

Keeping Ourselves Unspotted from the World
(Lesson 2)

Introduction:

1. An important part of "*pure and undefiled religion before God*" is "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).
2. One key to keeping ourselves unspotted from the world is "controlling anger."
3. We are constantly exposed to outbursts of anger, and we often see the effects of uncontrolled anger.
4. We must comply with the instructions given in Ephesians 4:26-27.
5. Before we examine these verses, . . .

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST CONSIDER SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES RELATING TO ANGER
 - A. Anger leads to irrational behavior (3 illustrations).
 1. (Genesis 4:5) Cain became "*very wrath,*" and he killed his brother Abel (vs.8).
 2. (2 Kings 5:11) Naaman "*was wrath,*" and he refused to do what Elisha told him to do.
 3. (Luke 15:28) Anger prevented the older son from attending the feast for his brother.
 4. In addition to causing irrational behavior, . . .
 - B. Anger is habit forming (Proverbs 19:19).
 - C. Anger is contagious (Proverbs 22:24-25).
 - D. Anger leads to other sins (Proverbs 29:22).
 - E. Anger causes strife (Proverbs 30:33).
- II. LET US STUDY EPHESIANS 4:26-27
 - A. Let us first examine the context.
 1. This chapter teaches Christians how to "*walk*" so as to please God.
 - a. (vs.1-16) We are to "*walk worthy*" of our vocation.
 - b. (vs.17-24) We are not to walk like people in the world.
 2. Beginning at vs.25, several specific subjects are addressed.
 3. (vs.26-27) Instructions are given that relate to anger.
 - B. Let us determine what these statements mean.
 1. (vs.26) "*Be ye angry*" is not a command to be angry.
 - a. "Anger" is an emotional response to something that displeases us.
 - 1) We all have emotions, and we all have things that displease us.
 - 2) Since this is the case, we are all subject to being angry.
 - b. These verses teach us not to sin as a result of being angry -- "*and sin not.*"
 2. "Anger" [wrath] that causes us to commit sin is condemned.
 - a. Ephesians 4:31-32
 - b. (Galatians 5:19-21) It is a work of the flesh that will keep us out of God's kingdom.
 - c. Colossians 3:8
 3. (Ephesians 4:26-27) Our anger must be controlled, and we must not allow it to result in sin.
- III. LET US CONSIDER SOME INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTROLLING ANGER
 - A. (Ephesians 4:26) Do not let "*the sun go down upon your wrath.*"
 1. In other words, let your anger go the same day it arises.
 2. If it is held in long enough, anger will lead to malice, hatred, and a desire for revenge.
 - B. (Ephesians 4:27) Do not "*give place to the devil.*"
 1. We must avoid giving Satan the opportunity to lead us into sin.
 2. (James 4:7) "*Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*"
 - C. Additional instructions:
 1. Remember that vengeance belongs to God (Romans 12:19).
 2. We are to "*overcome evil with good*" (Romans 12:20-21).
 3. We must follow the order given in James 1:19-20.
 4. Great words of wisdom are found in Proverbs 14:29; 15:1; and 16:32.