**USING MERCY and ANGER TO CREATE PEACE: Resentment vs. Peacemaking**

Anger is the normal human response to injustice. When faced with hurt, it guides and motivates our efforts to correct an unfair situation. Its power is given to correct injustice. When justice is seen through the eyes of divine love and mercy, the anger is God's, and it is a powerful force influencing others. When the focus of our hurt is personal (*our* needs have been neglected, *our* pride has been hurt), we are walking in the flesh, so the most adaptive response is a turning to God for comfort and guidance. Sadness and tears are often the outward expression. When our expressions of grief (“I’m so sorry you feel that way”) meet with a cold heart and closed mind in others, then anger, having first broken open and cleansed our own souls, can do the same for others. Here is how the morally neutral powers of mercy and anger can be harnessed to do good for the Kingdom of God.

**UNMERCIFUL INWARD RESPONSES TO ANGER (Resentment)**

 Deny it, or bury it alive. **Eph 4:26**

Run to God about something else, as an escape, like just going on to church or Bible study and acting like nothing is wrong. **Mt 5:23-24; Mk 11:25-26**

 Plan ways to get even. **Rom 12:17,18**

**MERCIFUL INWARD RESPONSES TO ANGER (Peacemaking)**

 Turn to God for help**, Psalms 39 and 56**, and

 for inner cleansing. **Psalm 51; Mt 7:1-5**.

Forgive others. **Matt 6:12-15; Mt 18:21-35; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13**

Pray for enemies, appealing to God's wrath: **Psalms 35 and 109, Matt 23**

 justice**: Psalms 28 and 37**, and *then*

 mercy: **Luke 6:27-8, 23:33-34**

Decide if it is your anger (problem) or God's. **Romans 12:17-21**

**UNMERCIFUL OUTWARD RESPONSES TO ANGER (Resentment)**

Speaking quickly without reflection. **Prov 14: 17, 29; 29:11**

Cursing **Rom 12:14, James 1: 19-21**

Gossip **Lev 19:16, Rom 1: 28-9**

Hostile, insulting criticism to the offender's face. **Mt 5: 21-2**

 behind offender's back. **II Cor 12:20**

Getting even - paying back the hurt. **Mt 5: 38-9, Rom 12:19**

**MERCIFUL OUTWARD RESPONSES TO ANGER (Peacemaking)**

Be kind to enemies. **I Sam 24: 1-22; Prov. 25:21-22; Mt 5: 38-47**; **Rom 12: 19-20**

Take action to correct situation. **John 2: 13-17**

Verbally confront the offender. **II Tim 2: 24-25; Mt 23**

Try to make peace, first one-to-one, then with one or two others to help resolve differences, then to church authority. **Mt 18: 15-20** The healing of the relationship comes from the new and deeper

 understanding of each other, which comes from really listening to each other, which comes from

the power of Jesus' presence: **v. 20**