ESSAY · APRIL 12, 2018

Do this to control anger

Written by Bill Perkins

Has it ever occurred to you that Jesus was 30-years- old when he cleansed the temple? That means he likely visited the temple during every Passovers for eighteen years. He had repeatedly seen the money tables, herds of animals and crates of birds. He had seen the rip-offs, smelled the steaming dung, and heard the cacophony of mooing, bleating, and shouting. I'd guess each time he entered the Court of the Gentiles the scene stoked his anger. Yet, he waited for years before saying anything. During that time he gathered information and processed his anger with God.

He only expressed anger after he had all the facts concerning the injustice suffered by the worshipers and the disrespect shown to his Father's house.

The Day of the Whip

On that day Jesus entered the temple, grabbed pieces of rope, loose tethers, and baggage-cords that lay strewn about and plaited them into a rope. Without warning he swung the whip hitting a cow on the rump and moving it and the rest of the cows out of the temple.

At the same time he drove out the sheep, oxen and their owners. Next he poured out the coins of the money changers, flipped over their tables and drove out the stunned men. And to those selling doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" (John 2:16).

Anger Without Sinning

I'm impressed that during that ordeal, in spite of the heat of his anger, Jesus never lost control of himself. He expressed his anger without sinning. He even demonstrated restraint by not releasing the doves. All of the animals could be rounded up and the money recovered. But if he had released the doves they could have flow away causing loss to their owners.

Jesus' anger propelled him to right a wrong. But his actions weren't knee-jerk. Nor should ours be. It always makes sense to remember the words of Solomon, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). Harsh words often show disrespect toward the hearer and stoke their anger. A wise person may lose their cool, but they're careful how they express it.

Swallow Your Words

With anger, it's usually, if not always, a good idea not act on your initial impulse. Swallow your words. If necessary, walk away. Take time to process your anger with God.

A few months ago a friend said something that angered me. I immediately wrote a scathing response. And it felt good . . . real good. I savored the wound my words would inflict. My argument was air tight and left no wiggle room for escape.

But I didn't send it. Instead, I ran it past my wife and a friend. I rewrote it numerous times. Finally, when the rough edges were sanded away and my anger had subsided, I sent a very different and redemptive message. A few days later we talked and a healthy and healing conversation followed.

The outcome would have been different if I had sent the first draft. We all need to be careful how we process and communicate anger. Nobody understood this better than Solomon. He said, "A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control" (Proverbs 29:11). Losing your cool doesn't mean losing control. Don't ever express your anger until you're prepared to do so wisely.

The problem is you may suffer disrespect or injustice and not have a few days to process your anger and develop a healthy response. Your spouse may say something that hurts. Your kids may lash out at you. Or someone may cut you off on the freeway. Again . . . don't act on your initial impulse.

Ask yourself why you're angry. Ask if you've suffered a real wrong or a perceived one. If you can't act with grace then walk, or drive away. Above all, follow the example of Jesus by losing your cool without losing control. (Adapted from: *Six Rules Every Man Must Break* by Bill Perkins).

MINISTRY UPDATES

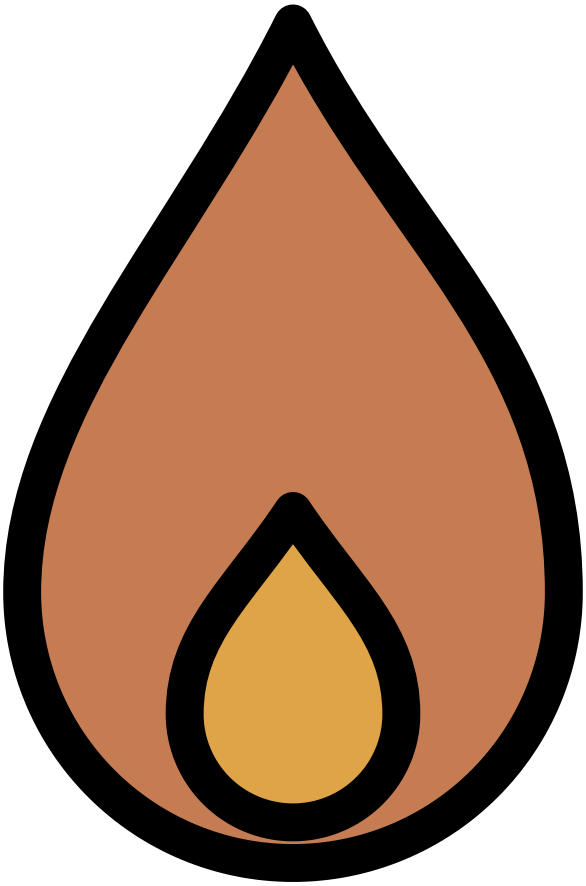
I'm having a great time speaking at Grace Baptist Church in St. Helens, OR. Last week a couple from Portland visited and introduced themselves. If your in the area on a Sunday please visit and let me pray for you. I'm teaching on the topic of my next book: *Lord Jesus, Resurrect This . . . a short prayer that will transform your mind and empower your life.*

