

she expect what was going to happen to her. The son bit off his mother's ears! He said he did it as revenge because he blamed his mother for not teaching him right as he was growing up. If he had been taught to curb his little acts of stealing when he was young, he would not have become a criminal.

One of the messages of this story is that greed, if left to develop, can lead to grave mistakes in life.

In this exercise, each one of us will think of one or two areas where we know we are the weakest and likely to succumb to greed. Then we will write a short explanatory note about the area we are likely to fall into temptation and what those temptations to sin are. After that we will put that note, anonymously, into a box. The teacher will then pick out each slip of paper and write those areas identified on the board. As a class, we will brainstorm how we can guard against those temptations.

Teaching Tips

If time permits, perhaps the teacher can break the students into groups and have them do a skit or role-play on people who are under temptations of greed. Then, as a class, brainstorm ideas how to help that person. That way, the students may not feel they have to write down what they think their weaknesses are, but can instead bring it up indirectly through the skit

REFLECTION & PRAYER



Let's read Proverbs 30:7-9. This is a very wise prayer request made of God. A Christian should always aspire to lead a simple life. God has promised to take care of our lives. If we spend too much of our time and energy on things of the world, we will definitely compromise in our faith and zeal towards God. Worse, we may even make foolish decisions like some of the biblical characters we studied today. If we resolve to lead a simple life, we can be spared from the snares of greed.

Lesson 12

Anger

Listed Scriptures

Num 20; Jdgs 12; Dan 6; Jn 8:1-7

Lesson Aim

- 1) To help our students learn from the examples of biblical characters who had anger issues.
- 2) To help our students take specific steps to control and diffuse anger.

Memory Verse

“Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.” (Eph 4:26, 27)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Ecclesiastes 3-5

BIBLE BACKGROUND



Anger can be likened to a flame that can set a whole forest ablaze. In the Bible, we can find examples of tragedies that happened when anger was not brought under control.

In Judges 12, we see a very sad case of how brothers killed one another because two parties did not know how to handle their anger. The Ephraimites were upset that they were not enlisted by Jephthah, the judge, to fight the Ammonites. Jephthah's reply showed anger and folly, causing the Ephraimites to be more upset. In the end, the Gileadites (Jephthah's brothers) killed forty thousand Ephraimites when a fight broke out between them. We can see that anger can lead one to say provocative words that hurt and cause trouble.

Proverbs 16:32 says, "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." Anger is one fleshly weakness that is hard to control. Being angry in itself is not destructive. But, anger inevitably leads to other thoughts or actions that are often sinful or may lead to sin. Anger that is not resolved can lead to hatred, which may in turn lead to physical, harmful acts. That is why Proverbs 29:22 says, "An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered man commits many sins."

W A R M U P



Is there anyone in this class who dares to claim he has never been angry before? Does anger necessarily lead to verbal or even physical fights? Why or why not? (Let students respond.)

Let us first read Proverbs 16:32, "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." Why do you think such a person wields so much "power"? Can you think of situations where gentleness wins the day?

Today, we will look at this topic of anger. It is possible to be angry but not to lose our temper, or as Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry and do not sin". We will first look at some biblical examples of how anger was or was not brought under control.

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1

Anger Gone Awry

For the following two sections, read the Bible references and answer the questions.

A. Numbers 20:1-12

- What was the complaint from the Israelites? (They had no water to drink.)
- In vv. 3-5, we see that the Israelites made a complaint in a manner that they

had always been doing since they left Egypt. Analyze the complaint.

- What types of comparisons did they make? (They compared their current state with the lives they had in Egypt and the foods they enjoyed.)
 - Who were they pointing a finger at? (Moses, for bringing them out of Egypt.)
 - Do you think such murmuring provoked Moses' moods, or anyone's moods, for that matter? Why? (Yes, especially since they had done it many times. It makes even the most gentle-spirited person irritated.)
- What did God tell Moses he should do to handle the situation? (He told Moses to speak to the rock and water would flow out.)
 - What were the result of the complaints on Moses (vv. 10-12)? (Moses was so disturbed that he did not obey God's command to simply speak to the rock. Instead, he struck the rock twice with his staff and water came out. As a result, God did not allow Moses to enter Canaan because he did not honor Him.)
 - If you were in Moses' shoes, do you think you would have done differently?



