

## STUDY 2. NOTES FOR LEADERS

---

Anger is represented in the New Testament by two Greek words, 'thumos' and 'orge'. 'Thumos' has the sense of a swelling of emotion that rises and falls, while 'orge' is usually used for anger that creates destruction. James uses 'orge' in his discussion of anger. As the sermon points out, conflict and anger for James, stems from covetousness and disobedience to God. Much of his teaching about wisdom, coveting, conflict and anger overlaps and this will be seen in subsequent sermons in the series.

1. **Rate yourself 1-5 (1= poor, 5=strong) on the following:**
  - My ability to control my tongue when there is a dispute.
  - My ability to listen to another person when there is a dispute.
  - My ability to forgive and forget.
  - My ability to work out whether it is a fight that is worth having.
  - My ability to be "Christian" during an argument.
2. **Why do some in the group find it easier to be less volatile?**
  - Upbringing?
  - Males...the strong silent types?
  - Mellowing over the years?
  - Have learnt through experience that anger is a dangerous emotion?
  - Have grown as a Christian?
  - Have had professional help with anger management?
3. **The following verses from Proverbs mention anger. Which is your favorite? Why?**
  - Proverbs 12:16, *Fools show their anger at once, but the prudent ignore an insult.*
  - 14:29, *Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but one who has a hasty temper exalts folly.*
  - 15:1, *A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*
  - 15:18, *Those who are hot tempered stir up strife, but those who are slow to anger calm contention.*
  - 19:11, *Those with good sense are slow to anger, and it is their glory to overlook an offence.*
  - 22:24, *Make no friends with those given to anger, and do not associate with hotheads.*
  - 29:22, *One given to anger stirs up strife, and the hothead causes much transgression.*
  - 30:33. *For as pressing milk produces curds, and pressing the nose produces blood, so pressing anger produces strife.*
4. **What new insights into conflict and anger are found in James 4:1-10?**
  - a. The inner forces that cause conflict? *James doesn't talk about psychological forces but says that we sometimes operate on the basis of envy and jealousy.*
  - b. The role of prayer in overcoming anger? *See verse 3. We ask for material things instead of asking for a new attitude.*
  - c. The relationship of anger/conflict to murder and adultery? *James doesn't mean literal murder and adultery but uses these terms to convey the message of destruction associated with anger and idolatry.*
  - d. The outer forces that cause conflict? *See verse 4. By expressing inappropriate anger and being involved in continuous conflicts we are behaving like the rest of the world.*

5. Can you think of a conflict in your family or at work where these explanations/insights fit? Eg. Are murder and adultery meaningful analogies? Do any people cause problems because of attitudes of envy and jealousy?
6. **Note verses 5-6.** Have you ever been involved in a conflict where, if you had your time all over again, you would have behaved differently? Can you share that with the group?
7. **Note verses 7-10.** If you were an angry, uptight person and you had these verses read to you, how would you react? What do you think James is asking us to do in these verses?

*This is a strong call to repentance. He is not asking us to be miserable Christians, but rather to repent of any wrong doing on our part that may have caused the conflict.*

8. **See James 1:19-27.**
  - a. There is some concrete advice on how we can control our anger. What is this advice?
  - b. What part of verse 19 particularly applies to you?
  - c. Do you think it is as easy as what James suggests - that we can actually control the extent and rate of our anger?

*James implies that we can pause and delay the response so that we can at least understand where the other person is coming from.*

*Other passages imply that we have control over our emotions and can make a choice about the extent of our anger. See also Colossians 3:8.*

9.
  - a. What does Verse 21 imply about the basis of our anger?
  - b. Do you think Verse 26 is a little harsh?

*a. This is consistent with the words of Christ when he said (Matthew 15:17-20) that what comes out of our mouth reflects what is "inside" us. Here again James is giving us the insight that our anger may be an expression of other issues.*

*b. We will be doing a study on the "tongue" during the series.*

10.
  - a. Usually we can remember the times we have exploded and said things that we wish we had not. Have there been times when you have had the opposite happen, where you have actually been able to control your anger in a Christ like way? How did you do that?
  - b. How can we pray that we might be able to do that more often?

**Prayer.** *O Lord, fill us with the Spirit of Christ so that we might know when our anger is appropriate or not, and then give us the wisdom to express our feelings in a Christ like way.*