



Small Groups

Small Group Discussion Guide

When Weariness Brings Out Our Worst Part 4 of Hope for the Heavy Heart

Message by Pastor Brian Howard
Numbers 20:1-13

(Discussion Guide by Mack Braden)

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Of all the human emotions, anger is probably the most misunderstood. Anger is the only emotion for which we have court ordered emotional management classes. Mark Twain said, "Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured." Every day, each of us is confronted with reasons to be angry. Some are good reasons, most are not. The Bible recognizes that we all struggle with anger. It is okay to be angry as long as it does not lead to sin.

So, how do we do that? What causes anger to rise up in me? How can I deal with anger in a way that honors God and is beneficial to me and the people around me? Focusing on Numbers 20:1-13, Pastor Brian Howard shared wisdom from this ancient story on how to recognize triggers toward anger and then how to respond well in times of anger.

Opening Question: What is one thing that is making you angry these days?

Read Numbers 20:1-13 aloud.

I. Three Triggers Toward Anger

Ephesians 4:26-27 (NIV) "In your anger do not sin; Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry and do not give the devil a foothold."

a. Loss and grief (v.1)

Loss in our lives can be devastating and makes us vulnerable to anger. In this Covid-19 season, over the past seven months, we have experienced many losses, both big and small.

- 1. What is one loss you have experienced in this season?**
- 2. How have you experienced God's comfort as you've grieved this loss?**

b. Powerlessness (v.2)

We always want to be in control and when we are surrounded by situations and people we cannot control, we feel powerless. This powerlessness can lead to anger in part because the emotion of anger can give us a temporary false sense of power.

- 2. What are some areas in your life where you feel powerless today?**
- 3. How have you typically reacted to being powerless in these situations?**

c. Resentment (v.3-5)

In Numbers 20, the people had gone from celebrating their deliverance from slavery to resenting Moses for their freedom. The very thing they had cried out to God for was now something that had become distasteful to them. Resentment is blaming someone else for the circumstances you find yourself in, and often we end up blaming someone we love.

- 4. Put yourself into the sandals of the Israelites in this situation. Would you feel justified in feeling resentment against Moses and Aaron? Why or why not?**
- 5. Is there someone or a group of people you currently feel resentment towards? Keep that person in mind as we continue this study on dealing with anger.**

II. Dealing with Anger

Regardless of what has triggered my anger, what do I do when I feel anger rising up in me? Moses and Aaron stepped away from the confrontation and humbly sought a word from the Lord together. Here are four key practices to help us deal with our anger: 1) Seek the Lord Immediately; 2) Seek the Lord in Community; and 3) Seek the Lord in Humility; and 4) Obey the Lord Completely.

a. Seek the Lord (v.6-7)

- 6. The first thing Moses and Aaron do is to walk away from the heated situation. Pastor Brian encouraged us to “not show up for every fight you are invited to.” What are some ways we can disengage and walk away from situations that make us angry?**
- 7. How can I seek the Lord immediately, even when I am still angry? How do I have a heart posture like Moses of “falling facedown” before the Lord?**
- 8. Moses and Aaron sought the Lord together. Who do you trust to seek God’s wisdom with you? Who tells you when you are likely to sin in your anger?**
- 9. We always believe our anger is justified and yet, it rarely is. Have you ever been in a situation where you were angry at someone and then learned your anger was not justified? Give an example.**

b. Obey the Lord Completely (v.9-12)

Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to the rock. While that seems like a small thing, it was really a huge deal because Moses was impatient and disobeyed God. He took credit for what God was doing. Yet, God gave them water anyway! What amazing grace!

- 10. Do you have a situation or a circumstance in your life today where you need a clear word from the Lord? Share and pray together for God to speak to you.**
- 11. Is there something God has already told you to do and you have not yet obeyed fully? Share and pray for courage and faith to obey God’s leading.**
- 12. Close in prayer: Spend time thanking God for His love, grace, mercy, forgiveness, and blessing, even in this difficult season.**