

God Has a Name “Slow to Anger”

Exodus 34:6 “Yahweh, Yahweh, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger [erek apayim]...”

- Erek apayim = long of nostrils

Big idea: we need anger, especially God’s anger.

Challenge: work with your anger to make it more like God’s.

Working with your anger:

1. View anger as normal, and sometimes even necessary.
 - a. But note: Jesus’ anger was the exception, not the template.
2. Understand that anger and aggression are not the same thing.
 - a. Sometimes we must repent from aggression to anger.
3. Allow compassion and love to be with your anger.
 - a. Slow down to be less reactive
 - b. Remember compassion for other people (Ephesians 4.20-32).
 - c. Take anger seriously. Doesn’t have to look explosive to be dangerous.
4. Don’t feed your anger.
 - a. Anger is meant to have a short shelf life (Ephesians 4.26).
5. Listen to & shepherd your anger (Ephesians 4.27).
 - a. Avoid stuffing or transforming into aggression.
6. Make anger about your spirituality (Ephesians 4.27).
 - a. When anger lingers, we give something over in our soul.
 - b. Strengthen your identity as one who has “no condemnation in Christ” (Romans 8.1)



DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

Do you think most people struggle with anger? Why or why not?

Read Exodus 34:6-7 and focus on how “slow to anger” fits between compassionate and merciful, and loving and faithful.

Do you tend to see God as slow to anger? Why or why not?

What’s a story you can recall that has shaped your view of God’s anger?

We discussed how God is slow to anger because his anger has a purpose and comes from a place of secure identity, whereas human anger often comes from insecurity and shame.

- What connections between anger and shame do you see?
- Discuss some ways to slow down your anger to make it less reactive.

Discuss the idea that anger and aggression are different. How might you turn from aggression back to a healthy form of anger that is informed by compassion?

Read Ephesians 4.20-32:

- Discuss the idea that anger should have a short shelf-life.
- How can you listen to and shepherd your anger?
- What’s the connection between your anger and “giving an opportunity to the devil?”

Pray over each other for an abundance of patience, and compassion-informed anger.

