



Group Leader Guide Series: The Heart - Week 4 Scripture: Romans 12:1-2, 14-21

Leader Notes:

This week we are going to consider how we can possibly keep our hearts close to God even as we face anger!

Certain things in life trigger angry reactions in us, whether we like it or not. Maybe you have a case of road rage, or maybe you get angry when people talk in movies, or maybe it's something more serious. Regardless of the circumstances, the Bible clearly states that anger is a sin unless it is the righteous anger that seeks to uphold God's glory (like Jesus displayed in the temple). People tend to respond to anger in one of two ways—they frequently vent it or they hold it in until it boils over. Thankfully God's Word provides guidance for believers to deal with their anger in a God-honoring way.

Bottom Line:

Learn to respond to circumstances with truth and love, instead of anger.

BELONG – Begin by allowing the group a time to connect and care for one another! Take prayer requests and start the group in prayer.

Ice Breaker Questions:

- What makes you angry?
- How do you express your anger?

BELIEVE – Take time to study the Bible together.

Read Romans 12:1-2, 14-21

Teaching Points:

12:1. Paul urged all believers to present themselves as a living sacrifice. Jesus had given Himself as the once-and-for-all Sacrifice for sin on the cross. Believers thus were to live in light of Jesus' all-sufficient sacrifice, bringing glory to God. Paul further explained that living as a holy, pleasing sacrifice was a believer's spiritual worship. Paul taught that in light of God's gracious redemption (by the mercies of God), living as a sacrifice was the logical and pleasing way for Christians to serve God.

12:14-21. Paul concludes the chapter with the most lengthy evidence of being a living sacrifice: loving when wronged. The clear command is, Do not repay anyone evil for evil—whether a fellow believer or an unbeliever outside the church. There are at least two reasons for not taking revenge into one's own hand. First, it puts an individual, a part of the creation, in the place of judge over another part of creation. The second reason is that it could bring harm to the cause of the gospel. Paul tells the Roman believers, if it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. That would include peace with believers and nonbelievers, those in the church and outside the church. Since it takes two to fight, if the believers do not seek revenge, there will be no long-lasting disruption of peace. The point of this last section is to do toward others what God has done toward us.

God calls his followers to respond with truth and love.

Discuss these marks of a Christ follower in Romans 12:15-21. Talk about them in relation to our response to circumstances versus anger.

- Empathy (vs. 15)
- Humility (vs. 16)
- Forgiveness (vs. 17)
- Restraint (vs. 18)
- Surrender (vs. 19-21)

Questions For Discussion

1. After reading verse one, what would it look like to present your body as a living sacrifice and renew your mind?
2. Based on verses 15-21, what marks of a follower of Christ do you struggle with the most?
3. Give examples of how these responses to situations are better than anger.
4. Why does vengeance belong to God, not us?
5. What about Sunday's sermon stuck out to you or challenged you? What did you learn, love, or were you reminded of?

BECOME – Make application and determine to follow Christ better.

We must align ourselves with God so we are only angry at what makes God angry. We must respond to personal frustrations in truth and love as bodies presented to Christ for service.

Close the group by praying for God to help us lean into him and intentionally fight sin.