



The Fighter Verses

Study Set One

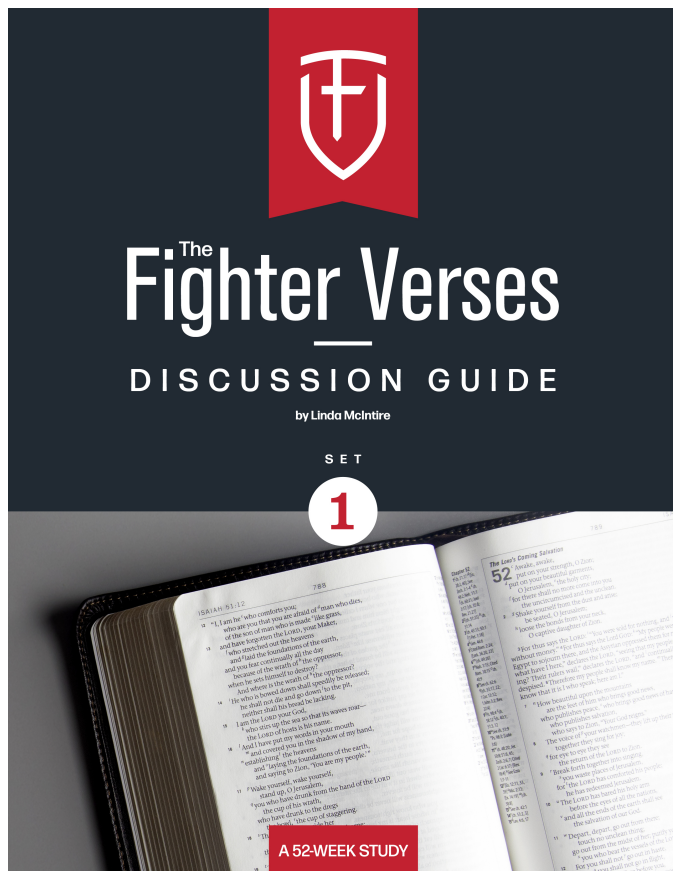
Equipping You to Fight the Fight of Faith

Building relationships that are deep, lasting, and meaningful requires time spent listening and talking together. Nurturing a relationship with God is no different. **The Fighter Verses Study** is a year-long devotional that will help you spend quality "bites" of time with God as you study the verses found in Set One of the Fighter Verses Bible memory program.

The Fighter Verses Study is perfect for family devotions, small group discussions, individual study, intergenerational classes and homeschool or school programs.

"Ever since the beginning, the Fighter Verses plan for memorizing Scripture has been part of my spiritual warfare, helping me fight unbelief and Satan and sin. ...What could be more valuable than teaching families not only to know the Scriptures, but also to linger over them as they discuss and color, and to pray them into reality."

—John Piper, Founder and Teacher, desiringGod.org



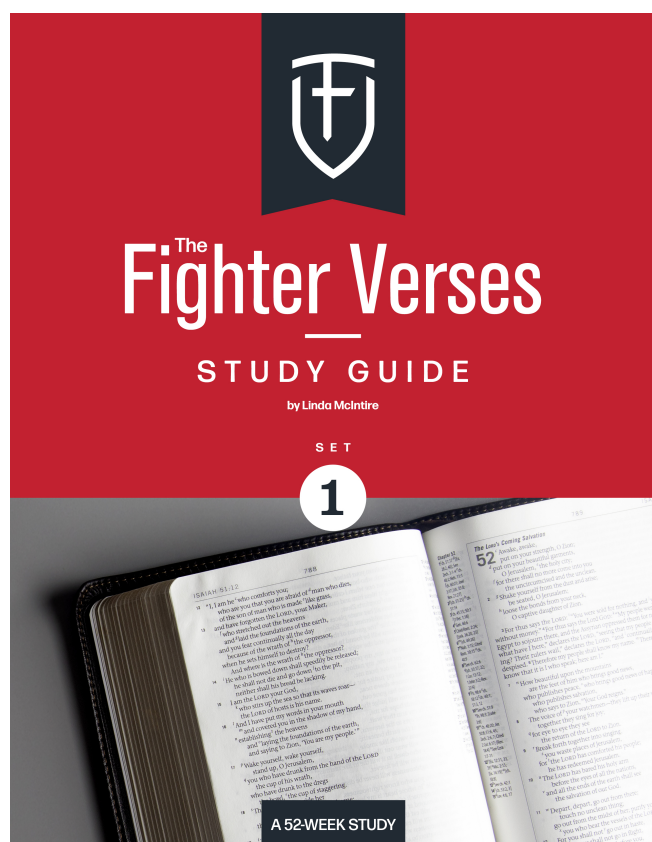
Discussion Guide

For Fathers, Small Group Leaders, Teachers or Individuals

The **Discussion Guide** includes 52 lessons, each based on a verse or short passage.

