousness.” [Dr. David Seamands](#)

Conclusion: I've got good news. Every Day is a “do over”.