

Psalms: Managing Our Emotions – Study 5

Anger: When Your Back Is Against the Wall

Learn to keep anger from being destructive

Psalm 79:1-13

Anger is a natural, God-given emotion, which, though potentially harmful, can be used constructively. Everyone experiences the emotion of anger, so we must learn how to deal with it in a healthy and righteous way. The Psalms give us examples of godly ways to express anger.

Psychologists tell us anger is a secondary emotion—that it arises in response to another emotion, usually hurt or fear. Neurobiologists tell us our anger response is hardwired into our bodies—actual physiological changes occur within our bodies when we are angry.

Anger in and of itself is not bad; God created us to get angry sometimes. The key is learning how to express anger without it being destructive; it even can be constructive. Psalm 79 sheds light on anger and healthy ways to deal with it.

Psalm 79 is a “lament” psalm. Jewish people today read the psalm to remember the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. The songwriter begins with a series of complaints: The Babylonians have destroyed the temple, the city is reduced to rubble, many have died, and the nations are scoffing at God’s inaction. Then he asks God to do something—to help or to take vengeance. He comes to see God’s judgment is behind all that has happened, and he also understands his own responsibility for the state of affairs.

TVC STUDY NOTES

Hold _____ to the things of God

¹ O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple they have defiled; They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.

² The dead bodies of Your servants They have given as food for the birds of the heavens, The flesh of Your saints to the beasts of the earth.

³ Their blood they have shed like water all around Jerusalem, And there was no one to bury them.

⁴ We have become a reproach to our neighbors, A scorn and derision to those who are around us.

We can be confident _____ ourselves to God

⁵ How long, LORD? Will You be angry forever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire?

⁶ Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You, And on the kingdoms that do not call on Your name.

⁷ For they have devoured Jacob, And laid waste his dwelling place.

We need to acknowledge _____ in each situation

⁸ Oh, do not remember former iniquities against us! Let Your tender mercies come speedily to meet us, for we have been brought very low.

Wisely Appeal to the _____ of God

⁹ Help us, O God of our salvation, For the glory of Your name; And deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, For Your name's sake!

Leave _____ for God to Work

¹⁰ Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Let there be known among the nations in our sight The avenging of the blood of Your servants which has been shed.

¹¹ Let the groaning of the prisoner come before You; According to the greatness of Your power Preserve those who are appointed to die;

¹² And return to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom Their reproach with which they have reproached You, O Lord.

Remember _____ You Are and Praise God before the generations

¹³ So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, Will give You thanks forever; We will show forth Your praise to all generations.