

Lesson 2: Doers of the Word¹

The Book of James

Scripture Passage: James 1:19-27

Growing Connected (10 min.)

Take turns briefly sharing things you do to help you calm down when you're angry. Ask someone in the group to ask God to use this lesson to help us deal with hard situations in a godly manner.²

Introduction (2 min.)³

Our anger has a way to paralyze our spiritual lives. In any context where there is consistent interaction between 2 or more people, it's only a matter of time before tensions rise high and words are spoken that injure one another. When offenses go undealt with, families fall apart, marriages divorce, friendships decay, business partnerships end up in lawsuits, etc. Being that the church is a community of people, the church is not void of these same types of problems either.

Some even believe that "religious people" are the most hateful toward one another. This is why many have resorted to saying things like, "I love God, but I don't do church... those people are hypocrites!" This line of thinking assumes that devout religious practice is not a license for devouring meaningful relationships. To do so is to live contrary to how God relates to humanity: with grace and truth (John 1:14).

In the Book of James, there is an important relationship between how we deal with our anger and our spiritual lives. Rather than become argumentative, even over "right" things like theology or spiritual disciplines, James exhorts us to:

Big Idea: Become doers of God's Word.

PLAY VIDEO- PT. 1- Video Notes

Think Tank (25 min.)

In the teaching video, there was a theme on living a life that reflects our obedience to God's Word; even when we are upset. The teacher demonstrated that there is a relationship between our anger and our choices, and that we have the tendency to forget God in tense moments. For this reason, let's process the positive impact the Gospel can have on us.

Get in groups of 2 or 3 in Zoom Breakout Groups. Discuss the following questions:

1. Read James 1:19-27 together once again.
2. What kinds of personal mindsets and assumptions about others accompany anger? Where do these mindsets/assumptions come from?
3. The phrases "*the word*," "*the implanted word*," and "*the law of liberty*" in this passage refer to the Gospel message. Why do you think there is an emphasis on "*being quick to hear*" the Gospel and on "*receiving with meekness the implanted word [the Gospel]*" when someone is angry?
4. What might it look like for you to establish a life rhythm that regularly looks into The Gospel (aka the law of liberty)? What difference would this life rhythm make when you're angry (i.e. that would change my view of self because it would remind them that...)?

PLAY VIDEO- PT. 2- Video Notes

Group Training (20 min.)

The teacher gave us three simple applications for how to obey God's Word when we are angry: **1.)** In your anger do not sin; **2.)** Make the decision to obey God's Word. **3.)** Ask God to reveal the areas in your life where you can take action.

Applying these principles is going to take us learning to be "Gospel Fluent." **Gospel fluency refers to when someone speaks the Gospel (the message about the death and resurrection of Jesus) into all things.** This tool can help us avoid forgetting God's Word or being complacent in our obedience. Gospel Fluency requires that we ask ourselves 5 questions:

Questions for Speaking The Gospel¹

1. **What am I experiencing right now?** *Use sentence stem... "I feel." Give context to your feelings and try to stick to speaking about your feelings.*
2. **Who is God?**
3. **What has God done (which reveals who God is)?**
4. **Who am I in light of God's work of salvation?**
5. **How should I live in light of who I am?**

It's not a sin to be angry, but it is never okay to sin in your anger (Ephesians 4:26). It's important to know how to direct yourself and others toward obedience to God. If one authentically answers the questions above in prayer and with others, one can remember the Gospel and obey it in moments of frustration.

Small Group Activity⁴

1. Partner up in groups of 2 or 3 people in Zoom Breakout Groups. Have each person think of something that is presently angering or frustrating them. Each person should take turns answering the "Questions for Speaking the Gospel" above. Make sure everyone has a turn.
2. After everyone has taken turns sharing, spend time praying for one another.

Return as a large group and discuss what that experience was like.

Training Session Wrap-Up (2 min.)

Summary: We can know we are becoming spiritually mature when we exhibit self-control in anger. In addition to this, we please God when we allow the Gospel to inform our choices and obey it when we are angry. Remember, God calls us to "Become doers of God's Word."

*Closing Prayer:*⁵ Ask someone in the group to pray that God would help us to apply the Gospel in tense situations that make us angry and to obey God leading.

¹ Adapted from <https://saturatetheworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Gospel-Fluency-Exercises-1.pdf>