Lessons include an introduction to the context of the passage and two or three parts looking at different sections of the text. Each part includes questions that will lead you to a better understanding of the verses. These can be answered personally or discussed in a group. At the end of each part are application questions, prayer points and an encouragement to journal and memorize the verse.

*The **Discussion Guide** includes suggested answers to the questions in the right-hand margin as well as teaching prompts for fathers, small group leaders or teachers.*



Study Guide

For Study Participants
or Individuals

The **Study Guide** includes the same main content for each of the 52 lessons found in the Discussion Guide.

The **Study Guide** will help participants in a family or small group study ponder and understand each week's Scripture passage through guided questions which can be answered personally and discussed as a group.

*The **Study Guide** does NOT include suggested answers to the discussion questions or teaching prompts. Individuals using the study on their own may choose from either the discussion or study guide, depending on whether or not they want the answers to the discussion questions.*

Quarterly Study

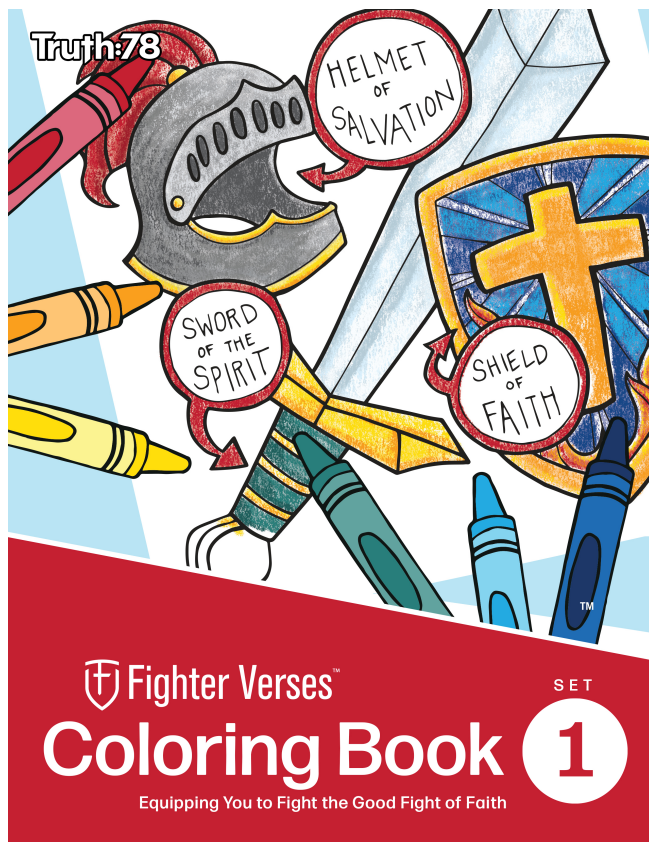
An Option for a Shorter Study,
Available for the Discussion
Guide and the Study Guide

Are you looking for a study to fill a summer session? Or do you want to try it in your small group without committing to a full year?

The **Quarterly Study** option takes the exact same content from the discussion and study guides and breaks it down into four, 13-week parts.

Each part is an independent study that can be done by itself or as a series. Start with Part A, or the one that lines up with your progress in memorizing Fighter Verses, or choose one with your favorite verse. It's up to you where to start, but once you do, you will not want it to end!





Coloring Book

For Children (ages 2 – 102)

The **Coloring Book** gives children of all ages a visual representation of each of the 52 verses along with a key truth statement to focus on.

This is a great resource to help younger children engage during a family or group discussion of the study and it encourages them memorize the verse along with the whole family.

These original illustrations include a blend of powerful Bible stories brought to life; children in real-life, modern-day moments; and beautiful nature scenes.

*The **Coloring Book** can be used alongside **The Fighter Verses Study**, by children memorizing **Fighter Verses**, or by itself as an encouraging, Bible-based coloring resource for children.*

