

Has Someone Hit a Nerve?

A challenging question to ask yourself:

What are you like when you fly off the handle at your kids, your wife, friends or others? Anger is an alarm that is saying something is wrong.... The issue that made you so angry may only be a superficial sign of something that touched a deeper nerve in you. A wise discerning person attempts to “peel back the onion” so to speak and tries to get to the underlying feeling that relates to the nerve that was hit. A good start is to have a list of words to help you identify and describe the feelings that you have when you get angry. When you get angry, stop and see if you can put words to your underlying feelings. Examples might be; you feel “hurt”, or you feel “embarrassed” or “ashamed”, or “dis-respected”, or “un-loved”, or any number of one-word descriptions.

Ask... what is the deep-seated wound which they may have hit? Does it go back to your childhood, back to your parents, or specific point in your life? There’s a lot of wisdom to slow down and just try to hear where God might be working and pray fully try to get to the root causes of your pain. Try a quick prayer every time you get angry: “*Lord God, please show me why this issue makes me so angry. Please give me one or two words to describe how I’m feeling inside right now. Please quiet me inside.*”

This bible verse may help:

Search me, God, and know my heart! try me and know my anxious thoughts! See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139: 25 (ESV)

See what Romans 7:18-25 has to say about this: New International Version (NIV)

For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Romans 7-25 (NIV)

How did you catch the habit of an in-appropriate angry manner? Was anger a part of your family life; expressed by your mom or dad or one of your siblings or early on with classmates? Explain _____

Talking Points

We are responsible for our own behavior, not the behavior of others. Realize you're the problem, she's not the problem, or he's not the problem, but rather you're the problem! One week as I attended Pastor Rick Warren's weekly church service, and had listening and marinating on his more than 20 years of sermons and teaching.....Pastor Rick said.... You need to realize who's the real problem. After hearing hundreds of his services, God was using Pastor Rick to say his message a different way and it felt like Pastor Rick was talking right to me! Sitting there all alone I had to hear the tough words; I was the real problem, I had a heart problem, I had a poor attitude of the heart! Sometimes God will use anyone, anywhere to get his point across to clean up un-godly areas in our life!

What are you like when you're tired, frustrated, hurt, impatient, or crabby? As I heard from a pastor friend of mine, Pastor Kenny Luck (founder of everymanministries.com) most of your arguments often will relate one of the following four conditions, which together, spell the word HALT. Recently, when you got angry or acted out a harmful behavior, were you:

- H Hungry**-----Was your last fight with your wife after a long day and were you hungry?
- A Angry**-----In your last argument with your wife were you angry about something?
- L Lonely**-----In your last disagreement with your wife were you feeling lonely and left out?
- T Tired**-----Was your last fight at the end of the week when you were very tired and run down?

If you identify the underlying feelings and conditions that lead to being angry or making bad decisions, you can begin to change for the better. I've learned that we're all broken and handicapped one way or another, and with a humble attitude we'll get more grace from others around us.

Additional questions to ask:

- 1) Think of a recent situation where you were angry or hurt. Can you identify any underlying feelings? What were you frustrated or irritated about at the time? Explain _____

- 2) Do you have a humble and repentant heart or do you pout and sulk for a while if you don't get your way? Explain _____

Talking Points

- 3) Do you talk too much and listen too little to others? (Often 70 % of the time we are tuning out others!) See what James 1:19 (NIV) has to say about this. *My brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.* Explain how well you do at listening to others. _____

- 4) What deep seated wounds from the past do you need to share with a Christian-based counselor or a safe men's group? Explain who's really hurt you in the past? _____

- 5) List a couple of areas in your life that you may need to look at closer. Examples; inappropriate anger, or your impatience with others, or maybe your poor attitude with your wife or others. If you were truly honest what comes to mind? Explain _____

See what Romans 8: 5-10 has to say about living in the flesh.

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.

Romans 8: 5-10 (NIV)

I encourage you to pray a simple prayer. Pray something like this to move forward past any hurt or pain:

Pray... Lord take my short comings, my faults, my deep, deep wounds, my hurts, my insecurities and heal me. I want to be the Godly man that you have created me to be... Gently show me the things that I need to work on and change me from the inside out, no matter what it takes!

Additional verses to marinate on and study:

The Vine and the Branches *I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.*

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

John 15: 1-7 (NIV)

As you humbly ask God to change you, don't worry! He has your best interest at heart! Think of some of the verses you've read in today's study. You can see that God loves you so much and will help you change to be what He wants you to be.