

Anger

Monday, 11/2/09 – Read Psalm 139

My Observations _____

A Question to Answer: God has created us as emotional beings. And that’s good. We have feelings -- which is part of what makes us human. Some of our feelings, though, are very difficult and are always getting us into trouble. This week we’ll think through some of what the Bible says about anger. ... Today’s reading, Psalm 139, has an abrupt break at verse 19. Up to that point a tender intimacy with God is contemplated. And then in verse 19 a vicious anger surprisingly flashes forth. ... Is your anger ever like that? Do you ever get surprised by your anger? ... Take some time in prayer today to talk with God about your experience of anger. Tell God what anger is like for you and ask God to help you this week work with your anger more creatively.

Tuesday, 11/3/09 – Read John 2:13-16

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Jesus got angry. And occasionally Jesus expressed his anger directly -- and physically. What do you make of this incident, of Jesus getting angry? ... Does it upset you? Does it help you accept your own anger? How do you respond?

Wednesday, 11/4/09 – Read Hosea 11:1-9

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Does God get angry? Think about it a moment. What do you think? ... Today’s reading from the Hebrew prophet Hosea struggles with this question. God is pictured as a tender parent of a little child (verses 3-4). Then God is the rejected lover (verse 7). Verse 9 says that God has “fierce anger.” And then God adopts a more compassionate path (verse 9). ... What do you think? Is all this simply our human tendency to attribute human qualities to God? Or is God really like this? What do you think? Does God get angry?

Thursday, 11/5/09 – Read Matthew 5:21-26

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Anger is normal, natural, and dangerous. ... Jesus knew that dealing creatively with our anger is essential to living a full life. He doesn’t say that anger is bad, but he does acknowledge that it’s dangerous. It’s got to be dealt with. Sometimes we hide from our anger in religion. We bring our gift to the altar when we have something unresolved with another person. So Jesus instructs us first to go and work toward reconciliation -- and then to come back to the altar. ... Is religion ever for you a way of avoiding something unresolved in your life? Is there a person to whom you now need to be reconciled?

Friday, 11/6/09 – Read Psalm 103

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Psalm 103:1 is a powerful and compelling verse. The psalm writer blesses (praises) God with ALL that is within him. Can you bless God with ALL that is within you? Even your anger? ... Think of it this way: It is when we intentionally bring the difficult parts of ourselves into God’s presence that healing can begin, that the hardness in

our hearts can begin to soften, and that we can BEGIN to move beyond the anger. That is precisely what the psalm writer did over and over. Remember Psalm 139 which we read on Monday? Anger was included! ... Will you try it today? Will you bring your anger to God? Will you bless God with ALL that is within you?

Saturday, 11/7/09 – Read Ephesians 4:25-5:2

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Ephesians 4:26 is an important reminder. Anger is dangerous; but it is natural and normal. And our anger itself is not sin. Verse 26 instructs us to “be angry” but “do not sin.” What is the difference between the feeling of anger and the sin? Does anger sometimes lead us into sin? How does that happen in your experience?

Sunday, 11/8/09 – Read James 1:19-27

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: This passage from James’ letter gives us some practical advice in managing our anger: “quick to listen, slow to speak” and not speaking carelessly without thought. ... Managing anger often means managing our speech. It’s not the feelings of anger that are the problem; it’s the way anger gets expressed. Remember a time when an angry word was hurtful or harmful to you. Remember a time when you hurt someone with your words. Think of one of your relationships where you can practice -- where you can pause and think before you speak carelessly. Write down some thoughts about how this could help you in this relationship.

My Faith Journal, November 1, 2009

You Asked for It, #8

Faith for Hard Times (2) – Thou Shalt Not Be Angry

What do I hear God saying to me today?

Ephesians 4:25--5:2

Psalm 103:1-5

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.