

THE BIG IDEA: Anger unchecked will turn into a wreckThe Take-Off**[VIDEO / Wild tantrums]**

This morning we're talking about something that applies to no one: anger
I've shared with you that the rest of chapter 5 could be a little difficult, so let me remind you of the WIN for this series
We WIN WHEN we understand who we are and allow that identity to fuel our activity
We LOSE WHEN we try to act a certain way hoping to convince ourselves and others who we are
In short, we lose when activity defines identity but we win when we allow our identity to define our activity
If you're here and you are a follower of Jesus, then it's important to remember that Jesus has already attained the high standards that He's going to point us to in the rest of the Sermon on the Mount
Because he has changed who we are, we can now trust Him to empower what we do
Let's see how this plays out in our passage this morning
Turn to **Matthew 5:21-26** and let's read it. Then we'll talk about 2 things: the problem and the solution.

1. The problem

- a. Ok, so let's be clear right up front about what isn't **the problem**: anger
- b. Here's why anger can't be the problem:
 - God got angry
 - At unbelief (Exodus 4:14)
 - At abuse of foreigners (Exodus 22:21-24)
 - At idolatry (Judges 2:13-14)
 - Jesus got angry
 - At hard hearts (Mark 3:5)
 - At cheating (John 2)
 - Paul got angry
 - At Peter (Galatians 2 / "I opposed him to his face" / doesn't mean he was angry, but the whole letter of Galatians has a pretty angry tone because Paul was angry...
 - At the Galatians (the whole letter)
 - We can get angry
 - At each other and the enemy who wants to divide us / Ephesians 4:26
- c. A lot of people read this part of the Sermon on the Mount and say that Jesus said that if we get mad at someone we might as well have killed them, but Jesus is NOT equating anger and murder
- d. What He is doing is pointing to the deeper issues of the heart that can cause anger to
- e. We can't imagine getting angry and it feeling good because we don't know how to be angry the right way
- f. And that is the problem
- g. We rage, we lose control, blow our top
- h. Jesus shows us in one verse the progression of anger that most of us don't even have to think about:
 - First, we get angry (the implication here is without cause) and judge superiority
 - We're put out in our own minds
 - There's a problem inside if we are a ticking time bomb
 - But we just get mad at others who didn't do anything instead of dealing with ourselves
 - If left unchecked, we grow angry enough to judge character (Raca means fool)
 - We don't sit in the ultimate seat of judgement
 - This cuts off horizontal fellowship and community
 - Rabbis used this word to excommunicate people
 - Common people used it as an insult
 - Last stop on the unchecked anger train is being so angry we judge someone's eternal destiny
 - Cursing someone was equal to saying they were deserving of hell
 - In our day, it'd be telling someone to go to hell, flipping them off, etc.
 - Jesus did use this word ("Moros") in Matt. 23:17 when talking about the Pharisees
 - But Jesus CAN use it because God sits in the seat of judgement
- i. Listen, none of us think through that progression standing in a long line at Walmart, right?

- j. We just go off - to the point that we probably don't even know what we said
- k. So before we talk about the solution, let's dig a little deeper into the problem
- l. Turn to Matthew **12:34-36** and hold onto something while I read it - this will not feel good
- m. Jesus is saying:
 - Your words reveal your heart
 - What comes out of your mouth comes from what is stored in your heart
 - "Careless" literally means "idle, lazy, BARREN"
 - Words that carry no power to bring about life, healing, or reconciliation
 - Often, the words we speak in an anger-filled rant, yes?
- n. I don't know what all goes on in your head during a normal day, but I imagine it could be hard to hear this teaching from Jesus and not start to feel a little tight in the chest
- o. I know I do
- p. Thankfully, Jesus moved from the problem to **the solution**

2. The solution

- a. What is it? Check yourself **before you wreck yourself!**
- b. This is so critical because **anger unchecked will turn into a wreck**
- c. How do we check ourself when it comes to anger?
- d. First, make it a PRIORITY.
- e. Deal with what (more often through a WHO) has triggered the anger
- f. Andy Stanley says it like this: Pay attention to the tension.
- g. Tension as you worship? Stop worshipping and get busy reconciling.
- h. Don't stop trying to reconcile even when it seems you're running out of time (on the way to court!)
- i. Seek reconciliation at any time as long as there is time
- j. Second, do it QUICKLY.
- k. Verse 23 / "you suddenly remember"
- l. Verse 25 / "settle your differences quickly"
- m. Here's why: time can't heal what time is burying
- n. So when God reveals it, take steps to heal it
- o. Trust me, God will reveal it!
- p. **Daniel 2:22**; Jeremiah 33:3; Luke 8:17; Luke 12:2-3
- q. Just know that He usually reveals the triggers THROUGH other people

The Landing

Wouldn't it be great if we lived in a world where there were no anger triggers?

Of course, that would negate our need for Jesus.

We'd never need to rely on the Holy Spirit to help us hear triggering words and remain silent, or be able to answer thoughtfully, intentionally, and in a way that doesn't leave us and others in a wreck.

This morning, my guess is that all of us need to repent of careless words, empty words that carry no life and no power for reconciliation.

My guess is that there were times during the message that you felt the need to leave the altar and go to your brother or sister and make things right.

Whether or not we realize our need of repentance when it comes to unchecked anger and careless words isn't in doubt.

The only question is whether or not we'll act on it, first with God and second with others?

One you can do right here and right now.

The second you can do as you leave, in the car on the way home, at the restaurant waiting for a table.

Use your words to repair what your words may have broken.

Let's pray.