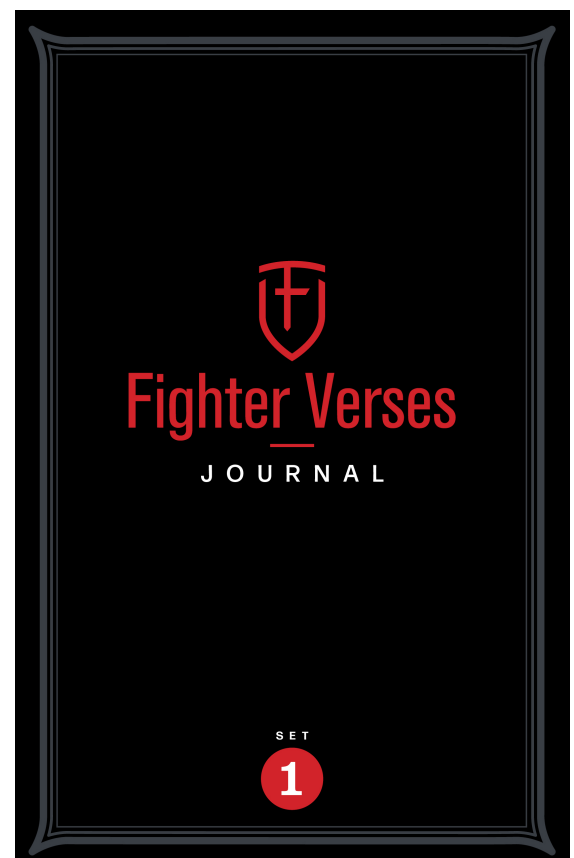
Journal

To Record Your Reflections,
Insights and Action Steps

Use the **Journal** in your personal quiet time with the Lord to reflect on the **Fighter Verses** and record truths that have made an impact on your life, actions steps you want to take, or how God is using the verses you memorize in your everyday life.

The **Journal** sets aside two pages for each passage and includes the verse written out along with a short paragraph to explain the verse or challenge you as you study.

*The **Journal** can be used as an extension of **The Fighter Verses Study** or by individuals who are simply memorizing the **Fighter Verses** and want to incorporate it into their personal study or devotional times.*



Fighter Verses, Set One

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Deuteronomy 7:9 <i>Faithfulness of God</i> | 27. Ephesians 6:12-13 <i>Spiritual Warfare</i> |
| 2. Deuteronomy 10:12-13 <i>Obedying God</i> | 28. Ephesians 6:14-15 <i>Spiritual Warfare</i> |
| 3. John 1:12-13 <i>Salvation</i> | 29. Ephesians 6:16-17 [18] <i>Spiritual Warfare</i> |
| 4. Romans 11:33-36 <i>Sovereignty of God</i> | 30. Philippians 1:6 <i>Security in God</i> |
| 5. Romans 12:1-12 <i>Sanctification</i> | 31. Matthew 10:28 <i>Battling Fear</i> |
| 6. Psalm 56:3-4 <i>Battling Fear</i> | 32. Romans 1:16 [17] <i>Gospel</i> |
| 7. Psalm 62:5-7 [8] <i>Trusting God</i> | 33. Matthew 11:28-30 <i>Depending on Christ</i> |
| 8. Romans 8:1 <i>Work of Christ</i> | 34. Psalm 20:6-7 [8] <i>Trusting God</i> |
| 9. 1 John 2:15-17 <i>Battling Sin</i> | 35. James 1:12 <i>Endurance</i> |
| 10. Philippians 2:5-7 <i>Humility of Christ</i> | 36. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 <i>Generosity</i> |
| 11. Philippians 2:8-9 <i>Humility of Christ</i> | 37. 2 Corinthians 9:8 <i>Generosity</i> |
| 12. Philippians 2:10-11 <i>Supremacy of Jesus</i> | 38. 2 Corinthians 12:9 [10] <i>Depending on Christ</i> |
| 13. Philippians 2:12-13 <i>Sanctification</i> | 39. Isaiah 64:4 <i>Waiting on God</i> |
| 14. James 1:2-3 <i>Endurance</i> | 40. Titus 3:4-6 <i>Work of Christ</i> |
| 15. James 1:4-5 <i>Endurance</i> | 41. Isaiah 46:9-10 [11] <i>Sovereignty of God</i> |
| 16. Psalm 1:1-2 <i>Word of the Lord</i> | 42. Proverbs 1:10 <i>Battling Sin</i> |
| 17. Psalm 1:3-4 <i>Word of the Lord</i> | 43. Proverbs 3:5-6 [7] <i>Trusting God</i> |
| 18. Psalm 1:5-6 <i>Word of the Lord</i> | 44. Proverbs 19:11 <i>Battling Anger</i> |
| 19. Colossians 3:1-3 <i>Life in Christ</i> | 45. John 15:5 <i>Life in Christ</i> |
| 20. Ephesians 4:26 <i>Battling Anger</i> | 46. John 14:2-3 <i>Eternity</i> |
| 21. Isaiah 40:28-29 <i>Sovereignty of God</i> | 47. Psalm 125:1-2 <i>Trusting God</i> |
| 22. Isaiah 40:30-31 <i>Waiting on God</i> | 48. Psalm 141:3-4a <i>Speech</i> |
| 23. Psalm 86:5-7 <i>Faithfulness of God</i> | 49. 1 John 1:8-9 <i>Battling Sin</i> |
| 24. 1 Timothy 2:5 <i>Supremacy of Jesus</i> | 50. Psalm 23:1-2 <i>Guidance of God</i> |
| 25. 1 Peter 1:3-5 <i>Salvation</i> | 51. Psalm 23:3-4 <i>Guidance of God</i> |
| 26. Ephesians 6:10-11 <i>Spiritual Warfare</i> | 52. Psalm 23:5-6 <i>Guidance of God</i> |

Preface

Do you long to have the Word of God engraved on your soul; to be instructed, guided, counseled, corrected, and convicted by Scripture; to have your worldview shaped by the Word, and not by the world? Memorizing the Word makes it possible to meditate on the Word, which carries the potential of shaping our thinking and our affections.

