Respectable Sins

Session Ten

Impatience and Irritability

Anger and Weeds of Anger

***HOOK***

Since last sessions, how have you spotted areas in which there is a lack of self-control? How did you respond? What steps do you plan to take for the future?

***BOOK***

1. What does impatience mean?
2. Jerry defines impatience as “a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ sense of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the (usually) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of others. This impatience is often \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in a way that tends to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ) who is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the impatience.”
   1. In what ways do you tend to express impatience?
   2. How do these expressions affect those people who are objects of your impatience?
3. Bridges, in his book gives two very real life situations in which we can become impatient and irritated with others. On His part, he has a hearing problem and hearing aids don’t work. So his wife can at times get frustrated and irritated cause she has to repeat herself. One her part, she has a habit of being ready at the very last possible second before they have to leave while he is ready sooner and likes to leave sooner so he can be early and he can easily get irritated and frustrated with her. In what specific ways are we tempted to, or do get irritated and impatient?
4. Situations do not cause us to be impatient. “They merely provide,” the author writes, “an opportunity for the flesh to assert itself. The actual cause of our impatience lies within our own hearts, in our own attitude of insisting that others around us conform to our expectations.”
   1. What does James 4:1-3 reveal about the truth of this statement?
   2. Is Jerry’s statement about situations not being the cause of our irritation, impatience, anger a new distinctive to you?
   3. Why is it important for us to understand this perspective?
5. Speaking through Paul in the scriptures below, how does God want us to act when we’re tempted to be impatient?
   1. 1 Corinthians 13:1,4
   2. Galatians 5:22-23
   3. Ephesians 4:1-2
6. What does Irritability mean?
7. *“Irritability,”* writes the author, “describes the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , or the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with which a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can become \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ over the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .”
   1. Keeping Jerry’s definition in mind, do you agree that irritability is a sin?
   2. What do you think lies at the root of the irritability? Be specific and explain your response.
8. How do you know if you are an irritable person?
9. What action(s) should you take to deal with your irritability?
   1. What are some circumstances in which we tend to be more irritable?
10. What if you are not the irritable person but are subject to dealing with an irritable person? How should you respond if you are the object of another’s impatience and irritability?
    1. Proverbs 19:11
    2. 1 Peter 4:8
    3. 1 Peter 2:23
    4. Matthew 18:15; Galatians 6

WEEK TWO

1. “Anger,” Robert Jones (Author of *Uprooting Anger*) writes, “is a universal problem, prevalent in every culture, experienced by every generation. No one is isolated from it presence by or immune from its poison. It permeates each person and spoils our most intimate relationship. Anger is a given part of our fallen human fabric. Sadly this is true even in our Christian homes and churches.”
   1. Do you agree with this statement? Explain.
   2. Where is our anger often directed?
      1. Towards the ones we love the most. Spouse, children, parent, siblings, other Christians.
2. How would you define anger?
   1. Negative feelings that cause us to lash out in hurtful ways.
3. Jerry defines anger as “a strong feeling of displeasure, and usually of antagonism…often accompanied by sinful emotions, words, and actions hurtful to those who are the object of [the] anger.”
   1. To what extent do you think anger has permeated our homes, friendships, and churches? Why?
   2. In what ways does anger affect our lives, our families, and our churches?
      1. Causes pain.
      2. We hurt others with our words and actions.
      3. We leave scars.
      4. We break unity.
      5. We cause dissensions
      6. We break trust and make it harder to trust others.
      7. Creates a space, a distance, a coldness, a lack of intimacy and fellowship. We become islands instead of a community.
      8. Anger devastates and kills.
      9. Anger kills. Therefore it is important for us to admit to our anger and our angry tendencies and it is important for us to call it sin and to confess, repent, and turn from it through the power of God’s grace.
      10. As we consider this issue of anger and seek to deal with it, it is important for us to understand the true root, the true source and problem of our anger.
   3. What is the root of our anger? Let’s go back to James 4 and read through verse 10. The root of our anger is….
      1. Selfish passions.
      2. Pride
      3. Covetousness
      4. Worldly passions and desires.
      5. Friendship with the world, over friendship with God.
      6. The true source of our anger is sinful desires which place our wants and interests over others.
      7. Anger comes into play when we choose ourselves and our own interests over others and elevate our interests over that of others and what God desires.
      8. When we place ourselves first and we are not given what we desire and want, anger flares up because we have been neglected our own interests. Anger does not consider the wants and wishes and desires of others and only stops to consider how we have not gotten what we want.
      9. Our anger focuses mostly on the fact that we did not get what we want or on the negative impact of the sinful action and not so much on the fact that we are in violation of God’s law.
      10. We are most often more concerned about the negative impact to us than we are to the fact that God’s law has just been violated and God is rejected and denied.
      11. The focus of our anger is most often US and not GOD and arises from pride and selfishness.
      12. What is the solution to anger as found in James 4?
      13. The solution is having a godly sorrow over sin (vs 9) that leads to repentance, a humble heart, and a complete rejection of the world and its loves and love God more.
      14. Humility. Brokenness. Repentance. It is about stopping to consider what God wants and considering others above ourselves.
      15. Now, having said so much negative about anger, let consider for a moment any good from it.

