

Managing Anger: Stop and Calm Down

Quarter 10 • Lesson 9

Focus on Life Skills

1. *Connecting:* Act out ways to show anger.
2. *Teaching:* Learn the first step in anger management (Ephesians 4:26; Proverbs 29:22).
3. *Responding:* Practice different ways to stop and calm down.

SUPPLIES

- Bible

Optional Supplies:

- Clock with a second hand or stopwatch
- Memory Verse Poster
- Paper
- Crayons
- Pencils
- Student Pages

Before class, think of a time when you were angry. You will share this story with the children, so be sure that the subject matter is appropriate to share with them

Teacher Devotion

Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end.

Proverbs 29:11

Has someone ever said or done something that made you very angry? Did you immediately begin to think about what you could do to pay that person back for what he did? The Bible warns us against this temptation. So often it is our pride that makes us react in anger. But God calls that foolishness. He wants us to react with wisdom instead of rage.

Spend some time with God, thinking about what makes you angry. Ask Him to help you think about what could happen if you gave full vent to your rage. Ask God for the wisdom you need to react calmly in the situation. Trust Him to help you to be wise and remain calm. And the example of your life will teach those around you, including the children you teach.

Family Connection: Let the children's families know that their children are starting a unit about managing anger. Encourage families to share different ideas that help them stop and calm down when they feel angry.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Act out ways to show anger.

Greet your children warmly. As they arrive ask them how they did leading in their different circles this past week. When you are ready to begin, have the children sit down.

God created each of us to feel all kinds of emotions. One of the emotions everyone experiences is anger. Let's act out different ways we show anger.

I will tell you a situation. Think about how angry you would feel in that situation. Hold up 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 fingers to show how angry you are in that situation. The number 5 means you are very angry, and 1 means you are only a little angry. After everyone shows her number, you will silently act out how you might show your anger in that situation.

Read each situation. Pause after each for children to show how angry they would be by holding up their fingers. Then have them silently act out how they might show their anger. Children may do things like stomp their feet, pretend to yell, or hit the air.

Situation 1: You collect your family's water every morning. Today, someone bumped into you, and you fell. Your water container was badly damaged and cannot be mended. It is your family's only water container. How angry would you be?

Situation 2: Your mother works long hours so that she can buy food and pay your school fees. She has been very sick lately and unable to work. You will have to leave school to find work and support your family. How angry would you be?

Everyone experiences anger sometimes. For the next few weeks, we will learn how to respond to anger in healthy ways instead of in unhealthy ways.

2. Teaching: Learn the first step in anger management (Ephesians 4:26; Proverbs 29:22).

Today we will begin to learn how to manage our anger. When you manage something, you control it instead of letting it control you. There are 4 steps to managing anger. Today we will focus on the first step. First, let's talk about anger and what you know about it.

Teacher Tip: In this discussion, do not correct or judge the children's answers. This time is just to discover what they think about anger.

- **Think about when you have seen an angry person. What did that person look like? What did she act like?**
- **What kinds of things make people angry?**
- **When you become angry, what does it feel like?**
- **What kinds of things make you feel angry?**
- **When you are around someone who is angry, how does it make you feel?**
- **Do you think anger is a healthy thing or an unhealthy thing? Why?**

Anger can be healthy or unhealthy. Feeling angry is not always wrong or a sin. So how can you know if anger is good or sinful? Anger that comes from selfishness or pride, hurts others, or that we do not let go of can be sinful.

However, anger that is concerned for what is right and that protects you or others is not wrong. The Bible tells us that even Jesus became angry when He was living on earth. He was angry with those who were disrespectful to God and His house, the temple in Jerusalem.

Let me tell you about a time that I became angry.

Share the story you thought of before class about a time you felt angry. What happened? How did it feel to be angry?

Teacher Tip: Sharing stories from your own life helps the children see that all of us struggle with the same things. They also see how God is working in your life too.

Anger is like a warning. It tells our brains and bodies that someone has done or said something that feels wrong to us. It says, "Stop! Something is wrong here!" Anger can be a good, healthy emotion if it helps others or changes a situation in a good way. For example, if you are angry because you saw someone hurting a younger child and you found an adult to help the child, your anger was good. In this case, you responded to your anger in a useful way.

Sadly, many people respond to anger in unhealthy ways. They damage things and hurt themselves or others.

- **Have you or someone you know ever done something destructive in your anger? If so, what was damaged or hurt?**

Teacher Tip: Everyone feels angry when mistreated or when bad things happen. Some of the children in your class may have been mistreated. They have good reasons for their anger. It is important they understand that anger itself is not bad or sinful. But if we allow our anger to cause us to sin, that is wrong.

