



# Firm Foundations

Following the way of Jesus

## Sermon on the Mount: Anger

**Date:** Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June

**Speaker:** Paul Gating

**Key Verses:** Matthew 5:21-26

### Talk Summary:

The Pharisees and teachers of the Law at the time (and perhaps still our society today) were preoccupied with how good they appeared to be and weren't looking at the heart. While some might think not acting on violent thoughts was enough, Jesus says even harbouring anger towards another person is enough to subject us to judgment. Jesus is not saying that we should never get angry though. Throughout His life on earth He experienced various emotions:

- He was frustrated with the greed and desecration of the temple that was meant to be a place of worship to God.
- He was annoyed when His followers tried to keep some children from gathering around Him.
- He was upset when He lost friends to death.
- He was disappointed when His followers couldn't support Him in the way He wanted them to.

Jesus was human and felt these emotions, but He was sinless in how He responded to them.

The type of anger that Jesus is referring to in this verse is a long-lived and nursed anger. It's not just about getting upset with someone but it's holding on to that feeling of anger towards them. That way of living is not appropriate for the kingdom of heaven that He's referred to repeatedly earlier in the sermon. (The reference to the "fire of hell" is about the historically deplorable and burning trash valley of Gehenna that was just outside of Jerusalem rather than a future place of damnation.)

The practical examples in v23-26 give us two important approaches for how we should respond to unresolved anger:

- 1) Choose to try to reconcile, even when it's costly.
- 2) Deal with conflict quickly before it gets out of control.

## **Worship**

*Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.*

*(Small group worship resources can be found at [bvc.so/sgworship](http://bvc.so/sgworship))*

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

*If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:*

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

## **Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)**

- How do the accounts of Jesus' emotional responses in the Bible model how we should respond to frustrating or upsetting situations?
- What scenarios do you find easy to express your anger? What scenarios are you more inclined to bottle up your anger?
- Which of the five signs of unresolved anger that Paul gave can you identify with the most?
  - Resentment – can't think of anything positive about the person
  - Revenge – e.g. badmouthing or gossiping about them
  - Reminders – similar characteristics in another person frustrate you
  - Revisiting – imagining or replaying past arguments in your mind
  - Reaction – over reacting to small things

## **Witness**

*We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:*

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invite to?