WEEK THREE

1. In what ways, if any, can anger be righteous, good, or helpful?
2. Contrast what the Bible reveals about righteous anger with what it says about sinful anger.
   1. What is righteous anger?
   2. Righteous anger (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , arises from an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of evil, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ):
      1. Exodus 32:15-20
      2. Why is this righteous anger?
      3. Nehemiah 5:1-8
      4. Why is this righteous anger?
      5. Matthew 21:12
      6. Why is this righteous anger?
   3. What is sinful anger?
   4. Sinful anger (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ):
      1. Matthew 5:22
      2. Why is this sinful anger?
      3. Galatians 5:19-20
      4. What does this text communicate about anger?
      5. Ephesians 4:29-31
      6. What does this verse communicate about anger?
3. Bridges writes, “In facing up to our anger, we need to realize that no one else causes us to be angry.”
   1. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain.
4. How does Peter’s message to slaves in 1 Peter 2:18-20 help us knowing how to respond when others sin against us?
5. Read Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 3:13. What guidance do these verses offer for guarding our attitude toward people whose words or actions tempt us to be impatient, irritable, and/or angry?
6. How should we handle our anger in a God honoring way?
7. What about anger toward God? Can a person be angry towards God? Can a Christian be angry toward God?
   1. Is it okay to be angry WITH God?
   2. Is there a difference between communicating your anger TO God and being angry WITH God?
   3. Why is not okay to be angry with God?
8. How then, do we deal with our anger towards God?

***Battling Anger’s Noxious Weeds***

We tend to see anger in terms of episodes. We get angry, we get over it. An apology may or may not happen but somehow the injured party gets over it and we get on with life. The relationships is scarred, maybe, but not broken and still intact.

We just move on and count life as normal.

What do the following verses remind us about anger?

1. Eph 4:31
2. Col 3:8

Long-term unresolved anger creates many “noxious weeds” that poison lives. Use the following verses as a springboard to further explore the effects of these “weeds.” Ask God to reveal any area in which He sees a weed growing in your life, and then recognize it and deal with it according to the guidance in the suggested scripture references. If one or more of these conditions surfaces often – or in a way that leads to verbal or physical abuse of anyone – seek good Bible-based (Pastoral) counseling.

Use the spaces below to note any personal tendencies God may be revealing to you. Summarize His message to you in the corresponding Scriptures.

1. Resentment – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, anger that is held onto. (See 1 Corinthians 13:5, 2 Timothy 2:22-24)
   1. How does these verses tell us to handle resentment?
2. Bitterness – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, that has grown into ongoing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, . (See Romans 3:12-14; James 3:14)
   1. What to these passages say about bitterness?
3. Holding a Grudge – Taking \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, of the grudge. (See Romans 12:18-21; James 5:9)
   1. What do the following passages reveal about holding a grudge?
4. Strife – Open \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, between people (See Proverbs 30:33; Romans 1:29; 1 Timothy 6:3-4)
   1. What do these passages reveal about strife?

**Learning to Forgive**

1. First, what is forgiveness?
2. Is forgiveness conditional or unconditional? Explain
3. Read Jesus’ parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:21-35. Then respond thoughtfully, in writing, to the following prompts:
4. Let’s begin with HOW OFTEN are we to forgive?
5. From the parable, what can we learn about forgiving others as God has forgiven us?
6. Every sin we commit, regardless of how insignificant it seems to us, is an assault on God’s infinite glory. What did it cost God to forgive us?
7. How should we then live?
8. How should we then forgive others?

***LOOK***

Answer the following questions in your own time at time and think over these very crucial issues.

1. Do you agree with the author that circumstances or people’s actions can never cause us to be impatient, irritable, or angry? Explain your answer.
2. Discuss the statement: “We can choose how we will respond to sinful actions of others toward us.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
3. What are the real causes of impatience, irritability, and sinful anger? Once we recognize them, what practical steps can we take to deal with them:
   1. Proactively – Before situations arise?
   2. Responsively – In the heat of the moment situation?
   3. Retrospectively – Once the Holy Spirit makes you aware that you’ve blown it?
4. Imagine that a good friend keeps justifying his or her sinful anger and refuses to face the deeper, causative issues. What might you say to him or her?
5. How has the sovereign God, in His wise and good purposes for you, used difficult situations (including impatient, irritable, and angry people) to teach you more about Him and the Christian life?

***TOOK***

Through your reading and study this week, what has God revealed to you about your tendencies to be impatient, irritable, and angry?

What commitment(s) are you willing to write down – right now – about how you intend to deal with these sins in the future? (Think proactively, responsively, and retrospectively)

Write out your hearts prayer, asking God to help you, through His Holy Spirit, to keep your proactive, responsive, and retrospective commitments when dealing with these respectable sins.