B. Judges 12:1-6

- What was the complaint of the Ephraimites (v.1)? (That they were not included in the fight against the Ammonites.)
 - Do you think it was a justified complaint? Why? (No, because according to Jephthah, they were called but they chose not to fight. See v. 2)
 - Do you think their approach was provocative and offensive? Explain. (Anytime we confront someone, we run the risk of aggravation. The Ephraimites were definitely confrontational and harsh.)
 - Do you think they could have voiced their displeasure in another way? How? (Perhaps by talking to Jephthah after the whole situation had blown over, just so they can be counted in the next time. There was no way to turn the present situation around anyway.)

- b. What was Jephthah's reply? Do you think his reply was equally provocative and offensive, like the approach of the Ephraimites? Cite evidence from the passage.
(He replied by pushing the blame to them, saying that they were called to help but refused to help him, v. 2. He even went on to say that as a result of their refusal to help, he had a hard time fighting the Ammonites, v. 3)
- c. What was the result of the confrontation between the Ephraimites and Jephthah?
(Jephthah gathered the Gileadites to fight the Ephraimites. They were actually all brothers of the nation of Israel. Forty-two Ephraimites died.)
- d. Do you think the tragedy could have been averted? In what ways could both sides have given in a little?
(They could have tried not to speak so harshly. Or, they could have let the matter rest for a while until everyone was more calm to talk things over. It is always wise not to discuss things when one is angry or not ready.)
- e. What does this event tell you about the potential damage of confrontations and spiteful words?
(It can cause a lot of damage – sometimes irreparable damage to one's life, and relationships are hurt.)



Part 2

Potential Confrontation Avoided

A. Daniel 6:1-10

- a. What was the plot against Daniel?
(The satraps wanted to remove Daniel by having him go against the king's decree that no one should bow to any one else but the king himself.)
- b. As the favored one of the king, do you think Daniel could have gone up to the king to clarify matters after learning about the plot against himself?
(Yes, but Daniel chose to tell it to God first, before doing anything.)
- c. Why was the situation potentially confrontational? Who would have been

likely to confront whom?
(Daniel could have confronted the king or the satraps, his colleagues.)

- d. What did Daniel choose to do to deal with the situation?
(Daniel chose prayer and reliance on God.)
- e. What else could he have done, if anything? Explain.
(He could have chickened out and not worshiped God. That way, he would have failed. He could have talked to the king. But Daniel chose to stick to the most reliable method: turn to God first.)

B. John 8:1-7

- a. Why was this a situation that was potentially confrontational?
(If Jesus Christ let the woman go, the people would accuse Him of condoning adultery. If he did not, they could accuse Him of not showing mercy.)
- b. Who were the ones who tried to initiate the tension/confrontation against the Lord Jesus?
(Teachers of the law and the Pharisees.)
- c. How did the Lord Jesus alleviate the tension?
(The Lord Jesus calmed Himself down when facing confrontation by drawing on the earth).

C. Conclusion

There is a saying that one should not utter more than three sentences when one is angry. This highlights the crucial role of holding back our words when we're not in a clear-minded situation. Why do you think this is so? (Answers include: words can lead to argument; words can hurt someone when we don't mean to; words are like spilled milk, you can never take it back; the damage caused by words can sometimes be irreparable.)

Other than holding back our words, what other methods are there in alleviating situations of tension/anger? Daniel's example shows us the importance of prayer. The Lord Jesus' example shows us the need to calm down and not react right away. (Brainstorm as a class – talking a walk, go running, do something else and come

back to deal with the matter at hand only after one has allowed things to settle and cool off etc.)

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 What was the complaint of the Israelites at Kadesh?

