

"From Rage to Redemptive Anger"

Numbers 20:1-12

3/20/22

Small Group Discussion Guides

In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

² Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. ³ They quarreled with Moses and said, "If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the Lord! ⁴ Why did you bring the Lord's community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? ⁵ Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!"

⁶ Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. ⁷ The Lord said to Moses, ⁸ "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink."

⁹ So Moses took the staff from the Lord's presence, just as he commanded him. ¹⁰ He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?" ¹¹ Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.

¹² But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."

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What was so bad about what Moses did? Do you think the punishment was too harsh in light of the long term faithfulness of Moses? How can a singular act of disobedience undo or outweigh a lifetime of service? How true to life is this story when applied to the consequences of rage?

1. Have you ever thought of the fact that the reason we are able to experience anger is because we are created in God's image. Anger is part of our character because it is part of God's character? What do you think about that?
2. Being angry is not a sin. Anger has positive uses. Share a time when you used anger redemptively (for good or for God).
3. How do you normally handle anger? Look at the five styles of anger management and identify the one(s) that fit how you manage anger.
 - Accommodating – you allow the person to win and get their way.
 - Avoiding – you ignore it, run from conflict situations or evade getting into conflict.

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- Compromise – you seek middle ground, both parties make concessions.
 - Compete – you believe you are right and you do not back down or give in.
 - Collaborate – you look for a win-win situation.
4. Does your way of handling anger work in the short term? Does it work long term?
 5. What are the consequences to how you handle anger? How have those consequences helped you get better control of your anger?
 6. React to this statement: "The consequences of losing your temper are disproportionate to the seriousness of the sin."
 7. What triggers your anger? What can we do to put a safety on each trigger so our anger doesn't explode and do damage to ourselves and others?
 8. What are the underlying reason(s) or cause(s) for your anger? What attempts have you made to change? How have you been able to "cage the rage?"
 9. What attempts have you made to change and are they working? What has worked?
 10. "For man's anger does not bring about the righteous life God desires." James 1:20. What righteous goals do we think anger will help us accomplish? Does it work? What are the costs? What's a better way?
 11. What high stress times tend to produce the most conflict in your family? Share a time it got ugly. What have you been able to do to "cage the rage" so it doesn't ruin future family gatherings?
 12. Energy plus irrationality is a dangerous mix. Share a few ways you've seen that mix ruin people's lives and let that motivate you to take anger seriously and work to get it under control!
 13. Read the following passages and reflect on them. Proverbs 14:29; 15:1-2, 4, 7, 28, 33
Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:26-32; 6:4.
 14. Anything left unsaid that needs to be said?