

ACTION STEPS FOR THE WEEK

Monday Action Step 1	You may wish to spend some extended time in prayer, giving God all your “anger triggers” and seeking His wisdom in how to better deal with these things
Tuesday Action Step 2	
Wednesday Action Step 3	Be sure to spend some time isolating areas in our society that are crying out for Christians to be angry enough over to want to make a difference
Thursday Action Step 4	Is there anyone who has been hurt by your anger? How can you make it right today?
Friday Action Step 5	
Saturday Action Step 6	
My biggest area for prayer and work this week	

DAILY DEVOTIONS

ANGER



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. ~ Ephesians 4:26,27

MONDAY

READ: Ephesians 4:17–5:2; Proverbs 19:11

Abraham Lincoln's secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, was angered by an army officer who accused him of favoritism. Stanton complained to Lincoln, who suggested that Stanton write the officer a sharp letter. Stanton did, and showed the strongly worded missive to the president. "What are you going to do with it?" Lincoln inquired.

Surprised, Stanton replied, "Send it."

Lincoln shook his head. "You don't want to send that letter," he said. "Put it in the stove. That's what I do when I have written a letter while I am angry. It's a good letter and you had a good time writing it and feel better. Now burn it, and write another."

Lincoln knew that letting anger dictate decisions always ends badly. Angry feelings lead to angry words which then lead to angry actions. These words and actions are then usually reciprocated by the one who receives them, which just leads to even more problems.

1. Can you think of times when anger led to foolish decisions?
2. How can remembering verses 4:26-29 help you the next time anger wells within you?
3. How can living out verses 5:1,2 radically change how you deal with difficult people and situations?
4. List several things that usually trigger your anger, then spend some time during prayer giving these to the Lord

PRAYER (Note: Check Actions Steps on back for more)

- ◆ Thank God for the truth of His Word
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, allowing anger to gain control of your words and your actions
- ◆ Ask God to root out all sinful anger in your life
- ◆ Ask God to deal with your "anger triggers"

SATURDAY

READ: John 14:15-31; 16:33

Searching for the perfect picture of peace, a wealthy man announced a contest to produce this masterpiece. At the contest, the judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, while the viewers clapped and cheered. The tensions grew. Only two pictures remained veiled. As a judge pulled the cover from one, a hush fell over the crowd. A mirror-smooth lake reflected lacy, green birches under the soft blush of the evening sky. Along the grassy shore, a flock of sheep grazed undisturbed. Surely this was the winner.

Then, the wealthy man uncovered the final painting himself. The crowd gasped in surprise. Could this be peace? A tumultuous waterfall, a rocky precipice. Stormy-gray clouds threatened to explode with lightning, wind and rain. Then in the foreground, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls. In one of its branches, a small bird had built a nest. In that nest, content and undisturbed by the stormy surroundings, three baby birds rested under the cover of mama's wings.

1. How have you experienced God's peace during the storms of life?
2. Peace is not the absence of strife. It is being able to stay calm and serene in spite of your circumstances. How does Jesus speak to this in verse 16:33?
3. How well are you experiencing the peace of God?
4. What can you do to experience more of this peace?

PRAYER

- ◆ Thank the Spirit for providing you unending peace no matter your circumstances
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, allowing circumstances to dictate your life, not the Spirit's work in your heart
- ◆ Ask God to fill you with His Spirit and His peace
- ◆ Spend a few minutes in prayer for tomorrow's service

FRIDAY

READ: Philippians 4:1-13; Proverbs 17:1

Courtesy of thesaurus.com, we find that synonyms of anger are: “acrimony, animosity, annoyance, antagonism, blow up, cat fit, chagrin, choler, conniption, dander, disapprobation, displeasure, distemper, enmity, exasperation, fury, gall, hatred, hissy fit, huff, ill humor, ill temper, impatience, indignation, infuriation, irascibility, ire, irritability, irritation, mad, miff, outrage, passion, peevishness, petulance, pique, rage, rankling, resentment, slow burn, soreness, stew, storm, tantrum, temper, tiff, umbrage, vexation, violence.”

Meanwhile, the antonyms, which fill a notably shorter list, includes: “agreeability, calmness, contentment, enjoyment, good nature, happiness, joy, peace, pleasantness.”

