

# Come and Become pt 54 : Cultivating Anger

(Recap)

## **-Hot or not.com:**

-in the year 2000 an internet phenomenon hit the scene... Hot or not .com. a website where people could rate other other people's attractiveness from 1 -10.

**-you could know with the precision of a number how your hotness measured against others.**

*-I have showed you the highest rated picture yet,,, last week was the oldest active member*

*-today the weirdest picture yet*

-Maybe you have never posted a picture to find out your hotness, but How we rate in life, does matters very much to us.

-Wondering how God would rate us can create deep uncertainty.

-When it comes to God we tend to think: that we need to clean ourselves up,,,, possibly Raise our Hotness score in his eyes,,,, and then we can be accepted by him.

-but in his great sermon,,,, THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT,,, Jesus tells us something very different

**-We are Moral 0's** (not the hots, we are the nots) , but in spite of that Jesus invites us to follow him and to be part of what God is doing in the world.

—Jesus paid for our sin so that we could COME to God as we are

-By following what he teaches we actually BECOME something beautiful in God's sight and something that makes this world better.

*(this series in a nutshell)*

**-Last Week:** We established that God reveals himself to Humanity is so that we can Understand his desires, and to FIT OURSELVES TO THEM.

-the great temptation of Religious Life is to try and fit God's desires around what we already do, rather than fitting ourselves to his desires.....

**-Illustration: suit:**

**-i fit myself to the suit.** -rather than finding a suit to fit me

-So now that we know we are supposed to adapt ourselves to what Jesus says rather than the reverse,,, now we will go forward into the specific teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

-what we read now is the suit,,,, it is his desire for us,, his expectation

-Matthew 5:21-22 “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

**“You have heard it said, but”, is Jesus’ way of saying most of us miss the point entirely.**

-Of course God wants us not to murder. But not murdering is only one example of what NOT TO DO, and *is not in itself* what WE SHOULD DO.

-Jesus summed up the entire Old Testament Law in this command:

-Matthew 22:37-40 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

-Jesus carried this expectation further for his followers in the New Testament.

-John 13:34 A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

-So, not murdering is not our standard; **Loving others like Jesus loved us is our standard**

*-if we want to join what God is doing in the world, one of the things we need to learn is how to LOVE*

**Cultivated Anger is Antithetical to “Jesus-like” Love.**

-Jesus said, “you all know that murdering will make you subject to Judgment, but I also want you to know that anyone who burns with anger will also be subject to judgement.”

*-Simple, Right? Just don’t get angry????.....*

-wrong

-Jesus is not saying “dont GET angry” he is actually saying “don’t **BE** angry”.

## **-Anger:**

-in the original language there are 2 different words that could have been used for Anger.

-the first word refers to an Emotion that comes upon us quickly and dissipates just as quickly

*-metaphor: a little Kindling Fire: bundle of dried grass, leaves: if those things are introduced to a spark they CATCH FIRE IMMEDIATELY,,, but it also burns out as fast as it starts*

-The second kind of anger refers to a fire that you add wood to, in order to keep it going

-this kind of anger becomes more like a Decision than an Emotion

-this anger is something we nurture

**-this is an anger that we choose,,, we add fuel to maintain it**

**-This is Cultivated Anger.**

## **-Jesus condemned Cultivated Anger.**

-Jesus said “if you kill people you will face judgment, and if you cultivate anger toward people you will face judgment”

-Reactionary anger linked to circumstances is not necessarily sin.

-someone or something hurts you and you feel the anger ignite inside

-any time your will is thwarted it naturally produces some level of anger.

-but, you if take a moment and control yourself, allowing the feeling to come and go

-that is not a sin....

*-flip side: someone hurts you, or thwarts your will: you feel the flair up, but rather than letting it come and go,,, you begin to THROW MENTAL FUEL ON IT:*

*-they always do this*

*-they are so selfish or stupid or terrible*

*-you play it over and over in your mind,,,*

*-you think of all the things YOU WISH YOU SAID*

*-you tell other people about it and FEED on their SENSE of OUTRAGE, for you*

-These are the kinds of things that turn Innocent Anger into Cultivated Anger.

-they change anger from an experience to a state of being or even a character trait

*-The problem with any sin is that you start off in the drivers seat. But slowly and subtlly you are turned into a passenger.*

## **-Jesus warned us about the Progression of Cultivated Anger.**

-While there are negative impacts of anger, there are also components of anger we sometimes feed on:

-1. anger produces adrenaline. It can sharpen & energize us, we eventually begin to feed on the energy anger gives.

