



June 22, 2025
Kevin Sneed
Matthew 5:21-26

Introduction

This week's message explores Jesus' teaching on anger in an age of increasing dehumanization and outrage. Kevin Sneed challenges us to examine how anger resides in the heart and can slowly consume our entire being. Continuing our journey through the Sermon on the Mount, we see Jesus taking us deeper than external behavior to heart transformation. Through Matthew 5:21-26, Jesus reveals that true righteousness—the kind that surpasses the Pharisees—addresses not just murder but the anger that leads to it. The message distinguishes between destructive anger rooted in self-righteousness and redemptive anger that doesn't sin, calling us to break free from the vicious cycle of anger, contempt, and dehumanization.

Key Texts: Matthew 5:21-26; Ephesians 4:26; Proverbs 4:23

Icebreaker

What's something that people get way too worked up about that you think is pretty silly or harmless?

Discussion Questions

1. Kevin mentioned that we live in "an age of creeping dehumanization" where communities form around shared anger. How do you see this playing out on social media or in our culture? How does this affect you personally?

2. **Read Matthew 5:21-22 together.** Jesus moves from "you have heard it said" to "but I tell you," going deeper than just the act of murder to the heart issue of anger. How does this connect to last week's discussion about righteousness that surpasses the Pharisees?
 3. Kevin distinguished between two types of anger: destructive anger (rooted in self-righteousness) and redemptive anger (like Jesus cleansing the temple).
Read Ephesians 4:26 together. What does it look like to "be angry and do not sin"? Can you think of examples of each type?
 4. The message outlined a vicious cycle: anger → contempt ("Raca") → dehumanization ("Fool"). Kevin explained how contempt dismisses someone's humanity by reducing them to labels. Where do you see this cycle playing out in relationships, politics, or even in your own heart?
 5. **Read the rest of Matthew 5:23-26 together.** Jesus says to leave your gift at the altar and first be reconciled. Since the altar was 80 miles away from where Jesus was teaching, what point was He making about the urgency of dealing with anger and reconciliation?
 6. Kevin mentioned that if our hearts aren't bent toward Jesus, we'd be miserable in the Kingdom of God. How does understanding this change how you think about anger consuming your life, even if you never physically harm anyone?
-

Key Takeaways

- Anger in the heart can slowly consume our entire being
 - There's a difference between destructive anger and redemptive anger
 - The vicious cycle: anger leads to contempt, which leads to dehumanization
 - Jesus calls us to deal with anger urgently through reconciliation
 - Heart transformation is more urgent than religious ritual
 - Unresolved anger makes us slaves and robs us of life
-

Notes