**VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY: PASTOR WILLIAM A. LEE, JR. SERIES: “SILENT KILLERS”**

**TITLE: “ANGER MANAGEMENT”**

**TEXT: NUMBERS 20:1-12**

**In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried. 2 Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. 3 They quarreled with Moses and said, “If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the Lord! 4 Why did you bring the Lord’s community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? 5 Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!” 6 Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. 7 The Lord said to Moses, 8 “Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink.”9 So Moses took the staff from the Lord’s presence, just as he commanded him. 10 He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, “Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?” 11 Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank. 12 But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.” 13 These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with the Lord and where he was proved holy among them.**

**INTRODUCTION:** Anyone who is able to discern and sense the climate in which we find ourselves living, can no doubt sense that we are living in an extremely angry world. With the advent of the internet and social media available to all, it seems to have peeled back a scab revealing bitterness, hatred, resentment and fury as people feel empowered to spew venomous anger as they hide behind their computers. In a survey conducted by NPR-IBM Watson Health poll, some 84% of people surveyed said that Americans are angrier today compared to a generation ago. When asked about their own feelings, 42% of those polled said they were angrier in the past year than they had been further back in time. Another survey revealed that In 2020, the world was a sadder, angrier, more worried and a more stressed-out place than it has been at any time in the past 15 years. Indeed, People seem to be angry about everything.

While anger gets a well deserved and well earned bad rap we need to understand that it isn’t always bad. It is actually a natural human emotion that actually serves an evolutionary purpose to protect us. When we get angry, our sympathetic nervous system is activated, bringing on a fight-or-flight response, speeding up our heart rate, and leading to a surge of adrenaline that makes it easier for us to take physical action if needed. Anger can actually motivate us if it is directed in the right way and we get angry about the things we need to be angry about.

**Ephesians 4:26 “Be ye angry, and sin not:….”**

In other words, there is a type of anger that is not sinful that is known as righteous indignation when we find ourselves getting angry about the things that makes God angry. When we are angry about violence, domestic abuse, oppression, racism, the destruction of the family and greed. Angry when the world is in total rebellion against God. Angry when God’s House is in disrepair and not up to standard. Angry when the Holy Spirit is grieved when we disrespect God and the things of God. Indeed we need to get angry about the things that anger God. However, when our anger is not about those things and is persistent and has nowhere to go, it can get out of control and turn destructive; it can lead to problems at work; problems in our personal relationships, problems st church and in the overall quality of our lives. Yes anger, when not properly dealt with, can literally impact our lives and destroy our destiny.

Such would play out in the life of one of Gods greatest servants and prophets, the liberator known as Moses. When we come to our text we find the Children of Israel in the all too familiar place of being between deliverance and Promise. They had been delivered from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh after God delivered a right hook at the Red Sea that knocked Pharaoh out forever as God told his people that, “this enemy you shall see no more.” The trip from Egypt to the promise land was only an eleven day journey but because of their disobedience and lack of faith it eventually would take them forty long years to enter into God’s promise. They are now in a place called the Wilderness of Zin when they are once again confronted with one of the many crisis that God allowed in order to test their faith. Test, that these group of stiff necked people seemed to fail over and over again. The scripture says that while they stayed in a place called Kadesh that there was no water for the congregation, which also meant that there was no water for their animals that were with them on the journey which would impact their food supply. In their usual fashion the people began to fuss and complain to Moses and Aaron wishing that they had died in Egypt. They also had the nerve to accuse the men of God of engaging in a conspiracy to kill them all in the wilderness and wished that they were back in Egypt. When Moses heard their complaints he and Aaron went into the tabernacle and prayed and God gave them some specific instructions concerning how to deal with the situation.

**V.6-8 Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. 7 The Lord said to Moses, 8 “Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink.”**

However, while Moses received direction from God in the prayer room he apparently did not deal with the anger and frustration that the complaints and accusations of the people brought out of him. He became so angry, so ticked off, so P.O-ed and full of rage that he eventually would fly off the handle in an act of disobedience as he ended up striking the rock twice instead of speaking to it. An act that caused him to miss out on entering into the promise land with the people of whom he led. We want to explore our text and share with you some things that we can and must do to properly control and deal with our anger.

**I. EVALUATE**

One of the best ways to get our anger under control is to understand what is behind it. That’s the thinking behind a psychological concept called the anger iceberg attributed to the Gottman Institute. The anger iceberg is an analogy used to explain all the deeper emotions that can contribute to any particular bout of anger. Sometimes anger is a secondary emotion that masks a primary one like hurt, shame, envy, sadness, or helplessness.

