

FOUR

Slow to Anger

JAMES 1:19–21



19 This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.



OBSERVE

1. Summarize or diagram this passage.

THINK

2. According to this passage, what does anger not do? What does the Word do?
 3. Verse 19 talks about being quick to hear and slow to speak. List the people in your life who would benefit if you were to follow this advice.
 4. What kinds of things do you say in those relationships that you probably shouldn't say?
 5. James 1:20 says that anger doesn't produce the righteousness of God. Let's see if this holds true in our own lives. How do people respond when you're angry with them (or when you say the things you men-

tioned in the previous question)? Does it cause them to recognize their own sin, repent, grow closer to God, and be more like Him? If not, how do they usually respond?

6. What might change about those relationships if you were quick to hear and slow to speak?
 7. Our anger doesn't produce righteousness in the lives of others, but it also doesn't produce righteousness in our own lives. Think of the days you feel irritated or annoyed. How does it affect your attitude and actions? What would happen if you were to let go of your anger and forgive the person you're angry with? How might you be different?

8. Often we don't want to let go of anger and forgive people because we think they'll get away with their bad behavior if we do that. We also think that if we let it go, they'll never change. Review your answers to question 5. Have you been good at getting people to change by hanging on to your irritation, anger, or annoyance (or by saying the things you say in question 4)? Explain.

9. Romans 2:4 tells us that the kindness of God leads us to repentance. What would happen if you followed the practice of Romans 2:4 in the relationships you mentioned in question 3, rather than the things you currently say? Invite God to show you what fruit your kindness might bear.

10. Think about the relationships you mentioned in question 3. What would you like to change about the way you respond and relate to those people? (For example, would you like to give more grace, focus on their good traits, wait five seconds before you respond when you're annoyed, etc.) Explain.

11. In verse 21, James tells us to put away all filth and rampant wickedness. It's unclear whether he's switching to a new topic or describing anger as filth and rampant wickedness, but it is clear what the solution is: In humility, receive the word implanted which is able to save your souls. Think of the relationships you've been working through in this lesson. In what ways do you need to practice humility in those relationships? Offer specific examples of how you can practice humility in each one.

 **PRAY**

12. Keeping in mind the people who annoy you, read through today's Bible passage again. Visit with God about what you learned in today's lesson and anything you'd like to change about the way you handle the relationships you mentioned in today's lesson.



TAKEAWAY

13. What is your biggest takeaway from today's lesson?



ACTION STEPS

14. List any action steps you'd like to take based on your takeaway and prayer time with God.