

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES: Tips for great conversation

- We aren't here to teach/fix each other, but to share our experiences.
- Show respect by listening to one another, asking clarifying questions.
- If you're quick to share, allow space and time for others to speak up.
- If you're slow to speak, your experience is valuable so please share.

ICE BREAKER

When is a time you've had a positive or negative experience with anger?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What part of the message and Scripture was most encouraging, and which part is most challenging?
2. What did You notice about God, and what did you notice about yourself as well as other people?

GOSPEL EXCHANGE (REDEMPTIVE WORK)

Jesus asks us to give Him our burdens (Matthew 11:28-29), whatever they may be (a lie we have believed about God or ourselves, our hurt or negative emotions, or even our concerns for loved ones), so He can carry them for us, giving us His peace (His completeness) in exchange.

What do you want to exchange with Jesus today?

What is the burden? "Lord Jesus, I give you my..."

What's His gift? "Lord Jesus, I receive your..."

ACTION QUESTIONS

1. What is one step of obedience you can take this week, based on what you've discovered today? *(NOTE – Consider prayerfully asking God to answer this question for you, taking 30-45 seconds to listen in silence, writing what you heard. If nothing comes clear, keep praying this week.)*
2. During the coming week, who can you share what you learned today? *(NOTE – Consider repeating the same step with this question as the previous question.)*

**Sermon Study - Conversation Guide**

January 7, 2024

“Overcoming Anger Part 2”

Ephesians 4:25-32

This guide is a discipleship tool for personal reflection, family conversations, for home groups, and for Table Talk on Sundays @10:40 am and 12:15 pm on the Lowell Patio

Coastal Community Church
mycoastal.org

NOTES: Overcoming Anger Part 2 (Eph. 4:25-32) Pastor Andy Rock

I want to start by reminding you what anger is and what it isn't. Anger was created by God to move us to protect. In God's design, anger is dangerous and harmful to evil. Anger from God is never against a person. When we make people the problem, we use anger to harm others rather than using it to stop evil.

4:25 *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.*

Learning how to use anger the way God intended means we speak the truth to each other about how we feel. Speaking the truth to each other is an invitation for healing to happen. Keeping silent only allows the hurt to grow. The damage done by not speaking will be greater than the wound created by the hurt in the first place. Speak. Talk. Connect.

A great tool to speak anger is called non-violent communication. It starts with describing an event with the words "When you..." and then follows with how you feel. You can say, "When you speak to me that way, when you didn't do what you promised, when you made that choice, it hurt me and I'm angry." After we speak the truth to each other, then what?

4:26 *"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold.*

Last time we talked about how sinning in our anger is making another pay by hurting them the way we were hurt. That's the definition of hate. Hate is the choice to make another pay. Love is the choice to pay for another.

We also sin in our anger when we use it to control others. God always honors our free will. He never tries to control our behavior by making us afraid. God woos us with love, extends mercy to pay for our failings, and gives grace we could never earn so we can try again.

The devil tries to control our behavior by making us afraid, ashamed, or filled with pride. When we use anger to control people, we are doing the devil's job. Here's the awful flip side of what happens when we use anger to try to control others. They will try to control us.

Don't let the devil gain a foothold into your life because you're busy getting everyone to agree with you. Do you want to be done trying to control others with your anger? Then pray with me.

"Jesus, forgive me for using my anger to make others feel afraid. Forgive me for using my anger to control others. That's not how You treat me. I reject my strategy of trying to control others with my anger now, in Jesus' name. I take back my humility. I take back my faith. Jesus, show me Your way of love, vulnerability, and mercy."

4:28 *Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.*

Don't steal the joy God is giving you by holding onto your anger. And this is especially true for those of us who are being hurt by angry people.

4:29 *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*

When I'm hurt by angry people, I get people on my side. "See how bad I'm being treated?" But I don't forgive. I don't let it go. Why? Because I'm too busy building my case as to why I'm the victim. I don't want to admit I'm holding onto my anger so I can somehow change the person who has hurt me. That's called power and control. How do we let go of it?

4:32 *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

Holding onto anger robs me of compassion and forgiveness. Yet Jesus responds by forgiving me. Jesus never lets me go. So, if you're willing, pray the prayer I've been praying a lot over these past months.

"Jesus, I've been hurt by others trying to control me with their anger and my response has not been helpful. I reject and let go of my strategy to give up my faith, joy, and love in order to control how others feel and behave. You don't try to control how I feel. I take back the faith that You can handle the problems and people I was never supposed to control. I take back my love and joy, for You love me and are overjoyed to have me as Your own. I surrender those who have hurt me to You."