

God of Wrath

does God REALLY get angry?

Primary Objective: To help teenagers see that God is more than a happy-go-lucky Cosmic Genie. He does experience anger and it is important to watch for what His Wrath is directed towards.

Secondary Objective: To show teens what God gets angry about, how we are to do likewise, and brainstorm ideas how to do so.

Scripture Used In This Lesson

Acts 5. 1-10

Genesis 6. 11-8. 22 (overview)

John 9. 12-16

Supplies Needed

David Crowder*Band Can You Hear Us? CD

Handouts

Bibles

Pens

Supplies for Games played

Suggestions for opening activity/game:

Centipede Wars: *allows students the opportunity to run out energy and build some camaraderie as a team. This will come into play later in the lesson.*

Birdie on the Perch: *allows students to blow off tense energy and serves to break down some potential social barriers, which will serve to give better interaction later in the lesson.*

Opening: Play God of Wrath Bump

Teaching Script

Tonight we are going to dive into a fairly tense topic. Does God experience anger? How does He deal with anger if He does experience it? But first I want to find out if we can define anger and wrath.

Have Students split into two separate groups. One group should define “wrath” and the other will be responsible for defining “anger.” These are the answers that students should come up with, or be guided towards.

Definitions of Wrath and Anger according to Webster's Dictionary

Anger

Etymology: Middle English, affliction, anger, from Old Norse angr grief; akin to Old English enge narrow, Latin angere to strangle, Greek anchein:

a strong feeling of displeasure and usually of antagonism

Wrath

Etymology: Middle English, from Old English wræ? ththo, from wrath wroth:

*1: strong vengeful anger or indignation
2: retributory punishment for an offense or a crime : divine chastisement*

Teaching Script

As you can see, there is a difference between anger and wrath. The biggest difference is that while anger is an emotion, wrath builds on anger and comes an action. Anger=noun (almost), wrath=verb. Can you see God acting on anger? Can you even see Him getting angry?

We're going to try something that is going to tax you. It is going to test your memory and your acting ability. I like to call it Dramatic Challenge.

Dramatic Challenge



Divide students into 3 teams and have them act out an assigned story of God's wrath being depicted. They are not allowed to use Scripture, and must create their drama entirely from memory.

Team One: Genesis 6.11 - 8.22 (The Flood Account)

Team Two: John 9.12 - 16

Team Three: Acts 5.1 - 10

***Should students experience a hard time trying to act these stories out, feel free to give them hints or allow them to read the passage and go on from there. After they are all acted out, go back and hit any major points in the Scripture accounts that may have been missed during the acting.*

Teaching Script

As you can see, God just might experience anger and let it pour out in wrath. Let's dive in a little deeper and exegete these passages together

Scripture Exegesis:

Genesis Noah Account

God was flat out disgusted with humanity over how far they had fallen from His original intention.

The entire earth was destroyed. People everywhere died. In today's terms, we would be labeling this genocide. An entire group of people (the world's population) being wiped out.

God's sense of holiness simply was not able to deal with the depravity of humanity.

Jesus in the Temple

This takes place during the Passover, a Jewish feast that all people of the Jewish faith would travel back to Jerusalem in order to remember what God had done for them while in bondage in Egypt.

Jews were required to offer sacrifices during this feast each year, many of which would involve animals.

It was a common custom to sell traveling Jews animals to sacrifice since it was next to impossible to travel from sometimes hundreds of miles with an animal to sacrifice. They would sometimes also need to exchange their money into the local form of currency.

Jesus was angry primarily about these moneychangers and salesmen taking advantage and overcharging; stealing from the faithful Jews

Ananias and Sapphira

Ananias and Sapphira sold land and gave money from that sale to the church as an offering.

It was (and still is) a necessary practice in Christianity to give God our first fruits from any financial transaction.

The problem was not in keeping some of the money from the sale back. Ananias and Sapphira were well within their rights to do so. The problem was that they were attempting to fool everyone else (and God) into believing that they were giving all the money to God.

Ananias and Sapphira's sin was lying to both the church and to God... and the sin of pride.

Teaching Script

So looking at all of this, how does it apply to our lives today that God does indeed experience both anger and wrath?

Give students an opportunity to brainstorm how this all applies to their lives today. If their answers stray toward answers and practices that are shallow, then share the following with them:

Scripture Hermeneutics:

From the Genesis account we see God pouring out His wrath (literally) upon the earth because they have turned away from God, effectively forgetting Him. There is no effort made by the people to seek out God's will for their lives. No prayer, no fasting, no abstaining from practices that were harmful to them (physically, emotionally, spiritually, etc.)

From John we see Jesus displaying righteous anger because the people in the Temple were taking advantage of faithful Jews who were attempting to observe God's laws and commands for their lives, seeking out the best that there was that He offers.

From Acts we learn that God was not (and is still not) afraid to punish people for their sins against Him. Ananias and Sapphira attempted to make themselves look better and lied to God and the rest of the church to do so.

In short, we need to see where these people failed God, and strive to make every effort to please God with our heart and our actions. Don't engage in actions we know God does not want us to. Seek out His will through prayer, Scripture, the wisdom of other believers. Be honest and fair. Allow ourselves to be who God created us to be.

Take Home: How can we be practical and tangible about this?

Hand out cards to students. While listening to the David Crowder*Band's *God of Wrath* (or other appropriate song), have students brainstorm and write down what God despised in these passage. Then have students write the out areas that they see in their own lives where they are angering or frustrating God. Finally, have students write in ink one thing (they can write more than one thing if they wish, but make sure that they write at least one before they leave) from their list that they are going to work on changing this week. Don't let them just write that item, however. Encourage them to write out some thoughts on an actual procedure or steps that they will take to change that particular behavior.

***Additional step for the deeper group: Have students select an accountability partner who will help them to stick to this commitment.*

Close the evening in prayer, focusing especially upon whatever students have written down.

