

Anger Hurts!

by Steve “Leapin” Lillis

Anger hurts the game, others, and mostly yourself. Have you noticed pool players in your local pool room or community center getting angry after a missed shot or loss of a game or match? Through the years I have observed this not only on the amateur level but also among some of the game’s top professionals. Let’s look at some of what this does and how it might be fixed!

Anger makes the game of pool look bad! Have you ever seen a pool player snap a cue shaft on the pool table in frustration or shatter it on the rail in a fit of rage? I have seen top world class players do this and I have cringed! God calls us to be good stewards of everything we have including our pool playing equipment and the game itself. Pool is a gift from God just as in creation God gave us every good thing to enjoy. And if you are reading this article, I’m sure that you agree that our beautiful sport of billiards deserves our best efforts.

BCA Hall of Famer Tom “Dr. Cue” Rossman has been teaching stewardship principles during his entire professional career. You can learn more about these principles in his manual called “Student of the Game and Life” which can be found on his website www.drcuepromotions.com.

Anger can hurt others as well! What you do off the pool table usually comes out on the pool table. Pool players who come to their pool match with unresolved anger off the table can easily be triggered to have fits of anger during a match. Most of us who play pool regularly have experienced bad rolls or bad luck, loud music, or an opponent who intentionally or unintentionally sharks or distracts you. When you become annoyed or angry, your frustration might cause people to not want to be near you.

Other pool players will probably misunderstand your anger and feel bad and it might even ruin their joy of the game because of your poor attitude. The Bible says in Isaiah 26:3 that “God will keep you in perfect peace as your mind is fixed on him.” BCA Hall of Famer and Two-Time World 9-Ball Champion Robin Dodson shared in an interview on Facebook live in 2020 that her secret to winning was reading the Bible before each match to bring her peace of mind. You can find Robin’s interview on this website.

And finally, you get hurt too! Unresolved anger leads to bitterness and bitterness leads to walls and broken relationships. The Bible says in James 4:1, “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you?” When you are angry and bitter it usually means that you have not forgiven someone, yourself, or even God!

Here is a short story from my life journey to make this final point. In 2014, I lost my 2 ½ year old granddaughter in a horrific motor vehicle accident that was caused by negligence. When I heard the news, in my mind I had four choices and by the grace of God I made the right choice. I could have been angry with the person(s) who caused the accident. I could have also been angry with God for allowing it! And finally, I could have become angry with myself thinking that this was the result of all my sin in the past which were many.

My choices were based on the Word of God. I chose to forgive the person(s) involved in the accident as Matthew 6:12 says “forgive those who trespass against you.” I also chose to not be angry with God because he is above it all and in control as the Bible says in Isaiah 55: 8-9,

⁸ “For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,”
declares the LORD.

⁹ “As the heavens are higher than the earth
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Finally, I chose not to be angry with myself because Jesus does not condemn me as he said in John 3:17:

¹⁷ “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. “

What I did decide as my fourth and final choice was to trust that God would work all of this out for good and he wonderfully did! This wonderful promise from the Word of God is found in Romans 8:28 which says:

²⁸ “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who^[a] have been called according to his purpose.”

In a dream, God amazingly gave me an entire Gospel Trick Shot show called “Ella” named after my granddaughter “Ella.” This GTS Show has consequently touched the hearts of thousands of people for Jesus all over the world. God even gave me a specific Gospel Trick Shot to illustrate those four choices mentioned above.

That special shot includes asking the audience to pick one of four pockets on one half of the table to make a hidden 8-Ball in the center of a cluster of six balls under a scarf. The scarf indicates faith as you cannot see any of the balls however when shot correctly the 8-Ball disappears into the audience selected pocket by “faith.” People seem to easily identify with the first three choices as everyone is prone to anger and eager to blame someone.

However, that fourth and final choice can only come by faith and trust! How about you? Will you ask Jesus today to help you put your faith and trust in him to eliminate anger and the sin in your life? You will not be made perfect but forgiven from that point on! Jesus died on a cruel cross for all of your sins and made a way for you not only in this life but in the life to come! Pray and accept him today!

Acts 2:21 – “And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”