

Worship Sheet for Sunday 7 March - Anger

Jesus famously overturns the tables of the money changers in the Temple accusing them of turning God's holy temple into a place where they flagrantly ripped people off for their own gain. He is angry – not out of pique but at the offence to God. Are we able to ensure that the motives for our anger and the methods we use to deal with it are in keeping with God's forgiveness and grace?

Call: Jesus was angry because instead of worship the Temple was being used to fleece people. Often we are angry because OUR nose is out of joint. Jesus was angry with those who should have known better but went out of his way to forgive and bless. We tend to hold on to our anger and are slow to forgive and make up. Teach us good Lord, to accept your grace and forgiveness and to welcome it by letting go of our anger and being ready to forgive others. Let this be part of our worship.

Pray Lord, forgive us when we impose higher standards on others than we do on ourselves. Remind us that when compared to your goodness we have no reason to feel proud of our behaviour. And yet, for all our shortcomings you are ready to forgive, welcome and bless us. Give us your Spirit in full measure that we may allow that acceptance to work through in the way we treat others. May anger recede and be transformed into forgiveness and love, which in turn might spread even more of those Christ like qualities. Help us not to wash our hands of others we deem to be unworthy, nor despair of the state the world but rather to utilise the grace you have given and to pray and trust you to effect change in us, in them and in the world. Accept our worship and hear us as we pray together saying: Our Father...

Read John 2: 13-22 Jesus rebukes the moneychangers in the Temple.

Thought We all get angry at time – with ourselves, with our circumstances, with others, even with God. Sometimes we may think it is with good cause, though even when that is the case we often “blow it” by going over the top and making things worse. We can become blinkered to our own faults and failings and isn't amazing how often we imagine that the fault is entirely the “other person's”! The 10 commandments are usually used as a list of rights and wrongs to point out where we have failed. But while that is one use, another is to point us to the kind of relationship God wants us to enjoy with him – a depth of love our failings precludes. How different would things be if we thought less about blaming others or getting angry and worked up and more effort on how to relate better to one another. Jesus was angry with the abuse of the Temple and the affront to God's glory and he made a point of calling out the offenders (who ought to have known better) but it was righteous anger, not out of pique or to defend his own image or selfish ends AND it was designed to right a flagrant wrong. Yet ultimately his aim was to restore people to fellowship with God. When we get angry – are we sure of our ground, even if we are is our aim improving relationships with others and God? Is our response in keeping with the love and forgiveness Jesus has given us? How different might things be if they were?

Praise MP 1 A new commandment.

Pray Lord, we must have hurt you more than we could ever imagine, yet your response was to send your Son to love us and give his life for us. Open our hearts and minds to be transformed so that instead of anger, hate and a desire for revenge and retribution we could embrace that love for others, even those we fall out with, with a depth of love and forgiveness that would radically change the way we think of others, the way that we treat them, so that relationship becomes far more important than our supposed rights. All across the world and on our own doorsteps there are those who are hurting, angry, vulnerable and marginalised. How ready are we to change? To substitute love for self interest? To accept responsibility rather than pointing the finger in blame? Deep down we want the world to change, to be a better place, where inequality is dealt with, injustice put right, where folk don't need to live in fear, where there are opportunities for all to be healthy, fed, clothed, educated and to live at peace and with real satisfaction of body, mind and spirit. Work this miracle of grace in our world and make us ready for you to begin with changing us. In our prayer walk we remember those who work or use the Health and Sports Centres. SILENCE

Lord hear our prayers spoken and unspoken and answer them for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen Blessing May the Lord bless you. Amen.