Exercise: Think of the last time you felt angry or had an anger outburst and ask yourself the following review questions:

* What was the last thing that happened before I got real mad? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* How did I interpret the thing that happened? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What was my mood at the time? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What feelings, beliefs, or values are involved in this situation? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Behind the outbursts of anger there are usually underlying issues that are erupting at that moment. Moses Outburst: It is possible that Moses suffered from unresolved grief over his sister’s death.

**In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.**

Miriam’s death was an important point in the journey from Egypt to Canaan. She was the first of Moses’ siblings to die in the wilderness Her death was also a demonstration of the fulfillment of God’s promise that the generation which refused to enter Canaan would die in the wilderness, and the new generation would enter instead. (Numbers 14:29-34) In the Midst of that God’s people are not sensitive to Moses personal loss and are treating him like a non-human.

Exercise: Ask Yourself the Question: Why am I Angry or Why Do I continue to be Angry?

* Am I having a flashback to a time in which I was disrespected or mistreated.
* Does this person remind me of someone from my past?
* Am I beating up this man/ woman over what another man/woman did?

\* Am I angry at this pastor because of the way my former pastor treated me?

\* Am I taking out my frustration on my family because my boss is giving me a hard time?

\* Am I angry at him or her because I’m angry at Daddy or Momma?

\* Am I responding because of a list of offenses and events that I never took the time to deal with.

\* Did I go in with a Predetermined angry response- the next person….

**ASK THESE QUESTIONS AND BRING THEM TO GOD!!**

In A True Relationship We are Free to Bring All of our Anger Issues to Him. The Problem is that we were often told that we aren’t supposed to feel anger so we fake it in front of people and in front of God. However, God Understands Anger and Has been angry.

**...the Lord’s anger burned [literally “his nose burned hot”]. (Deuteronomy 29:27**

**The Lord’s anger burns against his people; his hand is raised and he strikes them down. The mountains shake, and the dead bodies are like refuse in the streets. Yet for all this, his anger is not turned away, his hand is still upraised. (Isaiah 5:25)**

**The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him. (Ezra 8:22)**

**Isaiah 42:25 He poured out on him the heat of His anger and the fierceness of battle, and it set him aflame all around.**

In the Bible God gets angry at human violence. He gets angry at powerful leaders who oppress other humans. And the thing that makes God more angry than anything else in the Bible is Israel’s constant covenant betrayal. All of these examples have something in common: they are all expressions of God’s anger at humanity’s idolatry. **Jesus Also Got Angry.** When Jesus cleared the temple of the moneychangers and animal-sellers, He showed great emotion and anger.Another time Jesus showed anger was in the synagogue of Capernaum. When the Pharisees refused to answer Jesus’ questions.

**“He looked around at them in anger, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts” (Mark 3:5)**

His anger was pure and completely justified because at its root was concern for God’s holiness and worship.

**BRING OUR ANGER TO HIM AND BE REAL ABOUT IT**

**14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:14-16**

**II. DE-ESCALATE**

The Key to Dealing with our Anger is to Recognize it. Understand it and Control it. We will Either Control it or it Will Control us. Decide to Control anger before it controls you.

**De-escalate**- Mitigate, minimize to decrease in intensity, magnitude. Anger has a Rising nature, the Longer it remains unchecked. Anger can make you feel as though you’re at the mercy of an unpredictable and powerful emotion.

**Psalm 37:8**

**Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil.**

**Ephesians 4:26**

**26 “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,**

**Moses failure to De-escalate:** His Anger toward the People Caused Him to Disobey Gods Orders. God told Moses to simply take the rod and speak to the rock (verses 7-8). God never told Moses to lecture the people of Israel, especially in this harsh and angry manner. There were times when Moses had to be the messenger of God’s anger, but this was not one of those times. It was bad for Moses to lecture Israel; it was worse for him to do it with an angry attitude, filled with bitter contempt against them. On previous occasions when Israel contended against Moses, he reacted differently.

· At Kadesh, Moses fell on his face before God when the people rebelled (Numbers 16:4)

· At Marah, Moses cried out to the LORD, not against the people (Exodus 15:22-25).

· At Massah and Meribah, Moses confronted the people (Exodus 17:1-7), but seemingly without the edge of anger, contempt, and bitterness seen here.

