**Changed Into His Image**

***Lesson Fourteen: Basics for Angry Believers – Num. 20:1-13***

**Introduction**: There are many issues we continue to face even as believers. While believers are not immune from the trials of this life, we do have hope. Now that we have considered the process of being changed into His image, we will look at particular areas in which exemplifying Christ is put to the test. Anger, depression, hurt, pressure, and worry are all a part of our world. We will consider the biblical response to these areas.

1. **Recall the Three Tree Diagram**
   1. There are numerous life situations that “beat down” on us like the sun.
   2. These life situations prompt a response that comes from the heart.
      1. If a believer is submitted to the Spirit’s control, the response

will be in the form of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

* + 1. If a believer is not submitted to the Spirit’s leadership in his

or her life, the response will be in the form of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).

* 1. Every response brings its own set of consequences.
     1. A spiritual response brings positive consequences.
     2. An unspiritual response brings negative consequences.
  2. The consequences become a part of a person’s life situation.
  3. If unspiritual responses persist a vicious cycle of folly continues.
  4. The truths that are presented in these lessons are intended to bring you to a place of repentance and thus a change of life.
  5. Let’s consider the area of anger as it affects us as believers and how we may trust God for victory.

1. **Descriptions of Anger**
   1. Anger is by definition a strong emotion of displeasure.

Illus. Many things happen daily that displease us – school calls about your child who is in trouble, a co-worker doesn’t fulfill their responsibility, a car breaks down.

* + 1. We experience a high level of displeasure when we attach a high level of significance to the event.
    2. Something becomes significant when the event happens repeatedly. School calls *again* about your child, co-worker does not get their project done *again*, and the car breaks down *again*.
  1. Anger is a statement of demand.
     1. We feel that the event that displeases us must be corrected before we will be satisfied.
     2. Anger destroys the event or person that displeases us.
  2. Sinful anger never sees the whole picture (as God sees it) and, therefore, draws the wrong conclusions and responds in the wrong way.

1. **Three Common Causes of Anger**

Note: Jim Berg uses the illustration of a tea pot to illustrate that which generates anger. He identifies three flames of displeasure. Consider the account of Moses’ anger in Numbers 20.

* 1. The frustrations of life can make your anger boil.
     1. Moses has put up with this whining, complaining people for years now and, frankly, is tired of their carnal spirit.
     2. Frustration is the result of thwarted goals.
  2. When someone or something hurts you it can make your anger boil.
     1. Moses has been accused of bringing them into the wilderness to kill them. The truth is that Moses has spared them from God’s wrath. (Ex. 32:7-14)
     2. There may be people in your past or in your present situation who have hurt you with their actions or words.
  3. The fears of life can make your anger boil.
     1. The last time the children of Israel did not have water, they came at him with stones to murder him. (Ex. 17:1-4)
     2. Because you are not in control of the future, you can become angry.

1. **Four Common Distortions Caused by Anger**
   1. Anger distorts our conversation.
   2. Anger distorts a man’s concept of himself.
   3. Anger distorts man’s concept of others.
   4. Anger distorts the commands of God.
2. **Expressions of Anger**
   1. Not everyone expresses anger in the same way.
      1. Some people express their anger externally.
      2. Some people express their anger internally (clamming up).
   2. Anger, whether it is expressed externally or restrained internally, will be destructive to something or someone.
   3. The solution is to gain God’s perspective about those things that displease us.
      1. The solution is not to get better at controlling how and when we “blow up” or “clam up”. But to get God’s perspective.
      2. To change your perspective you must be “transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2).
      3. Key question: How does God view your frustrations, hurts and fears?
3. **The Heart of the Issue**
   1. Moses was not rebuked for his anger, but for his unbelief. (vs. 13)
   2. God is showing us that behind all sinful manifestations of anger are unbelief and failure to see Him as the most important element in the whole picture.
   3. The biggest obstacle to properly deal with your anger will be your failure to believe that God’s way of handling your problem is, indeed, the best way.
   4. When we are angry, our position seems justified and our perspective seems right because carnal pride is at the heart of sinful anger.
4. **Application for Life Change**
   1. Identify what things in your life are producing your displeasure.
   2. Get God’s perspective on each issue that is causing your displeasure. What does God say about these areas?
   3. Repent of your sinful pride and acknowledge you need to believe God in these areas.