-as we come to depend on anger for energy, we subconsciously feed our anger

-2. anger offers us a stool of superiority over those we are angry with

-*Anger Goggles: anger distorts your vision causing it to look like you are ABOVE those you are angry with, looking down from a position of moral authority.*

-while wearing anger goggles we forget that we are just as flawed as those we are angry with

**-we are blind to the hypocrisy of our skewed vision**

-We sometimes feed on the feeling of superiority anger breeds in us.

-3. anger can provide opportunity for us to feel the self pity of a victim

-*George costanza : "Pity is underrated, I like pity, it is good"*

-when we are angry about all the ways we have been wronged and overlooked we tell ourselves that *"if we had a fair shot in life,, then we would really be something"*

-our anger/pity justifies to our minds how we can be so superior and yet still be stuck where we are in life,,,,,,

-Anger allows us to take NO RESPONSIBILITY

-All of these factors and more cause us to keep anger burning in our lives.

-we blame our anger on the people we are angry with

**-but the truth is that anything other than the *flare up and burn out*, is Cultivated and it IS Our Choice.**

## **-Cultivated Anger grows and Mutates.**

-Level 1 Cultivated Anger: the kind of anger we just described, isn't malicious, it doesn't hate, but it nurses grudges

-in level 1 anger you can nurse anger for people and still love them. (not loving them well)

-you still care about them, you still want them in your life

-but you regularly burn these little campfires full of grievances:

-parents..... -spouse..... -friends..... -siblings...

-At this level we still feel fondly for the person, but we repeatedly **choose** to think about our **grievances** with them.

**-this level of anger begins to hollow out our love for people.**

-we feel love, but we begin to think about them in ways that don't look like love

-Level 2 Contempt: this level of anger is reached when we are angry consistently enough to Disregard people entirely.

-Jesus said : -if you cultivate anger you are in danger of judgment, -if you say to your brother Raca, you are answerable to the court.

-Raca was not a word but a sound (like clearing your throat)... the audible equivalent rolling your eyes. (act it out)

-Making that sound at people told them they don't matter to you at all.

-you are writing them off as people...

-Dallas Willard: *"To belong is a vital need based in the spiritual nature of the human being, contempt spits on this pathetically deep need"*

-we need to belong and contempt directly attacks a person's sense of belonging

-When we know that people are angry with us it tends to make us angry as well.

**-but to sense Contempt is like a knife in the heart**

-Finding out that someone you care about doesn't care whether you come or go, flourish or fall; is a deeply wounding experience.

**-but that is the injury we inflict when we express contempt**

-To have have contempt is to entirely dismiss someone.

-or to assign them some lesser status

**-can be personal or to a group of people**

-the personal brand is more bitter

-but the group brand is equally diabolical : racism, sexism, classism, or **contempt**

**based in political ideology**

*-this has become very acceptable today but in reality it's no different than racism*

*-we are assuming that people are a certain way, think a certain way, act in certain ways because we perceive them to be associated with a certain group*

*-and you are choosing to dislike or oppose them based solely assignment to that group*

***-this form of Contempt allows us to personally know nothing but dislike everything about someone***

*(politics & America)*

***-living in consistent contempt & disdain for people we will never meet, will not change anything for the better, and only poisons our soul.***

***-you wanna make a difference? Vote,,,,, write to your representatives***

***-that is how democracy works***

***-getting involved in public CONTEMPT EXCHANGES is how our enemy dupes us into playing his Anger game.***

-William Barclay: "There is no sin quite so unchristian as the sin of contempt. There is a contempt which comes from pride of birth, and snobbery is in truth an ugly thing. There is a contempt which comes from position and from money, and pride in material things is also an ugly thing. There is a contempt which comes from knowledge, and of all snobberies intellectual snobbery is the hardest to understand..... We should never look with contempt on any man for whom Christ died."

-Contempt is like a Lying Demon from Hell that whispers to us about how silly, stupid, or otherwise lesser, others are and how smart or right we are.

-contempt is a tasty morsel that will leave you fat with pride and indifference.

-As Jesus followers we must learn to recognize the voice of contempt in our heads and SILENCE IT with humility and love.

-Level 3 Harm: Jesus said “if you say, you fool, you are in danger of hell fire”

-The word fool doesn't carry the same force, today, it did in Jesus' day.

**-to publicly call someone a fool back then was to assassinate their character before others.**

-At this level we want people to do harm.

