

# FLIPPED.

DEVOTIONAL

## The Flipside of Anger | Matthew 5:21-26

By Ryan Rasberry, Lead Area Pastor, South Arlington & Kennedale

What makes you angry? What gets your dander up? What pushes your buttons? I bet you've already thought of a thing or two...or twenty. Sometimes we get angry over the right things, like injustice. But the norm seems to be anger over things like traffic, slow service, rising gas prices, demanding bosses or family members.

There seems to be a special category of anger that is reserved for family. We get angry at people outside of our family, but it's not like the anger one can feel toward a parent, a spouse, a child, a sibling. Perhaps, because we care more about our family members, we have higher expectations for those closest to us. We invest more in family and when our return on investment is in the red, the fire in our belly gets stoked, brows furrow, temples throb! If you listen, you can hear the warning sirens in the distance.

Anger unleashed can be devastating, to say the least. Anger on the loose can wreak havoc on the ties that bind. Like a tornado in Texas, anger has the power to uproot a home and permanently change the landscape of our relationships.

In Matthew 5:21-26, Jesus gives us an "Early Warning System" regarding anger. Christ links anger and murder together because at the core of all murder is anger. Don't dismiss your anger because you think you'd never kill anyone. Anger leads to hatred, and in I John 3:15, we see that a person who hates his brother is considered a murderer in his heart. This kind of anger leads to judgment on earth, as well as in heaven.

Jesus commands His followers to deal with the heart of the matter, not just the after effects. He expects His followers to address their anger immediately, while it is just a *dirt devil* rather than a full-blown twister. Deal with it now! Reconciliation is a prerequisite to worship (see verses 23-24). Settle disputes quickly or there will be hell (on earth) to pay. Can I say that?

God knows the unnecessary pain that anger can bring to a life, to a family, to a church. To spare us this sadness and bring glory to His Father in heaven (see Matthew 5:16), Christ calls the citizens of His kingdom to the Flipside of Anger...to a life of peace and unity, a life of forgiveness and reconciliation. This is only possible by His grace and through the power of His Spirit within us. Don't ignore the warning siren of Matthew 5:21-26. Deal with your anger quickly by pursuing reconciliation, rather than facing the ruin and judgment of anger unleashed.

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Ryan Rasberry has been serving at Pantego Bible Church since 1995. He served for 7 years in the Student Ministry and has been serving as an Area Pastor ever since. In 1991, he completed his undergraduate work at Tennessee Temple University with a degree in Christian Education. He received a Master of Theology degree from Dallas Theological Seminary in 1996. He and his wife Lori have been married for more than 20 years, and have four children – Rylie, Braydon, Landri and Jesse.