



## More Than You Can Handle: Anger | May 8, 2019

### Discussion Guide

#### The Scoop

A lot of times when we tell people not to be angry, or we tell them they need anger management, we suggest that they shouldn't be angry. But what if our faith told us a different story? It's ok to be angry, but it's what we do with that anger that matters.

#### Key Verses

**Mark 4:38-40 (NIV)**

*"Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, 'Teacher, don't you care if we drown?'"*

*He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, 'Quiet! Be still!' Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, 'Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?'"*

#### Discussion

There is something about a therapist's office that feels the same regardless of who you see. The color scheme is not only design-friendly, but also very relaxing. There is typically a desirable scent in the air and enough background noise to make you feel completely at ease. Usually there's even a perfect couch, with just enough depth to feel comfortable but not too much that someone could get lost in it. And although the environment feels very peaceful, it can also prompt us to recognize that what's going on under the surface in our own lives is anything but peaceful. Enough anger rises within us that we'd be able to take a baseball bat to the perfect couch about a hundred times.

1. Have you experienced a therapist's office like this? If so, explain. If not, explain what your most safe and peaceful environment looks like.
2. Why do you think therapists strive to create an environment like this? What does it enable us to do and see while we are there?

Often times in our faith, we expect that if we really trust God, we should never and will never experience rage and anger. But the reality is, that's not true. In Nate Pyle's book, *More Than You Can Handle*, he talks about the fact that sometimes in life we experience more anger than we can handle. In our "perfect suburban faith," we'd simply ignore anger and rage and stuff it away. We pretend it doesn't exist. But the truth is, God longs for us to bring it to him. While none of us have answers for why we experience the pain and suffering we do, we are encouraged to express our pain to God through lament.

3. Describe a season in your life where you carried more anger than you could handle. What did you do with that anger? Did you express it? Stuff it away?
4. Why are we prone to believe that "perfect faith" doesn't involve anger or rage? How might God instead use our anger or rage to grow us closer to him?

In Mark 4:38-40, we read about a time where Jesus and his disciples were out on a boat. Jesus falls asleep and a storm appears very quickly. His disciples start to panic, but Jesus immediately calms the storm. While it may be easy to think this verse suggests that Jesus always calms the storms in our lives very quickly, that's not exactly what it's saying. Although he has the power to, sometimes the storms in our lives persist much longer than we'd like them to. But the encouragement is that it's not in the absence of storms where our faith shows up, it's actually right in the middle of them. Not only that, but Jesus is close and near while we experience storms.

5. Describe a time in your life where you called out to Jesus in the midst of a storm. How did he respond?
6. Why is it encouraging that our faith grows in the midst of storms? Do you believe that God is near even when we experience pain and suffering? Why or why not?

#### What's Next?

The reality is that there are things in this world that will inevitably make us angry. There will be seasons in life where we feel like we are carrying more anger than we can handle. But what if instead of pretending the anger doesn't exist, we stepped into those seasons ready to lean on God? What if we went to him with our baseball bat, ready to express our pain and rage. God is ready and able to take it.

This week, as you live out and engage your faith, if you get to a place where your anger is more than you can handle and you have to let it out, bring your baseball bat to God. Allow him to hear about your pain and suffering. Invite him into it. Lean into God, not away from him, in times where you feel over your head.