

ANGER “SURRENDER”
Reflect Jesus by Releasing Offense
Matthew 5:21–24, 38–42

Big idea

- Anger may begin as a wound.
- Offense becomes a prison.
- Forgiveness is the key that opens the prison and how we reflect Jesus.

Introduction: “I’m not angry...”

Have you ever had a moment where you said, “**I’m not angry,**” while everyone around you quietly took two steps backward?

That is why the movie *Anger Management* is so funny.

AIRPLANES - PERSONAL STORY

The movie exaggerates it for comedy, **but Jesus takes it seriously.** In Matthew 5, Jesus says the problem is not only what comes out of our mouth; **the problem begins in the heart.**

So today I want us to ask a different question:

Not “Who made me angry?” but “What is happening in my heart, and how can I reflect Jesus through forgiveness rather than offense?”

Read Matthew 5:21–24.

1. Anger reveals the heart (Matthew 5:21–22)

Jesus says, “You have heard, ‘Do not murder,’ but I say to you that everyone who is angry...”

The Pharisees focused on the external act; Jesus goes **beneath the behavior to the heart.** The seed of murder is often anger, contempt, and bitterness.

Notice the progression:

- **anger,**
- **insulting words,**
- **contempt for a person’s worth.**

Key truth: God judges not only what I do with my hands, but what I nurture in my heart.

Unresolved anger eventually leaks out through sarcasm, coldness, gossip, avoidance, or revenge.

A simple question ...

- Whose name changes my tone of voice?
- Whom do I avoid?
- About whom do I repeatedly rehearse the story?

That may reveal an offense that has taken root.

Illustration: the backpack

Imagine carrying a backpack filled with stones. At first you think, “*I can handle this.*” One stone for that **betrayal**. One stone for that **criticism**. One

2. Offense blocks intimacy with God (Matthew 5:23–24)

Jesus gives a shocking picture: a worshiper brings a gift to the altar, remembers a broken relationship, and Jesus says, “**Leave your gift. First go and be reconciled.**”

Reconciliation matters so much that Jesus interrupts worship for it.

John Bevere describes offense as Satan’s bait. The bait feels justified:

- “**I have a right to be angry.**”
- “**They owe me an apology.**”
- “**After what they did, I cannot let it go.**”

But what begins as a wound can become a prison.

Offense becomes a prison.

And prisons rarely hold only one person; they affect families, friendships, churches, and communities.

3. Forgiveness sets me free (Matthew 5:38–42)

Jesus speaks about “eye for eye,” **a law originally meant to limit revenge**, not encourage it.

Turning the other cheek is not weakness; it is refusing to let evil dictate my response.

Going the second mile is not surrender; it is freedom from bitterness.

The world says, “Get even.” Jesus says, “Be free.” Don’t try to manage your anger, but surrender the offense!

Jesus is our model

“Sometimes I need to lose myself in Christ to find myself in Him.”

Forgiveness is the key that opens the prison.

A practical step for this week

Before you leave today, ask God for **one name**.

Then do **one thing** this week:

- send one message,
- make one phone call,
- pray one blessing,
- stop repeating one story.

Ministry moment

Sit quietly for a moment and ask the Lord:

- Who comes to mind immediately?
- What anger have I normalized?
- Is there someone I need to forgive today?
- Is there someone I need to approach in humility?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I confess my anger and offense. I release those who have hurt me. I surrender my right to revenge. Heal my heart, cleanse my worship, and make me a reflection of Your forgiveness. Amen.