

**Venom: Emotion: Impulsive & Chronic Sins, Ephesians 4:22-25; Psalm 4:4****C. The Impulsive and Chronic Sins of Ephesians 4:22-32**

In verses Ephesians 4:22 and Ephesians 4:23, Paul exhorts us to lay aside the lifestyle of unbelief, under the first husband with its lust pattern of deceit, and to be renewed by means of spiritual growth.

**Ephesians 4:22** - Put off for good the lifestyle of unbelief under the first husband and its corruption in association with the lust pattern of deceit.

**Ephesians 4:23** - Be renewed in the spirit by means of spiritual growth.

**Ephesians 4:24** - Clothe your soul with a new lifestyle, founded on imputed righteousness and built up by doctrinal integrity.

**Ephesians 4:25** - Therefore, putting off the lie once for all, speak truth, each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

**Ephesians 4:26 [NAS]** - Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.

This is probably one of the most misunderstood verses of the Bible for it is often used to justify the legalistic trend of maligning others who wrong you. In fact, it is nothing of the sort. The verse recognizes that we do commit the impulsive sin of anger while exhorting us not to not permit a descent into the chronic sins, such as bitterness and slander among others. This however is not apparent in the English so it does require some exegesis in order to sort things out. First of all, the statement is actually a quote from David's 4<sup>th</sup> Psalm, verse 4, which in corrected translation reads this way:

**Psalm 4:4** - Tremble on the brink of anger, yet do not sin.

The word for “*tremble*” is the qal imperative of the verb: *ragaz* - “*To be agitated; to quiver or tremble; to be enraged.*”

This verb describes the observable physical effects upon a person who has been confronted with an outside exigency that is unfair and unjust. It is sometimes called “*righteous indignation*” but this term is too often used to justify and condone what is actually chronic sinning. Those who justify their anger by hiding behind the term “*righteous indignation*” are hypocrites who manifest their chronic bitterness through maligning, judging, and involvement in crusades.

In David's case, he was mentally staggered by the sudden realization that he had been betrayed by his own son, Absalom, the Crown Prince of Israel. Being suddenly shocked by a totally unexpected set of circumstances, which he correctly viewed as wrong, caused him to be tempted to enter into the impulsive sin of anger.

This Psalm was written as David and his loyalists fled Jerusalem following his son's *coup d'état*.

Regardless of the circumstances a revolution is uncalled for. When it occurs in the palace itself it takes on the indignity of disloyalty to one's own flesh and blood. Rebellion, disloyalty, and betrayal by his own son caused David to, in shock, contemplate anger. Yet he did not submit.

Since David did not sin, he is qualified to admonish us to follow his lead under similar circumstances, thus his mandate found in the qal imperative of the verb: *chatah* + the negative *lo* - “*do not sin.*”

The principle is that it is possible to confront unfairness, be repulsed by it, but yet not enter into the trap of impulsive sin.

Follow the logic: you face a circumstance where someone has wronged you. You would have to deny reality in order to completely ignore it. If fact, in order to turn it over to the Lord you must conclude that anger is not an option and the matter must be turned over to the Supreme Court of Heaven for prosecution.