

**“SOULed OUT”**  
**Session 2: Unrighteous and Righteous Anger**  
**Rev. Rick Dietzman**  
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**INTRODUCTION**

Some Examples in the Bible

- Cain slaying Abel (Genesis 4)
- Pharaoh, toward Moses and Moses, toward Pharaoh (Exodus 10 and 11)
- Jonah toward God for not destroying the Ninevites. (Jonah 4)
- Jonathan, on account of Saul's persecution of David & Saul, toward Jonathan, on account of his sympathy with David (I Samuel 20)
- David toward God for the death of Uzzah when he steadied the Ark (2 Samuel 6)
- Nebuchadnezzar at the three Hebrews who refused to worship his idol (Daniel 3)
- Herod, toward the wise men who deceived him (Matthew 2)
- The people of Nazareth, toward Jesus (Luke 4)
- Jesus cleansing the Temple (Mark 11)
- Jews, against Stephen (Acts 7)
- Paul, toward Ananias the high Priest (Acts 23)

**I. Attack leads to two kinds of responses: Anger and Fear**

Anger revolves around the question: Is God just? Will He let the wicked win?

Fear centers on the question: Will God protect me?

Anger attempts to destroy the wrong being done. It triggers activity. It is an adrenaline that increases our courage. We take matters into our own hands. It can become a taunt against God for apparently refusing to act on our behalf.

Anger is our response to an assault or an injustice. If this assault blocks our true desires then we will burn with rage.

**What provokes Anger?**

A. Interference with something we want

B. Unjust Assault

2 Samuel 6:5-8

*David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals. When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God. Then David was angry because the LORD's wrath had broken out against Uzzah.*

**Q: Is Anger at God ever justified?**

## **The Pitfalls of Anger**

Genesis 4:6-7

*The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."*

James 1:20

*A person's anger does not bring about the righteous life God desires.*

Ephesians 4:26-27

*"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.*

## **II. Unrighteous Anger: means fixing the problem yourself**

- A. It suppresses other's choices
- B. It consumes others

Ecclesiastes 4:4

*"I saw that all labor and achievement stem from a person's envy of their neighbor. This too is meaningless a chasing after the wind."*

- C. It condemns others
- D. It is often a battle against God

Psalms 2:1-3

*Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."*

### **III. Righteous Anger: Cooperates with God in righting wrongs**

Romans 12:17-21

*Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

#### **What is God's Wrath?**

God's wrath is an expression of His holy love. If God is not a God of wrath, His love is no more than frail, worthless sentimentality; the concept of mercy is meaningless; and the Cross was a cruel and unnecessary experience for His Son.

The Bible says that all people are "by nature children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3) and that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18). Since Christians have been "justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Romans 5:9). The magnitude of God's love is manifested in the Cross, where God's only Son experienced wrath on our behalf. The day of the Lord's wrath" (Zephaniah 1:18) or "the great day of the Lord" (Zephaniah 1:14) is also referred to in the New Testament. These terms refer to "the wrath of the Lamb" (Revelation 6:16), Jesus Christ, that will fall on the ungodly at His Second Coming (1 Thessalonians. 1:10; 5:9; 2 Thessalonians. 1:7-10)

#### **The Paradox**

Psalm 145:8-9

*The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.*

Psalm 78:49-52

*God unleashed against them his hot anger, his wrath, indignation and hostility-- a band of destroying angels. He prepared a path for his anger; he did not spare them from death but gave them over to the plague. He struck down all the firstborn of Egypt, the firstfruits of manhood in the tents of Ham. But he brought his people out like a flock; he led them like sheep through the desert.*

**Q: How can both of these be accurate descriptions of God?**

It takes a lot to provoke God's rage, but it is best not to test his anger.

### **The point of God's anger**

- To provoke fear
- To stop those who do not heed his warning

Psalm 90:7-12

*We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan. The length of our days is seventy years-- or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

### **Righteous anger warns, invites, and wounds in order to bring reconciliation and understanding.**

- A. It allows the offender to see the issue is between them and God.
- B. Righteous anger grieves and struggles with God.
  - What are you doing God?
  - What am I to understand about you?
  - What am I to face about myself?

Psalm 77:6-14

*I remembered my songs in the night. My heart mused and my spirit inquired:  
"Will the Lord reject forever? Will he never show his favor again? Has his unfailing love vanished forever? Has his promise failed for all time? Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?"*

*Selah (Pause)*

*Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High." I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds. Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.*

Unrighteous anger refuses to surrender, to wait for God, to look to Him for perspective.

We feel righteous in taking matters into our own hands when the One we cry to justice for does not hear or respond.

James 4:2-3

*You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

#### **IV. The transformation of anger from unrighteous to righteous**

Psalm 37:7-8

*Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret-- it leads only to evil.*

Psalm 4:4

*In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.  
Selah*

- A. Be still
- B. Wait
- C. Ponder
  - Your desire
  - Your sin
  - God's character

#### **For Personal Reflection:**

- A. What is your flash point? Where you just respond without thinking?

B. Have you been angry at God? What have you questioned about Him?

C. Name the kinds of interferences that lead you to become angry

D. Name the injustices that make you feel angry

E. What do the answers to C and D tell you about yourself, and what is important to you?

Coming up...

October 3        Constructive and Destructive Fear

October 10      Divine and Dark Desire

October 17      The Loss and Restoration of Hope

With more to come...

This series is based on a number of books, but a key text is "*The Cry of the Soul: How our emotions reveal our deepest questions about God*" by Dr. Dan B. Alexander and Dr. Tremper Longman III

The audio and notes for this and previous sessions of this series are available at [www.sequimcommunitychurch.org](http://www.sequimcommunitychurch.org) in the Sunday Seminar section