

# *Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:1-7*

## Our Attitudes

God chose us not to be like robots but like him, experiencing emotion--emotional beings by his design. You see, we can express emotion and feelings of love toward God. But emotion can also be a vehicle for the enemy. God wants us to control our emotions. He doesn't want our emotions to dictate our actions but he wants his Word to dictate our actions. **Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:1-7, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members of one another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth [spiritual application of the 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment]. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (verses 25-32) "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them." (verses 1-7) Put off the old man and put on the new man and his nature. The new man has a new mind, a new tongue, and as we'll study this week, a new attitude. **Verses 26-27, "In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."** Anger itself is not a sin, but this emotion can lead to sin. Righteous anger is an anger against sin. But uncontrolled, selfish anger leads to sin. Generally we find ourselves angry because**

we didn't get something we wanted. Sometimes anger can be the result of someone else getting something we wanted. But the main area we get angry in is when we get hurt--hurt by someone else. This kind of anger should be shut off very quickly by the Holy Spirit in us, or else we're headed for trouble. [Refer to Nan Missler's four step process for giving Jesus our hurts & offenses that others have caused us.] **Proverbs 15:1,18, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger..." (18) "A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger allays contention." 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." 19:11, "The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and it is to his glory to overlook a transgression." 27:4, "Wrath is cruel and anger arrogant, but who is able to stand before jealousy?" 14:29, "He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly."** Do you get angry when you're hurt or do you pray? *An old Latin proverb says, "He who goes to bed angry goes to bed with the devil."* Don't go to bed with the enemy. Anger is an emotion God has given to us. But he warns us to use it properly. Horace calls anger momentary insanity. Uncontrolled anger makes us irrational. Paul's answer to anger is found in **Romans 12:14-21, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' [Deut. 32:35] On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' [Prov. 25:21-22] Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."** What Paul is saying here is that when you respond to non-Christian abuse and hurting with love, it is a powerful witness. But on the other hand, uncontrolled anger can divide families, destroying and tearing them apart. The reality of life is that we will often unintentionally hurt each other. Satan grabs these opportunities and uses them against us if we're not watchful and deal with our hurts and angers properly right away. Satan hates God and God's people. When he finds a spark of anger in a Christian he fans it until it flames up. Anger that broods over into the next day turns into bitterness. Avoid bitterness like the plague. **Ephesians 4:31-32, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and all evil speaking [slander], be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind**

**one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."** Bitterness defiles you and blinds you from seeing God. If you know someone who is bitter, pray for them. **God allows others into our lives, giving us hard times. These will either make us better or bitter.** But we have a choice in the matter because of and through the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

*Example Of Moses & Ruth 'And The Waters Of Bitterness'*

**Exodus 15:22-26, "Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, 'What are we to drink?' Then Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the Lord made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them. He said, 'If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you."** This occurred just after their great deliverance from the Egyptian army by the parting of the Red Sea. They got angry. Have you come to bitter waters in your life? God has done it to make you better, not bitter. God can make those bitter waters sweet. God brought bitterness into the life of Naomi, mother-in-law of Ruth. Look how it turned out, and to what purpose. **Ruth 1:3-18; 4:13-17, "Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband. When she heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah. Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, 'Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the Lord show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.'** Then she kissed them and they wept aloud and said

to her, 'We will go back with you to your people.' But Naomi said, 'Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me--even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons--would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has gone out against me!' At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-by, but Ruth clung to her. 'Look,' said Naomi, 'your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.' But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.' When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her." God brought Naomi through some bitter times. God took these difficult times and turned them sweet. Naomi brought home to Judah the Great Grandmother of king David. **Ruth 4:13-17, "So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he went in to her, and the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. The women said to Naomi: 'Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.'** Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. The women living there said, 'Naomi has a son.' And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David."

Learning how to forgive and forget is the key to a happy Christian life. What God desires is **verse 32 of Ephesians 4, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."** Love covers a multitude of sins. If we do this with anger--putting it aside--**Isaiah 58:9-12** will become a part of our lives. **"Then you will call, and the Lord will answer, you will cry for help, and he will say; Here I am. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose**

**waters never fail. Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of the Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.”**