

## The Sermon - In 10 Sentences or Less

Countercultural (Week 2) - Responsible, Not Angry:



1. America has an anger problem, and there are a host of reasons why - for example, a) we're dealing with multiple crises at once (economic, CoVid, political), b) anger is a natural human response to uncertainty, because at least our anger, however fleeting and unsatisfying, feels secure, c) as one sociologist put it, our culture is now an "anger incubator," and d) many are now addicted to anger, they live in a perpetual heightened state of agitation, with their rage or frustration no longer having an immediate cause.
2. Scripture asks Christians to chart a different course: we paid close attention to Psalm 4.4-5 yesterday, and where its repetition in the New Testament (Eph. 4.26-27).
3. First, we must be willing to acknowledge our anger: there is no such thing as a human being that doesn't get angry, we either admit and control it, or we don't, and it controls us.
4. Second, we must understand it: in the verbiage of Psalm 4.4, we must "ponder" (or say it with precision) to ourselves.
5. How well do you understand your own anger - what lies beneath it (like embarrassment, failure, etc.), what triggers it, and what it looks like for you in particular (e.g., shutting down, losing your temper, choosing not to forgive).
6. Third, we must count the cost of anger: per both texts, some sort of anger lies behind many of our own personal sins.
7. Moreover, there is a real psychological, emotional, and even physical toll taken by unexpressed, avoided, buried anger.
8. Fourth and last, we must slow down our anger: in the language of Psalm 4.4, we wait to respond to whatever elicits our anger until we have a chance to express and understand it at a designated time and place (in the verse, on your bed in silence.)
9. All this being said, you can see why the opposite of anger really isn't peace, serenity, or being unemotional, it's personal responsibility (as in, I take personal responsibility for recognizing, processing, and laying down my anger).
10. Spend the week considering these questions (in prayer, by journaling, or in conversation with your small group or class): what's my anger look like, what makes me angry, what is my anger costing me right now, and how can I take steps to handle it more like we saw in Psalm 4.4-5?

## For Further Exploration

1. The Proverbs on anger: Want to do a little more digging into scripture about anger? Try the Proverbs on anger... [BibleGateway - Keyword Search: anger](#)
2. Want to read more about the physical and psychological cost of avoiding your anger? Try this - [The Simple Truth about Anger](#)
3. A wise reflection on Christianity and anger, especially as it dovetails with our concern for social justice, from Ryan McAnnally of The Yale Center for Faith and Culture - [It's okay for Christians to be angry. What matters is what you do with that anger.](#)