In his book, *Teach Them Diligently: How to Use the Scriptures in Child Training*, Louis Paul Priolo paraphrases the thoughts of Heywood Oliver, a Puritan preacher, regarding meditation on the Word.

Lack of meditation is the primary reason that so many professing Christians, in spite of exposure to the most excellent teaching still remain ignorant, unstable, and unfruitful, “ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Instruction flows in upon them from all sides; but their hearts and minds are like sieves, out of which everything runs as fast as it is poured in. The impressions which truth makes on their minds are as temporary as characters traced on the sands of the seashore, which the next wave erases forever. But meditation imprints truth deeply on the conscience, and engraves it on the tablets of the inner man, as with the point of a diamond or laser beam. It thus becomes incorporated into the soul; and forms, as it were, a part of it; and it is ever present, to regulate the heart’s affections and to control and guide all of its movements.¹

This is an echo of what the Bible teaches us in Psalm 1:

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.—Psalm 1:1-2

Fighter Verses are memory verses specifically chosen to help believers “fight the fight of faith.” These memorized verses will inform, instruct, guide, strengthen, and comfort the soul through the daily struggles and joys of life. Meditation on these verses may “regulate the heart’s affections and control and guide all of its movements.” They are profitable for:

- **Fighting the Fight of Faith**—fighting temptation, unbelief, discouragement, despair; fighting for joy and peace; fighting to place your full confidence in God
- **Growing Strong**—strong in the Word, strong when life is manageable, and strong in faith even when difficulties abound
- **Fighting for Others**—encouraging the fainthearted and pointing unbelievers to Jesus

The Fighter Verse memory program provides a systematic means for you to memorize God’s Word and meditate on it “day and night.” This Study Guide will help you discover a treasure of wisdom in each of the Fighter Verse passages as you discover the teaching of our great God.

May your faith and confidence in God grow as you see the character and work of God revealed in these verses. May you discover the joy of mining the Word of love and learn to observe, interpret, and personally apply it. And may God’s Word be imprinted on your mind and firmly established in your heart.

***In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.
I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.
I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.
Deal bountifully with your servant, that I may live and keep your word.
Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.
—Psalm 119:14-18***

1. Priolo, Louis Paul. *Teach Them Diligently: How to Use Scriptures in Child Training*. (Stanley, North Carolina: Timeless Texts, 2000).

Preface

A Word to Parents

The Fighter Verse Study resources were developed for those who have been yearning for an easy-to-use, spiritually profitable resource for leading family devotions. These resources have the potential to deepen the understanding of Bible passages for the adults while also engaging children in seeing the truth of the Scriptures. For both adults and children, the resources encourage not just understanding the meaning of the text, but also personal application. Within the context of a family, you will be able to spur one another on to “live” these verses and fellowship with the living God.

Family devotions are often Satan’s battleground to defeat spiritual leadership in the home. Spiritual attacks seem to come on all sides when we attempt to gather our families around God’s Word. Realizing that we are in a spiritual battle that requires spiritual weapons will go far in defeating weariness, inattention, and interruptions that often bring about defeat. *Pray* for your own heart and for those of anyone you may be leading. *Pray* that Satan would be bound, and God’s Word would not return void.

When devotional time seems like a failure, don’t give up. Persevere and trust in God’s promises. Little by little, the Word of God may awaken or strengthen your faith. Immersing your family in the Word will push back the draw of the world. God is faithful and has promised that our “labor in the Lord is not in vain.” The God of the Universe, the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, is on your side!

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.—1 Corinthians 15:58

A Word to Small Group Leaders

Small groups are a wonderful means of sharing the Word, instructing and encouraging each other, promoting spiritual growth, and praying for each other. They can be live-giving and challenging, especially if everyone takes time before you meet to work through each lesson, thinking through the passage, and recording insights and questions. This Discussion Guide will help the small group leader guide the discussion to cover important points.

By giving the members the tools necessary to discern the meaning of a text (rather than just what each person thinks about its meaning), the Fighter Verses Study resources provide each participant with the potential be enriched by the Word of God, receiving good instruction, as well as a challenge to personally apply the truth in order to...

***Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
—Colossians 3:16***

A Word to Individuals

There is no substitute for meditating on the Word of God through the memorized Word. As you ponder each Fighter Verse, ask God to help you embrace this truth deep in your heart. Work through the study as you make your own observations, interpretation, and applications of the text. As you answer the questions, ask God to speak to you through His Word. Determine to be a doer of the Word as He reveals what you must think, be and do in response to the truth.

After you have done your own study, check the answer key for any insights you may have missed and complete the journal section during the week as the Lord brings opportunities for you to apply His Word to your own life. As you discover who God is and contemplate His involvement in your life, may you experience the truth of this verse:

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!—Psalm 34:8

Fighter Verse 20

Ephesians 4:26

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Prayer

Pray that God will open your mind and the minds of your family or small group to understand His Word, and that your hearts will be ready to respond to what He teaches you (Luke 24:45).

Introduction

This Fighter Verse could easily be misunderstood if sound **principles of interpretation** are not used. The command, “Be angry” could be wrongly interpreted as license to vent anger, or to take offense.

But looking at the verse in context quickly shows us that this is not what Paul has in mind, because in verse 31 he says, “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.” How can we explain these two seemingly contradictory commands?

Employing sound principles of interpretation, we look at cross references and note that verse 26 is a quote from Psalm 4:4, “Be angry, and do not sin.”

The context of this psalm is that David has been falsely accused by his enemies, who are attempting to kill him. David and those who are loyal to him should be angry at the injustice being done. This is a righteous anger, but even in their righteous anger, they should not give in to sin.

In studying this Fighter Verse, we will discover the difference between righteous anger and unrighteous anger, and how to avoid sinning in our anger.

Part 1: Righteous Anger

Illustration

Have you ever heard the counsel, “Have a good time. Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do”? Or, “Have fun. But don’t do anything wrong”? What is the speaker saying?

The speaker is giving permission for someone to go out and enjoy himself, but with limitations. The “fun” the person can have is within boundaries. It is not an unrestricted, no limits, do-anything-you-want-to-do fun, but fun that is controlled and appropriate.

This is the same sense that our Fighter Verse expresses. (Ask someone to read Ephesians 4:26.)

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Bible Study Tip—Principles of Interpretation ¹

In order to correctly interpret a passage, it is important to use sound **principles of interpretation**. These would include:

- Study the verse in context.
- Look for the author’s intended meaning.
- Interpret the text literally, unless there is a reason not to do so.
- Remember the Bible uses ordinary, everyday language, not technical language.
- Interpret texts in light of progressive revelation.
- Doctrine should be based on clear Scripture passages.
- Define unclear or key words in light of the biblical usage of the word.
- Unclear passages should be interpreted in light of clear passages.
- Main rule: Use the Bible to interpret the Bible.

1. This list is, in part, adapted from: David Bryant’s “Clouds of Heaven,” published in 2006: 2007/01/writing-and-leading-bible-studies-part.html#more

Ephesians 4:26

Let's see what Paul is saying:

- There is a right place for anger and a right kind of anger.
- There are two kinds of anger—righteous anger and unrighteous anger.
- But even the right anger—righteous anger—is an anger with limitations.

Now, let's first see what Paul is not saying.

- Paul is not saying that unrighteous or wrong anger is okay.
- He specifically tells us not to express unrighteous anger in verse 31. He tells us to put it away.

(Ask someone to read Ephesians 4:31.)

Ephesians 4:31—Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

1. *What does unrighteous anger look like?*

Unrighteous anger is often a selfish anger. It is motivated by a personal agenda. It is the frustration, irritation, resentment, or bitterness that comes from being inconvenienced, offended, or from not getting what I want. It is very dangerous, because it is the first step toward murder (Matthew 5:21, 22).

2. *Recall a time recently when you became unrighteously angry. Can you identify the selfish reason for your anger?*

3. *What should you do if you have responded with unrighteous anger?*

4. *What do you think righteous anger is?*

- Righteous anger is anger at evil and sin. It is anger that is angry at what God is angry at.
- Righteous anger is not self-centered, but is focused on God, His kingdom, rights, and concerns.²
- Righteous anger is accompanied by other godly qualities, and it expresses itself in godly ways.³

2. Jones, Robert D. *Uprooting Anger*. (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P & R Pub., 2005), 29.

3. *ibid.*

Answer Key for Part 1

1. holding a grudge; “flying off the handle”—uncontrolled anger; attacking another person; trying to “get even”—revenge; saying hurtful things to others; being irritated with another person because you have been inconvenienced; it is explosive
2. Answers will vary.
3. repent and ask God for forgiveness; ask for His perspective on the issue; if your anger has hurt someone else, you need to ask his forgiveness; ask God to give you His grace to respond differently in the future
4. Answers will vary.