1. So which would you prefer to live with: The synonyms of anger or the antonyms?
2. How can verses 6-8 help you live with the antonyms?
3. How can verses 11-13 help you live with the antonyms?
4. How are you doing with what you wrote under #2 and #3?

PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for providing a pathway to peace that transcends understanding
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, living too much with the synonyms and not enough with the antonyms
- ◆ Ask God to focus your thoughts on all that is good
- ◆ Ask God to guide you into deep contentment regardless of your circumstances

TUESDAY

READ: Psalm 4; Proverbs 14:29; 29:11

In the spring of 1894, the Baltimore Orioles came to Boston to play a routine baseball game. But what happened that day was anything but routine. The Orioles' John McGraw got into a fight with the Boston third baseman. Within minutes all the players from both teams had joined in the brawl. The warfare quickly spread to the grandstands. Among the fans, the conflict went from bad to worse. Someone set fire to the stands and the entire ballpark burned to the ground. Not only that, but the fire spread to 107 other buildings in Boston as well.

1. How have you seen anger take a small issue and blow it up into a disastrous situation?
2. How do our Proverbs for today address dealing with anger?
3. In Psalm 4, the Psalmist is obviously dealing with difficult people who are slandering him. What counsel does he give himself in the midst of this?
4. How can this advice help you in dealing with your anger?

PRAYER

- ◆ Thank God for the peace and strength He can give in the midst of difficulty and strife
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, venting your anger instead of dealing constructively with it
- ◆ Ask God to fix your resolve to deal maturely and rationally in all situations
- ◆ Ask God to root out any and all sinful anger in your life

WEDNESDAY

READ: Matthew 21:1-17

Jesus showed anger when the disciples tried to send away the mothers and their children (Mark 10:13-16). He was indignant and distressed at the way the disciples were keeping children from his loving purposes. He showed anger once more when he drove out those who turned the temple into a crooked marketplace. God's house of prayer was being made into a den of thieves and the Lord was not being glorified.

In regards to this, Dr. David Seamands writes, "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."

1. On Monday and Tuesday, you were asked to deal with your "sinful anger" not just your "anger," because there is a place for anger. Where is that place?
2. How can anger be constructive?
3. How did Jesus show "righteous anger" in our Scripture?
4. What are some areas in our culture that more Christians need to show some righteous anger?

PRAYER (Note: Check Actions Steps on back for more)

- ◆ Thank God for anger's proper place
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, excusing sinful anger as "righteous indignation"
- ◆ Ask God to show you how you can constructively use anger to make a positive difference in our culture
- ◆ Ask God to show you where you need to work and act within our culture

THURSDAY

READ: 2 Samuel 13:1-29

At 5 am one morning, Ralph Milton woke up to a noise that sounded like a jackhammer on his roof. Still in his pajamas, he went into the back yard to investigate. He found a woodpecker on the TV antenna, pounding its little brains out on the metal pole. Angry at this dumb bird that was ruining his sleep, Ralph picked up a rock and threw it at the bird. The rock sailed over the house right into the window of his neighbor's car. Disgusted, Ralph took a vicious kick at a clod of dirt, only to remember that he was still in his bare feet. Uncontrolled anger, Ralph leaned, can sometimes be painful.

Similarly, a lady once came to Billy Sunday and tried to rationalize her angry outbursts. "There's nothing wrong with losing my temper," she said. "I blow up, and then it's all over."

"So does a shotgun," Sunday replied, "and look at the damage it leaves behind!"

1. What damage have you seen sinful anger do?
2. In our Scripture, Amnon was mad at himself for his own lustful choices. How did he react out of that anger?
3. Absalom was enraged over Amnon's actions. How did he react out of his rage?
4. What can you do to make sure that anger never causes destruction in your life or family?

PRAYER (Note: Check Actions Steps on back for more)

- ◆ Thank God for the strength He can give to overcome anger
- ◆ Confess to God, if necessary, allowing anger to bring ruin and destruction to your life, home, family, and/or church
- ◆ Ask God to fill you with peace, love, and joy
- ◆ Ask God to help you seek forgiveness for anger if necessary