

- Thank God for sending Jesus to restore our relationship with Him. Ask God to use you as a minister of reconciliation.
- Ask God for the grace to overcome anger in your life. Pray and believe for a greater capacity to love others. Pray for your relationships, and ask God to restore those that may be broken.
- Pray for opportunities to preach the gospel to your family, friends, classmates, or colleagues that they may be reconciled to Christ. Ask God for specific words to bring healing and reconciliation.

NOTES

On Murder and Anger

WARM-UP

- What is one of your “pet peeves”—a little thing that annoys or frustrates you? What do you find most annoying or frustrating about it?
- What was the worst argument you were a part of? What happened?
- Is it easier for you to express your emotions to someone, or to hold them in? Why?

WORD

²¹“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ ²²But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.”

MATTHEW 5:21,22

(Read also **MATTHEW 5:23-26.**)

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talked about anger and its effects on our relationship with Him, and our relationships with others. We must understand that God is a God of reconciliation. His heart is for each of us to be reconciled to Him, and anyone we are angry with—no matter who made the offense. The following truths give us a biblical perspective of anger, and how we can respond as Christ’s followers.



1 Anger can lead to broken relationships.

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Anger held against another person typically means having the desire to damage the offender, and at its extreme, it can lead to murder. Jesus warned us against the destructive effects of anger in our relationships, and instructed us to *be reconciled* (Matthew 5:24) to those who have offended us. How does the Apostle Paul encourage us to deal with our anger? (Ephesians 4:26)

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2 God restored our relationship with Him.

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation . . . **2 CORINTHIANS 5:18**

God reconciled us to Himself, even though we offended Him and grieved His heart with our sin. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, His original design—of man having a relationship with the Father—was restored. All this is His doing, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). Why is Jesus the only one qualified to restore our relationship with God?

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3 Our broken relationships with others can be restored.

¹⁹. . . *that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.* ²⁰*Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.* **2 CORINTHIANS 5:19,20**

The fitting way to respond to God's love and forgiveness is to reconcile with those who have hurt and offended us. Just as Christ made a way to restore our relationship with our Heavenly Father, He gives us the capacity to forgive, and the grace to overlook all offenses—but we must choose to respond in faith. According to Proverbs 10:12, what is the best way to overlook offense?

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APPLICATION

- How can you guard your heart against anger? This week, look for and meditate on Scriptures that talk about anger, and its effects on our relationships. Ask God for the grace to reveal new insights to you as you do so.
- How can you be a minister of reconciliation to others? How will you tell others about what God has done for you this week?
- Is there a family member or friend whom you need to forgive? Name one specific step you can take to initiate reconciliation, starting this week. Pray for the relationship to be restored.