2 Why did Moses lose his cool?

3 What did Jephthah do that caused the Israelite brothers to end up killing one another?

4 What could have been done in the cases of Moses and Jephthah to avoid the tragedies?

5 What were the methods of Daniel and the Lord Jesus in dealing with potentially confrontational situations?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Part A- Anger, A Lethal Weapon

Most human beings get angry at some points in their lives. Some people are more prone to anger, while others are not. Actually, when we say a person is prone to anger, it is often because we see more manifestations of anger from that person. One of the most commonly seen manifestations of anger is the outburst of angry words. Here is a thought-provoking story about the damage of anger and spiteful words.

Once upon a time, there was a boy with a very difficult character. His father gave him a bag full of nails and told him to drive one nail in the garden fence every time he lost his patience and/or had an argument with someone. The first day, the boy drove 37 nails in the garden fence.

In the following weeks, the boy learned to control himself and the number of

nails driven into the fence got lower everyday. The boy discovered that it was easier to learn to control himself than to hammer nails in the fence.

At last, the day came when the boy did not drive any nails in the garden fence. Then he went to his father and told him that he did not need to hammer any nails again. His father then told him to take out one nail from the fence for every day he succeeded in controlling his temper and not losing his patience.

Many days passed and finally the boy could tell his father that he took out all the nails from the fence. The father brought his son in front of the fence and told him: "My son, you behaved well, but look how many holes you left in the fence. It will never be the same again."

When you have an argument with someone and say hurtful words to him, you leave him with wounds like the nail holes in the fence. You can stab a man and then take the knife out, but you will always leave a wound. It does not matter how many times you say sorry, the wound will stay. A wound caused by words hurts just as badly as a physical wound.

Questions to think about:

- 1.** Can you think of an occasion when you were angry and said things or did things that caused "holes in the fence" as the boy did in the story?
- 2.** Did you manage to make amends for the damage or hurt you caused? If so, how? If not, why not?
- 3.** If you could do things differently, what would you have done in that incident?
- 4.** What lesson did you learn from that incident?

Part B- Self-Control in Times of Anger

As the memory verse teaches us, we should not sin when we are angry. What does it mean to be angry but not to sin? (Let students respond.)

It is sometimes inevitable that things happen or certain people make us angry. But, how we deal with the situation will determine if we are true Christians with good spiritual character.

The Bible has many verses of encouragement about how to handle confrontational situations. Using a concordance, work in groups of two or three to come up with a list of five verses that are relevant for exhortation in self-control when we are angry. (You may use search words like "angry", "wrath", "feelings" etc. As a group, brainstorm the words that are related to this topic.)

For each verse, come up with an example of a potentially explosive situation and an explanatory paragraph of how the Bible verse can help alleviate the anger. Then, share with the rest of the class what your group has come up with.

Here's a sample for this exercise:

Bible Verse	Example of Situation	Explanation of how the verse helps/could have helped
Proverb 15:1 – "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."	Mary came back home one day looking like she had a bad day. The moment she stepped into the apartment she said really loudly to her sister, "Could you please turn off the music? I am stressed out as it is already, and your music irritates me even more!" Her sister felt very offended and replied, "You deserve to be stressed out. It's nothing to do with me. Why are you taking it out on me and my music?" A bigger verbal fight then ensued.	If Mary had been careful to remind herself not to have spiteful outbursts, knowing that she had had a stressful day, she would not have provoked her sister. If her sister had remembered to reply with a soft answer, such as, "Okay, I'll turn off the music now. Are you feeling alright?", things would have been under control right away.
Example 2		
Example 3		
Example 4		
Example 5		

Some of the verses that can be shared to help the students get started include: Eccl 7:9, Prov 20:3, Prov 16:32



Read Proverbs 18:21 – "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." In today's lesson, we studied the importance of controlling our tongue when we are angry. Actually, there are also many other manifestations of anger. As children of God, we should always be careful not to allow ourselves to get worked up. It takes conscious effort in spiritual cultivation. Finally, let us read James 1:19, 20 – "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God." May God help us to be people of a gentle spirit, that we may bring glory to His name!