

Ordinary 6A - February 15, 2026

"Don't let her brush your hair."

In the book, *Wit and Wisdom from the Peanut Butter Gang*, by H. Jackson Brown, Jr. some children offer advice on spotting and dealing with anger. Morgan, age 11 says, "When your mom is mad at your dad, don't let her brush your hair." Lezlee, age 11 advises, "When your mother is mad and asks you, 'Do I look stupid?' it's best not to answer her." — Children become quite adept at spotting the signs of anger because so often they become the unsuspecting target of adult anger. Martin Luther King admonished his people "to avoid not only violence of deed but violence of spirit." That's sound advice based on the Sermon on the Mount. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

You win the war:

My wife and I have a rule. We don't fight on Saturday nights. You know why? Because I have to preach on Sunday morning. Now I don't want you to get the idea that we fight the other six nights of the week. Quite frankly, I gave her an unconditional surrender several years ago. Husbands let me teach you a lesson that will save you a lot of grief. When it comes to your wife, if you lose the battle, you win the war. (Rev. Curtis Fussell).

Anger: I Told You Not to Bite

We are told that a rattlesnake, if cornered, will bite itself. Anger and resentment are like that. They are destructive and not only to others, but to ourselves as well. And so we ask, "How do we deal with anger in a constructive way? What are some guidelines?"

In the first place, we need to see that there are times when people ought to express their anger. That is something that a lot of good, sweet, nice, decent people need to realize. When Jesus told us to turn the other cheek, he did not mean for us to become doormats for everyone to walk on. Certainly he was no doormat. Remember how he drove the tax collectors out of the temple (Mt. 21:12-17; John 2:13-22)? He was angry with those who criticized him for healing on the Sabbath (Mark 3:5 even uses the word "anger"). And in Matthew 23:17 he called the Pharisees "blind fools."

So we conclude that there is a place for anger. We are wrong if we take these words to mean that all anger is sin. Paul tells us, "Be angry and do not sin" (Eph 4:26). There are times when expressing our anger is the proper thing to do.

There is an old story of a Swami at a village temple in Bengal, who claimed to have mastered anger. When his ability to control his anger was challenged, he told the story of a cobra who used to sit by the path and bite people on their way to the temple.

The Swami went to visit with the snake to end the problem. Using a mantra, he called the snake to him and brought it into submission. Telling the snake that it was wrong to bite people, the Swami persuaded it to promise never to do it again. And when the people saw that the snake now made no move to bite them, they grew unafraid.

Unfortunately, before long the village boys were tormenting the poor snake by dragging it through the village. Later the Swami again visited the snake to see if he had kept his promise. He found the snake miserable and hurting. The Swami, on seeing this, exclaimed, "You are bleeding. Tell me how this has come to be."

The snake was in anguish and blurted out that he had been abused ever since the Swami had made him promise to stop biting people. To which the swami said, "I told you not to bite, but I did not tell you not to hiss." (by King Duncan from *Collected Sermons*, adapted from Carol Tavris in *The Misunderstood Emotion*)

Dentist's mirror:

Evangelist Fred Brown used three images to describe the purpose of the Law. First, he likened it to a dentist's little mirror, which he sticks into the patient's mouth. With the mirror, he can detect any cavities. But he doesn't drill with it or use it to pull teeth. It can show him the decayed area or other abnormality, but it can't provide the solution. Brown then drew another analogy. He said that the law is also like a **flashlight**. If suddenly at night the lights go out, you use it to guide you down the darkened basement stairs to the electrical box. When you point it toward the fuses, it helps you see the one that is burned out. But after you've removed the bad fuse, you don't try to insert the flashlight in its place. You put in a new fuse to restore the electricity. In his third image, Brown likened the law to a plumb line. When a builder wants to check his work, he uses a **weighted string** to see if it's true to the vertical. But if he finds that he has made a mistake, he doesn't use the plumb line to correct it. He gets out his hammer and saw. — The law points out the problem of sin; it doesn't provide a solution. (Quoted by Fr. Tony Kayala).