Fighter Verse 20

5. *What kinds of things should make us righteously angry?*

6. *Can you think of any instances of righteous anger in the Bible?*

7. *What motivated the actions of the people in the previous question?*

Here are some questions that David Powlison, a Christian counselor and author, suggests to help us discern if anger is righteous.⁴ (Discuss the following questions.)

- Do you get angry about the right things?
- Do you express your anger in the right way?
- How long does your anger last?
- How controlled is your anger?
- What motivates your anger?
- Is your anger “primed and ready” to respond to another person’s habitual sins?
- What is the effect of your anger?

Anger for the right reasons at the right things is not wrong. But it can be expressed wrongly. It can be reacted to sinfully. This is why Paul tells us, “Be angry and do not sin.”

8. *What are some sinful responses to anger?*

9. *What are some appropriate ways to handle righteous anger?*

10. *What should be the desired effect of righteous anger?*

5. Answers will vary, such as: God’s name being taken in vain; child abuse, adultery, abortion, murder, and other sinful actions; injustice

6. Answers will vary, such as: Jesus’ indignation at the disciples for not allowing the children to come to Him; Jesus’ anger at the way His Father’s house, the temple, was being dishonored; Jesus’ anger at the Pharisees because of their opposition to His healing on the Sabbath (Mark 3:5); God’s anger at idolatry; Moses’ anger at the worship of the golden calf (Exodus 32:19)

7. love; love for God Himself, His ways, His commands, and His honor

8. gossip; exploding; pouting; despair; bombing an abortion clinic

9. praying about the wrong or evil being done; taking positive action to correct injustice; speaking the truth in love; helping the person with the problem, rather than attacking them

10. repentance; righting the wrong; apology; change in behavior for the better; glory to God

4. Jones, Robert D. *Uprooting Anger*. (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P & R Pub., 2005), 30.

Ephesians 4:26

11. In Ephesians 4:1, Paul urges us to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called" as Christians. He then describes this new life in Christ. "Be angry and do not sin" is part of this new life. We should be angry at the things that hurt others and offend God; we should be angry at sin. In our "old life," very often we and other worldly people did not always get angry at sinful things. Sometimes we accepted them and even celebrated them. What does it look like when people accept and celebrate sin?

11. they laugh at your concern over sin; they shrug and say, "whatever"; don't care if they are not affected by it; they make and vote for legislation to support sin

Part 1 Summary

How would you summarize this discussion of Ephesians 4:26a?

Application

Have you ever done or said something hurtful to someone and had them respond with righteous anger or no anger at all? Share that with the group.

Are there any sinful, unlawful, or unwise issues that you have been righteously angry about, but have not taken an active part in doing anything to bring about change?

Prayer

Pray the Fighter Verse for yourself and others.

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Journal

Encourage each person to take his Journal to a special place and spend some quiet time with the Lord, thinking about today's discussion and praying that God would personally show him what God wants him to think, be, and do as a result of this discussion. Challenge each person to quietly wait and listen for anything God might want to say to him in the Word. Then have him write about any new insights or specific actions God leads him to take. At the beginning of the next devotional time, each person can share the insights God gave him, the action steps He called him to take, and any results that occurred.

This Week

- Memorize Ephesians 4:26.
- Encourage someone with this week's Fighter Verse.
- Check the Fighter Verses App for devotion and memorization quizzes. And, if you use the English Standard Version of the Bible, there are also Fighter Verses songs and trivia questions.
- Prayerfully consider how God would have you to respond to this teaching and record what the Lord has revealed to you in The Fighter Verses Journal.

Part 2: Fighting Sin

(Ask someone to recite or read the Fighter Verse.)

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

1. *In the second half of this verse, Paul is putting a limitation or a check on righteous anger, like "Have a good time, but don't do anything wrong." What is the limitation Paul is putting on anger?*
2. *Paul is giving us some good advice. In your own words, what is the principle he is teaching?*
3. *Why do you think Paul tells us to deal with our anger quickly?*

Answer Key for Part 2

1. don't let the sun go down on your anger; don't stay angry; don't carry your anger overnight
2. to deal with your anger quickly
3. anger is dangerous and we can easily be tempted to sin in it; it is hard to rightly handle anger, so we must not dwell on it but move away from it quickly

Ephesians 4:26

4. *If your righteous anger is against a specific sin, such as abortion, each day you will need to evaluate your righteous anger and make sure you have not slipped into sinful anger. What might a righteous anger turned sinful look like in the case of the abortion issue?*

5. *What can easily happen if we do not resolve our anger quickly?*

Illustration

Godly anger in us is like a fire. Fires are good—they make us warm, they cook our food, they burn garbage. But a fire can get out of control, and then it isn't good. It does a lot of damage—burning down houses and forests, even killing people.