-most of us will do that with words

-but some of us will do that with violence

—At the harm level it is no longer just that I don't see your value; now, you HAVE no value and my anger gives me license to damage you.

-Violence employed by anger is wrong, and will be met by God's justice.

**-But please don't think that just because you are not violent that you have not harmed people.**

-the harm Jesus gave as an example was completely verbal

-By this third stage our anger has taken us to the point where we feel justified inflicting some form of damage.

-verbal    -physical.    -through some social mechanism....

-As anger progresses it is cumulative.

-level 1 is just level 1,,,,, but level 3 contains all level behaviors....

-(*picture: plant*) -it is like this plant: cultivated anger in your thoughts is THE ROOTS,,, if it grows beyond that, Contempt is the VISIBLE STALK AnD BODY of the plant,,,,,, and finally HARM is the flower or fruit of the plant

-you can have roots without stalk and fruit,,, but you cannot have fruit with our roots

-to address the FRUIT OR STALK you MUST DEAL WITH THE ROOT

-Some of us are probably getting defensive and thinking, “what I am doing is NOT THAT BAD”.

-that is exactly what Jesus corrected the pharisees for doing

– the goal was never “*not that bad*” the goal is to join Jesus in the healing of the world! To be salt and light,,, to be beacons for lost pilgrims, and to push back the decay, bringing wholesome life to our surroundings.

- The command of Jesus is to love each other the way Jesus loved us.
- cultivated anger is completely inconsistent with “Jesus-like” love

## **Anger Isolates us from the Love we need.**

- You were built to need the love of other people.
  - God built you to have a life that has Rich Webs of interconnectedness with people all around you.....

*(picture)*

-Over time Cultivated Anger removes the boards from the bridges connecting us to others.

**-this happens directly and indirectly**

-The words, thoughts, and actions of Cultivated Anger alienate us from those we are angry with.

- we get mad & choose to stay mad and do things that damage a relationship
- if it goes far enough it permanently breaks that relationship
  - even in situations where relationships are not severed,,, they can be permanently strained....  
*those bridges can become so precarious that crossing them is an ordeal....*

-Over time the indirect effect of Cultivated anger on relationships can be even greater, than the direct effects.

-our anger doesn't just isolate us from those we are angry with

**-Consistent Cultivated Anger Isolates us in General.**

- even those we are not mad at don't CONNECT CLOSELY with us,,,,,
- we become the kind of person that others avoid .....*
- or avoid genuine vulnerable connection with.....*
  - there are some people that I just try to avoid in depth conversations with ...*

-One danger of cultivated anger is that you eventually become acclimated to it.

- you wont even feel angry,, but your words and thoughts are full of venom
- you will consistently have conversations where people just don't know what to say,,, and then avoid real conversation with you in general
- because they are tired of all the negativity, even if its not directed at them

-Anger pulls the boards from the bridge eventually leaving gaps so large that people will not be willing to venture across anymore.

## **But God wants so much more for you than that.**

- God's desire for you is for you to have bridges all over the place
  - bridges that are used to receive and deliver great care and blessing
  - he desires for great wealth to come and go in our lives across the bridges of human relationship
- The Majority of all the Blessing God plans to deliver to you, will need to come across the bridges of human relationship.
  
- And there is so much VALUE in you that God desires to share with the world, but those bridges are essential to that.

-So what should we do? *First: Recognize Cultivated Anger, Next: don't CONDEMN yourself.* -Romans 8:1 there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus

*-Finally Repent:::: start moving in the other direction!!!!*

- Commit today to stop allowing cultivated anger.
- Commit to thoughts for people, full of LOVE, MERCY, COMPASSION, UNDERSTANDING, and HUMILITY
  - those things add boards to bridges***
  - being a bridge builder starts in your thoughts, repent of wrong thinking and begin thinking the right way,,,***

-think thoughts born of the Love that we are commanded by Jesus,,, anger and contempt are Antithetical to "Jesus like" Love

**-That is what Jesus Commanded. Don't cultivate Anger.**

*-thats the suit.....* Will you take it as it is and begin trying to fit yourself to it???? Or will you try to adjust your explanation of it to match what you already do?

**Response:**

- we are going to pray for God to help us to see this the way he sees it*
- we are going to pray for him to soften anger hardened hearts*
- we are going to pray for HIM to PULL THE GOGGLES OFF and show us his great LOVE and MERCY for us,,,, and pray that seeing that mercy fills us with mercy for others rather than anger.*

*-Jesus goes forward from here with some practical steps,, we will dive into that NEXT WEEK ,,, so be sure to join us back here....*