

## Trinity Home Teams

Sermon Notes / May 10, 2026

**Matthew 5:21-26** / *Fulfilling God's Commands, Part III: The Damage and Danger of Unrighteous Anger*

1. How does **Matt. 5:23-24** prepare us for worship?
2. In **Matt. 6:14**, Jesus commands forgiveness. Does he allow us to demand a contrite apology from the offender?
3. Struggling to forgive? Consider **Luke 23:33-34**.

REVIEW: We can see from scripture and from life that anxiety isn't necessarily sin, but it can lead to sin when it is indulged. In Matthew, Jesus calls us out of anxiety. The solution is simple but not easy. Matt. 6:33: *But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.* If we do not run toward God first in every anxiety-producing situation and instead we trust in our own strength, our own security, man's wisdom, we may never conquer anxiety.

This message is needed desperately in my own household. How can I stand in front of you being guilty of the thing on which I'm about to preach? Well, because Lord willing, I'm going to allow Christ's words to teach this to US, not just to you. Anyone who has stood in this position can attest that they feel the humbling weight of conviction of his own failures when preparing and delivering a sermon.

**Distinguish righteous/unrighteous anger** – We often claim our anger is righteous, and we tend to think of Jesus kicking the money changers out of the temple. (See John 2:13-17) Two additional examples:

**Mark 3:3-6** -- *Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. <sup>2</sup> And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him...* <sup>4</sup> *And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent.* <sup>5</sup> And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

**Mark 10:13-16** -- *"And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup> But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant (translated furious) and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.*

If we look at all 3 examples of Jesus expressing anger, we find common themes. Jesus was without sin, and so we should be able to pick out the qualities of righteous anger.

**RIGHTEOUS ANGER IS IN PROPORTION TO THE OFFENSE.**  
**RIGHTEOUS ANGER IS UNDER CONTROL.**

The scripture says Jesus "made a whip of cords" Have you ever seen a bullwhip? I grew up on a ranch, and we used whips for driving cattle. They take hours to make. It would seem that Jesus had time to think about what he was about to do. He *prepared* to drive the money changers out; he didn't just fly off the handle like us.

**RIGHTEOUS ANGER IS AN ACCURATE APPRAISAL OF TRUE EVIL.**

I thought I heard April say, "I think your parents made you a liar!" I stormed to kitchen. "What did you say to me?" She looked confused. "I think your pants may still be in the dryer." Often we assume the worst intentions and actions. Let's admit it; our anger is rarely righteous or Christlike.

### Characteristics of unrighteous anger

**ANGER IS DEADLY** / *Matthew 5:21*

Jesus doesn't say it's *just as bad*. Jesus understands the difference in the heinousness of those sins, and the sins of thought. What he's saying here, is that you are just as *condemned by the Law* for sins of thought as you are sins of actions. Cain kills his brother in anger. Jesus isn't saying the anger is as heinous as the killing, but He *is* saying we're just as guilty under the law.

**ANGER IS UGLY** – **Prov. 14:29** -- *"Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly."* When anger spills out, aren't you embarrassed for the fool who did it? See also **Prov. 25:23**, **Prov. 27:3**, and **Prov. 21:19**.

**ANGER IS TOXIC** – **Ephesians 5:19-20** *"Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions. **Proverbs 29:22** "A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression." **Proverbs 30:33** "For pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife."*

### Dismantling Justification

We may be convinced our anger is justified. Remember:

**RIGHTEOUS ANGER DOESN'T PRODUCE SIN** – Maybe we have been wounded, suffered real injustice, been falsely accused, betrayed. But if we harbor this wound for years without forgiveness, is it righteous?

**Eph. 4:26-27** *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and give no opportunity to the devil."* See also **Proverbs 19:11**.

**RIGHTEOUS ANGER ISN'T HYPOCRITICAL** – When it comes to our spouse, why do we believe that we are justified by faith alone, but we force our spouse be justified by his/her works? Consider:

**Matt. 6:14** -- *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, <sup>15</sup> but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

**RIGHTEOUS ANGER STILL FORGIVES** – Setting limits and boundaries is essential when facing abuse. Yet do we ever use the *idea* of emotional abuse wrongly? Someone causes us an offense, and we turn it into "abuse." I find *my* justification for *harboring anger* more difficult when I read **Matthew 18:21**.