

## Taming Anger

### **Ready:**

“Be angry and do not sin. Don’t let the sun go down on your anger, and don’t give the Devil an opportunity.” Ephesians 4:26-27

### **Set**

Every season athletes go through an emotional journey. For some, there are many highs, for others several lows. For most, however, it is one continuous emotional rollercoaster. No matter which emotional spectrum your season follows one thing is for certain; if we allow our feelings to take center stage they will take us in a dangerous direction. How we deal with any overwhelming feeling of emotion is the key to determining the outcome.

Not every emotion in this journey is bad. Some even provide the perfect positive and uplifting effect. Arguably the worst, however, is anger. We have all most likely crossed paths with an angry athlete, and they are definitely not fun to have as a teammate. If left unchecked, anger not only has the potential to cause individual demise, but also the collapse of the entire team. If the individual or team refuses or neglects to deal with this anger, then anger will definitely deal with them.

In a recent sermon, my pastor mentioned two myths about anger that we need to understand in order to help alleviate its negative results.

- Myth 1: Anger is automatic.
  - A habit is what we do. What we do, in turn, is who we are. Anger in and of itself is not a habit, but if we allow it, anger can become a highly addictive habit. With anger of any kind, it is not what happened to you that makes you angry, rather it is how you think about what happened to you that makes you angry. A small tweak in this thought process can change an otherwise negative and debilitating habit into a positive attitude.
- Myth 2: Anger is always bad.
  - In Ephesians 4, we see that Paul acknowledges the power of anger for good and evil. He admonishes us not to allow the Devil to form a foothold in our anger. Anger can be God’s way to motivate us to change and can even be good if it pushes us away from something bad. Anger over a bad social choice can be positive if it leads us to make a change that honors God. Personally, anger over my “dad bod” has led to positive changes in my health and wellness routines.

Anger and credibility often go hand in hand. In Numbers 20, we see that Moses, through his anger, disobeyed God and was denied the blessing of bringing the entire Israelite community he led out of Egypt into the promised land. Today’s social distancing and coronavirus

directives are especially challenging for athletes and coaches. While we typically look forward to improving through practice and demonstrating our skills through competition, it is easy to become angry when we lose these opportunities. Rather than allowing anger to fester and become a negative habit, what tweaks are we willing to make today that will help us to emerge from this shutdown in better control of our emotions?

## Go

1. What anger is festering in me today and how can I turn it to good?
2. What am I clinging to that God is pushing me away from?

## Workout

Psalm 4:4; Psalm 37:8; Numbers 20

## Overtime

“Lord, we thank You for all of our skills and emotions. Grant us today that we may use them all for Your glory. Amen.”

## Bible Reference:

Ephesians 4:26-27

Psalms 4:4

Psalms 37:8

Numbers 20



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