



Sermon: *Letting go of Anger*

Text: *Matthew 5: 21-26*

Preacher: *Paul Hahn*

Sermon question - As God's new Israel, how do we deal with our anger and go about extending forgiveness?

Introductory questions - We don't get very far into the Bible before we are faced with murder entering God's creation. The book of Genesis describes what caused it to happen and how God responded to such evil.

1. Read Genesis 4.1-16. The story of Cain killing Abel still shocks us. What's the reason for Cain's anger against Abel? What's God's caution to Cain? What are the evidences of Cain's premeditation? How did God demonstrate empathy with Abel the victim? What's the evidence of God's mercy toward Cain?
2. Read Genesis 9.4-6. Explain why murder was - and is - so offensive to God.

Reflection questions:

1. What standard does Jesus use for determining right and wrong?
2. Jesus' initial audience considered scribes to be the most accurate interpreters of Scriptures and Pharisees to be the most devout practitioners of Scripture. What kind of righteousness is Jesus referring to (v.20)?
3. Jesus aims at a change of heart. How does he do that?
4. What, according to Jesus, is the full meaning of the sixth commandment: "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20.13)?
5. In verses 21-22 Jesus places murder and unrighteous anger in the same category. How are they related?
6. Is there a place for a righteous anger? See Mark 3.1-5, 7.18, 9.19.
7. Jesus warns against calling someone Raca (an Aramaic word meaning "empty" or "stupid") or "You fool" (v.22). Why do you think insults such as these constitute murder in God's sight?
8. What has caused you to lose your temper with people?
9. What relationships are mentioned by Jesus in vv. 23-26? What do these 2 illustrations teach us about broken relationships?
10. Why is Jesus concerned that reconciliation and apologies be made quickly?
11. When have you either initiated forgiveness or had someone initiate it with you? What was the outcome?