**How To De-escalate**

1. Forgive- do it before you feel it Forgiveness is an act not a feeling

2. Be Quiet- Staple the Lips, Stop talking, fall silent, dummy up, hold your tongue, pipe down

**Speak when you are angry - and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret. (Laurence J Peter)**

**When angry count to ten before you speak. If very angry, count to one hundred. (Thomas Jefferson)**

**Proverbs 15:1**

**A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.**

**3. Get some exercise:** Physical activity can help reduce stress that can cause you to become angry. If you feel your anger escalating, go for a brisk walk or run. Or spend some time doing other enjoyable physical activities.

**4. Take a timeout:** Timeouts aren't just for kids. Give yourself short breaks during times of the day that tend to be stressful.A few moments of quiet time might help you feel better prepared to handle what's ahead without getting irritated or angry.

5. Let God Handle It: In Numbers 20:12 God said it was a lack of faith. Rather than fully trusting God to handle the situation Moses took matters into his own hands. When we try to fix situations ourselves rather than trust God to fix them we are prone to become angry. Why, because in reality we are not capable of fixing

**Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end. (Proverbs 29:11)**

**III. ESTIMATE**

Anger, if Not Properly Dealt with Can Be Costly. Anger has the power to blind us to circumstances

**Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame.** [**Benjamin Franklin**](https://www.brainyquote.com/authors/benjamin-franklin-quotes)

Anger is an Emotion that desires to Rule

**When anger rises, think of the consequences. (Confucius)**

The Cost of Responding to Anger: Grudge Holding Can Cost our Physical Health

**GRUDGE HOLDING CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH**

**Results of a Study:** The American Medical Association released the results of an interesting study on teenage anger. The study was conducted at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. It found that teenagers, who don’t manage their anger, are at a higher risk for weight gain than those who do. The study concluded that regardless of whether teens mismanaged anger by suppressing their feelings of anger or went to the other extreme and simply lost their temper –either way they were at a higher risk of weight gain. We have known for some time that physical problems like ulcers, high blood pressure, possible strokes, and depression are often associated with anger. But now we can add one more problem that unmanaged anger brings into our lives--problem of weight gain. One way to lose the weight is to lose the anger.

**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. (Mark Twain)**

Anger Can cost us Relationships

ALL IT TAKES IS A MOMENT OF RAGE TO DESTROY YEARS OF RELATIONSHIP INVESTMENT

Uncontrolled Anger will cause us to offend.

**A brother offended *is harder to win* over than a fortified city, And contentions [separating families] are like the bars of a castle. (Proverbs 18:19)**

**QUESTION TO ASK: WHAT IS RESPONDING TO ANGER GOING TO COST ME?**

**BE A BIG PICTURE PERSON:** When we become big picture persons a lot of this stuff doesn’t matter.

Moses Lost Sight of the Big Picture

**9 So Moses took the staff from the Lord’s presence, just as he commanded him. 10 He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, “Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?” 11 Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank. 12 But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.” 13 These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with the Lord and where he was proved holy among them.**

Notice How Much His Anger Blinded Him

**Must we bring water for you out of this rock?**

Since Moses and Aaron stood before the people (verses 6 and 10), **we** probably refers to them. Moses spoke to the people as if it were he and Aaron who would give the people water, not the LORD.

**Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod**:

Moses disobeyed God directly, striking the rock instead of speaking to it.

**Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.” This was the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the LORD, and He was hallowed among them.**

That act of anger cost Moses dearly. Because of it God did not allow Moses to lead Israel into the promise land. When you know the story behind all of that it’s pretty hard to blame Moses for getting upset. These people had murmured and complained the whole time. Nothing could please them. Miracle after miracle was not enough and Moses had been extremely patient with them. But he reached his breaking point and flew off the handle.

**GOD FORGAVE HIM, BUT GOD HELD HIM ACCOUNTABLE WHAT WILL THAT ANGER COST US? WHAT DREAM, RELATIONSHIP, VISION and chapter of your destiny will anger silently kill?**

**The Fence Story - Author Unknown**

There once was a young boy with a very bad temper. The boy's father wanted to teach him a lesson, so he gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper he must hammer a nail into their wooden fence. On the first day of this lesson, the little boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. He was really mad! Over the course of the next few weeks, the little boy began to control his anger, so the number of nails that were hammered into the fence dramatically decreased. It wasn't long before the little boy discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Then, the day finally came when the little boy didn't lose his temper even once, and he became so proud of himself, he couldn't wait to tell his father. Pleased, his father suggested that he now pull out one nail for each day that he could hold his temper. Several weeks went by and the day finally came when the young boy was able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. Very gently, the father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. "You have done very well, my son," he smiled, "but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same.” The little boy listened carefully as his father continued to speak. "When you say things in anger, they leave permanent scars just like these. And no matter how many times you say you're sorry, the wounds will still be there."