Just as fires must be treated with care and respect, so righteous anger must be treated with care and respect.

6. *How can you treat righteous anger with care and respect?*
7. *Many have wisely said: "Anger is one letter short of danger." When you are wrongly angry, why is it good advice not to let the sun go down on your anger?*

(Ask someone to read Ephesians 4:26-27.)

Ephesians 4:26-27—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil.

8. *What does verse 27 show you?*

4. hating people who perform abortions, promote freedom of choice, or choose to abort their babies; holding derogatory signs at an abortion clinic
5. we can become bitter or resentful; we can dwell on it, and it can consume us; we can cross the line into unrighteous anger; we can get out of control—righteous anger is under control
6. recognize that it can get out of control and ask God to help you and to give you a positive way of resolving the matter that is the object of your anger; guard your heart and, if wrong attitudes start to come in, confess your sin and ask God for help; ask a mature Christian how to handle your anger or to keep you accountable
7. because sinful anger is very damaging to yourself and others; we should repent quickly from our sin or it will grow; if we are not quick to resolve things, we can become bitter or cause a broken relationship between us and another person
8. the devil is looking for opportunities to cause us to sin; our anger is a doorway in which Satan can walk through in tempting us to sin

Part 2 Summary

How would you summarize this discussion of Ephesians 4:26?

Application

John Trapp, in warning of the fine line between righteous and unrighteous anger, said: "It is not a sin to be angry, but hard not to sin when we are angry."⁵ Share a time when you were righteously angry at sin, and then suddenly found that you had slipped into sinful anger and had let that anger fester overnight or longer. How did you handle the situation once you were convicted of letting "the sun go down on your anger"?

Prayer

Pray the Fighter Verse for yourself and others.

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

5. This quote can be found at: <http://standardbearer.rfpa.org/articles/be-ye-angry-and-sin-not-1>. This website attributes it to an article by the Puritan preacher John Trapp, which was reprinted in the *Sword and Trowel* magazine, volume 4, 1993, published by the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England.

Ephesians 4:26

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Fighter Verse 20

Ephesians 4:26

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

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Illustration

Have you ever heard the counsel, “Have a good time. Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do”? Or, “Have fun. But don’t do anything wrong”? What is the speaker saying?

The speaker is giving permission for someone to go out and enjoy himself, but with limitations. The “fun” the person can have is within boundaries. It is not an unrestricted, no limits, do-anything-you-want-to-do fun, but fun that is controlled and appropriate.

This is the same sense that our Fighter Verse expresses.

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Bible Study Tip—Principles of Interpretation ¹

In order to correctly interpret a passage, it is important to use sound **principles of interpretation**.

These would include:

- Study the verse in context.
- Look for the author’s intended meaning.
- Interpret the text literally, unless there is a reason not to do so.
- Remember the Bible uses ordinary, everyday language, not technical language.
- Interpret texts in light of progressive revelation.
- Doctrine should be based on clear Scripture passages.
- Define unclear or key words in light of the biblical usage of the word.
- Unclear passages should be interpreted in light of clear passages.
- Main rule: Use the Bible to interpret the Bible.

1. This list is, in part, adapted from: David Bryant’s “Clouds of Heaven,” published in 2006: 2007/01/writing-and-leading-bible-studies-part.html#more

Ephesians 4:26

Let's see what Paul is saying:

- There is a right place for anger and a right kind of anger.
- There are two kinds of anger—righteous anger and unrighteous anger.
- But even the right anger—righteous anger—is an anger with limitations.

Now, let's first see what Paul is not saying.

- Paul is not saying that unrighteous or wrong anger is okay.
- He specifically tells us not to express unrighteous anger in verse 31. He tells us to put it away.

Ephesians 4:31—Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

1. *What does unrighteous anger look like?*

Unrighteous anger is often a selfish anger. It is motivated by a personal agenda. It is the frustration, irritation, resentment, or bitterness that comes from being inconvenienced, offended, or from not getting what I want. It is very dangerous, because it is the first step toward murder (Matthew 5:21, 22).

2. *Recall a time recently when you became unrighteously angry. Can you identify the selfish reason for your anger?*

3. *What should you do if you have responded with unrighteous anger?*

4. *What do you think righteous anger is?*

- Righteous anger is anger at evil and sin. It is anger that is angry at what God is angry at.
- Righteous anger is not self-centered, but is focused on God, His kingdom, rights, and concerns.²
- Righteous anger is accompanied by other godly qualities, and it expresses itself in godly ways.³

5. *What kinds of things should make us righteously angry?*

6. *Can you think of any instances of righteous anger in the Bible?*

2. Jones, Robert D. *Uprooting Anger*. (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P & R Pub., 2005), 29.

3. *ibid.*

7. *What motivated the actions of the people in the previous question?*

Here are some questions that David Powlison, a Christian counselor and author, suggests to help us discern if anger is righteous.⁴

- Do you get angry about the right things?
- Do you express your anger in the right way?
- How long does your anger last?
- How controlled is your anger?
- What motivates your anger?
- Is your anger “primed and ready” to respond to another person’s habitual sins?
- What is the effect of your anger?

