

Dealing With Anger

Film

Do you believe the wife dealt with the root of her husband's anger by attempting to please him sexually? Why or why not?

Teaching

Anger is a powerful emotion that each of us experiences from time to time. Some people believe that it is wrong for a person to get angry. That's not only true, but also impossible. Anger is a normal, universal emotion. While anger due to an injustice can often serve as a trigger for action, it is possible for anger to lead to destruction when not handled wisely and responsibly - and that is what we see in *Push*.

The book of Proverbs warns that a hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, and anger rests in a fool's heart. However, a man of understanding will be patient.¹ While there are a number of strategies that can be applied to control angry outbursts, it's always best to address the internal root of the anger.

Colossians 3:8-10 provides a prescription for dealing with anger from the inside out before it becomes sinful: *But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips ... since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.*

The goal is not to merely manage anger, but to rid yourself of anger that manifests as rage, malice, slander, and filthy lips. This is a continual process that happens as you abide in Christ, and walk in the Spirit.

Call to Action/Homework

James 1:19-20 commands every person to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Note: this scripture does not let *anyone* off the hook, not even those with aggressive personalities. The reason for this command is because man's anger does not produce God's righteousness.

While you should take advantage of anger management courses, counseling, and other strategies that may assist you as you deal with your anger, understand that true victory over anger only comes through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion

1. When you become angry, do you negatively affect your marriage? What would your spouse say?
2. What particular words, actions, and/or situations trigger your anger?

¹ Proverbs 15:18

Abuse In Marriage

Film

At what point during the video did the husband begin abusing his wife? Explain your answer.

Teaching

Abuse is always self-defined, and always wrong. Abuse is sin. It is a violation of God's character and God's design. It destroys people, relationships, and hope.

Look at these alarming statistics:

- . Nearly half of all women and men in the United States have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime (48.4% and 48.8%, respectively).²
- . Females ages 18 to 34 generally experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence.³
- . Approximately 1.3 million women and 835,000 men are physically assaulted by an intimate partner annually in the United States.⁴

Many spouses grew up in an abusive environment, and saw hate demonstrated instead of love. As a result, many think abuse is the normal way to resolve conflict in a relationship. If you are the abuser in your relationship, know that your actions are immoral at best, and criminal at worst. If you're the spouse being abused, know that the abuse is never deserved, is never okay, and should never be tolerated.

Call to Action/Homework

Abuse is not God's will, and there's help for both spouses if either is willing to take a step forward. If you're in a dangerous situation where you or your children feel threatened, get to a safe place immediately. No one should stay in an unsafe place for any reason. You can still believe in your marriage and work on it, but you should do it from a safe place until there's documented proof from a professional that your spouse has changed for the better. If you are the abuser, there's hope for you. You must come to grips with your need for power, and surrender your pride and brokenness to God. Both spouses should contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline for free support: {www.thehotline.org, 1.800.799.SAFE (7233) or TTY 1.800.787.3224}.

Discussion

1. Abuse is self-defined. How do you define abuse?
2. What causes a person to need to control another person?

² <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ipv9310.pdf>

³ <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ipv9310.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.nij.gov/pubs-sum/183781.htm>

Your Children Are Watching

Film

How do you think the dad felt when he realized his daughter was watching him threaten her mother?

Teaching

With children, more is caught than taught. This is arguably the most powerful phrase that has ever been spoken regarding how and what children learn. Long before they can speak or understand situations, children copy what they see and hear.

This was famously demonstrated by a Stanford psychologist who showed a video of adult males and females assaulting a three-foot-high inflated plastic doll to a group of children. When the children watched the video then came face-to-face with the doll, they too, assaulted the doll.⁵

In Ephesians 5:1, the Apostle Paul writes about children imitating their fathers. This is just further proof that children watch their parents, and take their cues from them. It is imperative that you understand that your example, even when you aren't saying a word, speaks volumes to your children. As they are growing up, they see you as someone who sets the standard for behavior. This is why it is important that as much as possible, your walk match your talk, and that you not be satisfied to simply say, "Do as I say, and not as I do." Children are smarter than that, and will not follow that flawed strategy for long, especially if you are asking them to do something that you yourself are not carrying out.

Call to Action/Homework

As a parent, it is essential that you realize that you are being watched and copied by your children. You are the chief example, especially if the children are young. Therefore, make it a goal of yours to live a life that you'd be proud to see your children copy -- one of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. More is caught than taught, so ensure you're being a good teacher with your lifestyle.

Discussion

1. Talk about some positive behaviors you have seen your children doing that you know they got from you. What will you do to help those behaviors continue?
2. Talk about some negative behaviors you have seen your children doing that you know they got from you. What will you do to help change those behaviors?

⁵ <http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/comm/bandur-s.mhtml>