

Overflow - Anger

Ephesians 4:31

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.”

Last week we spoke about guilt; Guilt says “I owe you.” Anger, on the other hand, says “You owe me.” The irony is that, for many angry people, the perceived debt that is owed to them can never be repaid. Anger has an effect on all other areas of one’s life, anger refuses to remain isolated. Anger is a heart disease. If anger is lodged in our hearts, then we will come to believe that everybody owes us!

Even if one’s feelings of anger are justified, those feelings can give other people power over you. How long are you going to allow other people that have hurt you to control your life? Don’t live your life with a victim mentality! Victims have no control over their lives. Victims are held prisoner by circumstances beyond their control.

Payback and revenge are not the solution to anger. A person is set free when he or she stops using their story to justify their anger and simply allows God to do heart surgery.

One main way to diminish the control that anger has on your life is to embrace forgiveness. The key to ridding our hearts of bitterness is to extend the same attitude about forgiveness that God offers us. For an example of this forgiveness, we need only look to Christ’s actions at the cross. When He was hanging on the cross, crucified for sins, He did not release His anger on the perpetrators. Instead, Jesus asked God the Father to forgive them (Luke 23:34).

God is slow to anger with us, therefore, we must be slow to anger with other people that are made in His image (Ephesians 2:4–5). We did not deserve such a sacrifice, but God’s forgiveness is unmerited, gracious, and constantly seeking the benefit of the ones He loves. If we hold out waiting to be paid back the wrongs done to us, we will be the ones who pay. If, on the other hand, we cancel the debts owed to us, we will be set free. Your anger is a poison to your soul.