Let's read some Bible verses about anger:

"In your anger, do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.
Ephesians 4:26

- **What does it mean to let the sun go down while you are still angry?**

Help the children understand that letting the sun go down while still angry means that the person is holding on to their anger.

- **What are 2 things we should not do when we are angry?**

We should not sin and we should not hold on to anger.

*An angry person stirs up conflict,
and a hot-tempered person commits many sins.*
Proverbs 29:22

- **How do you think someone who is angry stirs up conflict?**

The angry person is not reacting in healthy ways but causes fights and hurts others by yelling at them.

Unfortunately, anger can lead us to sin in 2 different ways. We can lose control and allow our anger to explode. When we lose control, we often hurt ourselves and others.

Another way we can sin in our anger is by keeping our feelings inside. When we do this, the anger inside becomes like a poison in our hearts and bodies. Anger on the inside can turn into hatred and violence. It can also make us feel depressed.

Over the next few lessons, we will learn some steps that we can do to help us manage our anger. The first step is to stop and calm down. Let's learn some motions to help us remember this step.

Teach children these simple motions for Step 1 "Stop and calm down":

Stop: all the children will jump to their feet and hold one hand straight out in front of them to tell someone to stop.

Calm down: the children will place both arms at their sides and slowly sit back down.

Have children practice these motions each time you say, "Stop and calm down" during this lesson.

When you first begin to feel anger, your body sends you warning signs. When you recognize your body's warning signs, you are better able to manage your anger. These are some signs your body may send when you are angry:

Clenching your jaw or grinding your teeth

Heart beating faster

Breathing faster

Having a headache

Having a stomach ache

Sweating, especially in the palms of your hands

Feeling hot, especially in your face and neck

Shaking or trembling

Feeling dizzy

- **What physical signs have you experienced when you are angry?**

As soon as your body warns that you are becoming angry, there are some things you can do to stop and calm down. Listen to these ideas to help you.

Pause for children to do the motions. Continue to pause each time you say the words "Stop and calm down."

First, and most importantly, pray! It is much easier to manage our anger with God's help. If we try to manage it on our own, we often hurt others or ourselves. So ask God to help you stop and calm down. Remember, you can pray quietly to God anytime and anywhere. Ask Him to show you if your anger is selfish or if it is about something that is truly wrong. If it is selfish, you can tell Him you are sorry. If it is for something that is truly wrong, you can use the next few tips to help you manage your anger in a healthy way.

Pause for children to do the motions.

Second, take 3 deep breaths while you slowly count to 10.

Lead children in taking 3 slow breaths and holding up their fingers as they count silently and slowly to 10.

Next, try to find a way to quiet yourself. Perhaps take a walk, or sit still and close your eyes, or quietly sing a calming song.

Find a healthy way to express your anger. You could draw what you are angry about and then rip up the paper. Or you could stomp your feet or run very fast. None of these things harm others or yourself, but they do help you to express your anger

- **Are there other helpful things you do to stop and calm down when you are angry?**

Remind the children to do the motions, and then allow children to share their ideas.

Optional: If you are using the Student Pages, there is space for children to draw a picture of something that will help them calm down.

This week, when things happen that make you angry, remember that God will help you stop and calm down, if you ask Him.

3. Responding: Practice different ways to stop and calm down.

This week, pay attention to when you are feeling angry. When you start to feel angry, remember the first step to managing anger: stop and calm down.

Let's practice now! I will read the situations from earlier in this lesson. After I read each situation, we will practice our motions and 1 other way to calm down.

Read each situation. Pause after each for children to practice.

Situation 1: You collect your family's water every morning. Today, someone bumped into you, and you fell. Your water container was badly damaged and cannot be mended. It is your family's only water container.

Lead the children in the stop and calm down motions. Then have them fold their hands to signal they are going to pray and then act out a way to quiet themselves. For example, they may close their eyes or quietly sing a song.

Situation 2: Your mother works long hours so that she can buy food and pay your school fees. She has been very sick lately and unable to work. You will have to leave school to find work and support your family.

Lead the children in the motions. Then have them fold their hands to signal they are going to pray and then silently act out healthy ways to express their anger. For example, they may stomp their feet.

Good job practicing all these ways to manage your anger with this first step. Remember, the first and best thing to do is pray because God cares for you, and He can help you manage your anger.

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end.

Proverbs 29:11

Close class by speaking the following blessing from Ephesians 4:26 over the children.

Blessing: May you know that God will help you manage your anger. He knows you will get angry sometimes. He does not want you to sin or let your anger stay inside you. Ask Him to help you stop and calm down.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible. "A Thousand Hallelujahs" by Brooke Ligertwood: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeS49pSXDts>