Anger for the right reasons at the right things is not wrong. But it can be expressed wrongly. It can be reacted to sinfully. This is why Paul tells us, “Be angry and do not sin.”

8. *What are some sinful responses to anger?*

9. *What are some appropriate ways to handle righteous anger?*

10. *What should be the desired effect of righteous anger?*

11. *In Ephesians 4:1, Paul urges us to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called” as Christians. He then describes this new life in Christ. “Be angry and do not sin” is part of this new life. We should be angry at the things that hurt others and offend God; we should be angry at sin. In our “old life,” very often we and other worldly people did not always get angry at sinful things. Sometimes we accepted them and even celebrated them. What does it look like when people accept and celebrate sin?*

Part 1 Summary

How would you summarize this part on Ephesians 4:26a?

4. *ibid*, 30.

Ephesians 4:26

Application

Have you ever done or said something hurtful to someone and had them respond with righteous anger or no anger at all? Are there any sinful, unlawful, or unwise issues that you have been righteously angry about, but have not taken an active part in doing anything to bring about change?

Prayer

Pray the Fighter Verse for yourself and others.

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Journal

Take your Journal to a special place and spend some quiet time with the Lord, thinking about today's lesson and praying that God would personally show you what God wants you to think, be, and do as a result. Quietly wait and listen for anything God might want to say to you in the Word. Then write about any new insights or specific actions God leads you to take.

This Week

- Memorize Ephesians 4:26.
- Encourage someone with this week's Fighter Verse.
- Check the Fighter Verses App for devotion and memorization quizzes. And, if you use the English Standard Version of the Bible, there are also Fighter Verses songs and trivia questions.
- Prayerfully consider how God would have you to respond to this teaching and record what the Lord has revealed to you in The Fighter Verses Journal.

Part 2: Fighting Sin

Ephesians 4:26—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

1. *In the second half of this verse, Paul is putting a limitation or a check on righteous anger, like "Have a good time, but don't do anything wrong." What is the limitation Paul is putting on anger?*

2. *Paul is giving us some good advice. In your own words, what is the principle he is teaching?*
3. *Why do you think Paul tells us to deal with our anger quickly?*
4. *If your righteous anger is against a specific sin, such as abortion, each day you will need to evaluate your righteous anger and make sure you have not slipped into sinful anger. What might a righteous anger turned sinful look like in the case of the abortion issue?*
5. *What can easily happen if we do not resolve our anger quickly?*

Illustration

Godly anger in us is like a fire. Fires are good—they make us warm, they cook our food, they burn garbage. But a fire can get out of control, and then it isn't good. It does a lot of damage—burning down houses and forests, even killing people.

Just as fires must be treated with care and respect, so righteous anger must be treated with care and respect.

6. *How can you treat righteous anger with care and respect?*
7. *Many have wisely said: "Anger is one letter short of danger." When you are wrongly angry, why is it good advice not to let the sun go down on your anger?*

Ephesians 4:26-27—Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷and give no opportunity to the devil.

8. *What does verse 27 show you?*

Part 2 Summary

How would you summarize this part on Ephesians 4:26?

Ephesians 4:26

Application

John Trapp, in warning of the fine line between righteous and unrighteous anger, said: "It is not a sin to be angry, but hard not to sin when we are angry."⁵ Share a time when you were righteously angry at sin, and then suddenly found that you had slipped into sinful anger and had let that anger fester overnight or longer. How did you handle the situation once you were convicted of letting "the sun go down on your anger"?

Prayer

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5. This quote can be found at: <http://standardbearer.rfpa.org/articles/be-ye-angry-and-sin-not-1>. This website attributes it to an article by the Puritan preacher John Trapp, which was reprinted in the *Sword and Trowel* magazine, volume 4, 1993, published by the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England.

Ephesians 4:26

 *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, —Ephesians 4:26*

There is a place for righteous anger against what God is angry about—evil and sin. It is very difficult for us to be angry, even righteously, for very long without sinning. Therefore, we should guard our hearts against responding sinfully in our anger.

Fighter Verse 20



FIGHTER VERSE 20
Ephesians 4:26

The Fighter Verses
Coloring Book, Set 1



Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,
—*Ephesians 4:26*



Be angry at sin, but do not sin when you are angry.