Pass it on

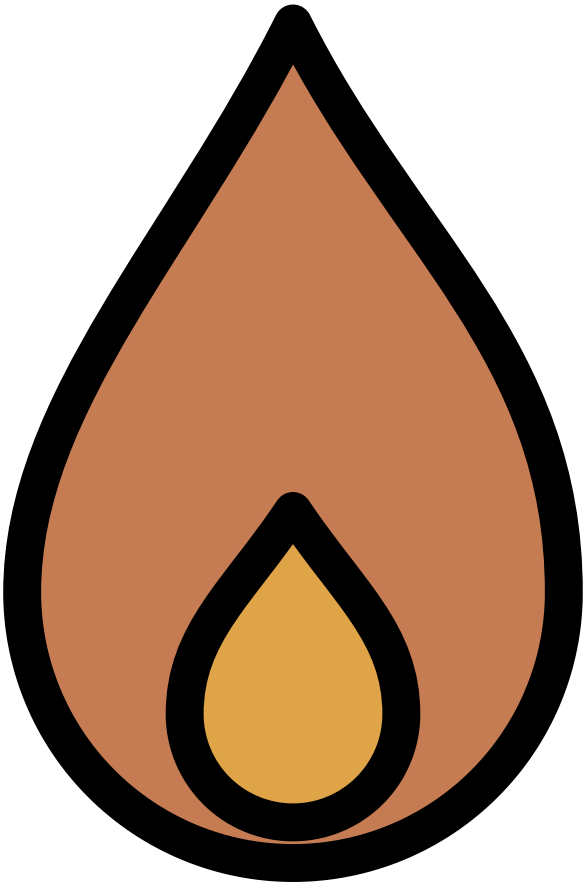
Email a friendText a friend Copy link

The trail continues

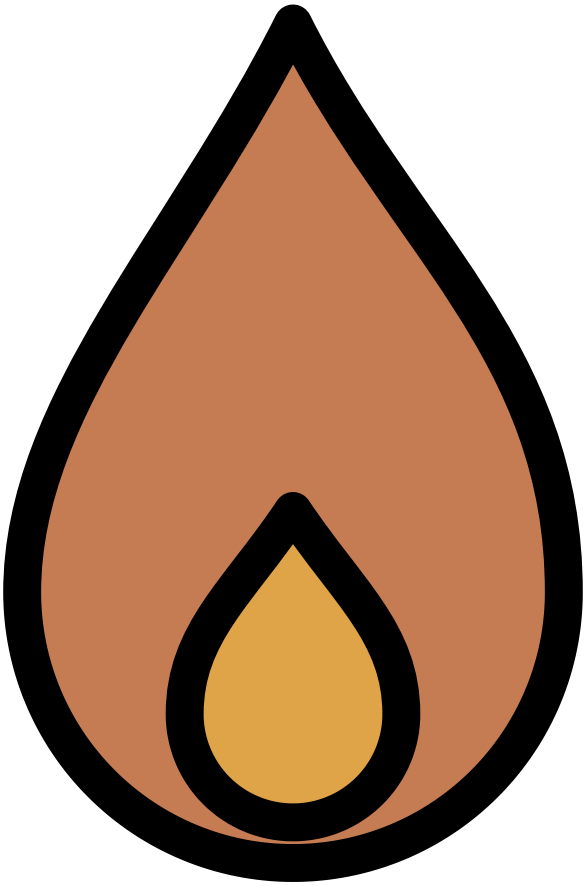
If this one stayed with you, keep walking — the Anger shelf has more



- AngerWhen it's okay NOT to forgiveOkay, you already know the answer: It's never okay NOT to forgive. At least according to Jesus. But there must be situations where God would flex a bit on this. For instance, are we supposed to forgive someone who repeatedly…



- AngerTwo Seconds That Will Change Your MindThe moment you're conscious of an unwanted thought you've got two seconds to kick it and replace it with another one. If you do this, your brain will treat the initial thought as vapor and it won't form a neural pathway. Paul wrote…



- AngerWhen getting even feels rightOne of Jesus' more controversial and misunderstood teachings dealt with forgiveness. In the Old Testament the Hebrew people were commanded to seek equal recompense for a wrong suffered. They were told to take "Eye for eye, and tooth…

Continue

- ← Back to A Deeper Read
- More on Anger
- Switch to Instagram Posts →

Receive a Devotional and a Song Each Week

Quiet. No rush. Just walking a few pages with Jesus.

First Name first name Email Address email address

Receive the next devotional

Bill Perkins

helping you see the Jesus you may have missed.

Everything on this site is free, made possible by our sponsors. Become a sponsor →

© 2026 Bill Perkins. All rights reserved.