

**THE WEEK OF
November 9th, 2009**



**Jesus Vs. The Consuming Wrath
Part 3
Matthew 5:21-24**

"First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

Matthew 5:24

We're continuing our examination of a very important area of spiritual battle: wrath. Pastor Kerry, in our accompanying video, discussed the reality that our struggle with anger is not new. As he mentions, we can trace anger back to the book of Genesis. In Chapter 4, Cain is angry at God for not accepting his offering. In his anger he leaves the presence of the Lord. This begs a question. How often does our anger remove us from the presence of the Lord, maybe even without our realization?

There's another aspect to this that is just as important. As fallen human beings, we like to justify our actions. It's always easier to say, "I was only responding to what you said first", or "well if you hadn't done that, then I wouldn't have done this," than to accept and admit that our actions in anger are sin. Some of us are more creative than others at making excuses for our anger. Another way we tend to justify ourselves is to say "well at least I didn't hurt (physically) that person." But we must remember that, in Matthew 5:21-22, Jesus connects anger to murder. As extreme as this may be to us, it bothers Jesus that much, and we need to take it just as serious.

Jesus said something else that is related to this subject, "first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." Many times, anger creates strife with others. And if we don't deal with it, our freedom to worship is affected. Too often something like this happens: We're on our way to church, speeding, frustrated (angry) over something that happened at home or along the way, and then when we arrive we put on the happy Christian smile. While we're smiling on the outside, we're an angry mess on the inside. How can we expect God to work in our hearts if we're stuffing all the anger deep inside of it. Let's swallow some pride, ask for forgiveness, and move on. Then let's see what God can do in our hearts!

**Read the Proverb and the section of Psalm 119 that corresponds with the calendar day example:
*If it's the 1st day of the month, read Proverbs 1 and Psalm 119:1-8 (Aleph)***

Anger in the Bible

Mon: Cain's Anger: "...And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell." Genesis 4:1-16

Tue: Do Not Sin: "...be angry and do not sin..." Psalm 4:4, Ephesian 4:26

Wed: Anger of Godly Men: "his spirit was provoked within him..." Acts 17:16-17

Thu: Anger equated to murder: "but I say to you that whoever is angry..." Matt 5:21-22

Fri: Overcoming Anger: "those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh..." Galatians 5:19-26

Discussion Questions for Bible Café:

1. Has your anger affected you in your attempt to serve God?

2. How does our anger affect our witness?

Prayer Requests of your Bible Café brothers (on back):