

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: MONDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER 2022

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ANGER NOT HATE

Jesus looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. - Mark 3:5

Last week, I listened to a powerful talk by Mark Russell, Chief Executive of The Children's Society. He spoke, angrily, about the plight of children in this country, how 4.3 million children, that is 1 in 3 children are in poverty, and in some cities its 1 in 2, and that figure is likely to rise to 5 million by Christmas. He said that the children society was founded by Edward Rudolf, as he was moved to anger when he found two of his Sunday School children begging in the streets. He spoke about how anger has been often at the heart that moves people to act which brings change for good.

I was reflecting on how, anger can lead to hate. Where is the line? When we hear statistics like that above, and know that we could do something about it and do not, or we see help and funding removed for political and ideological reasons, that makes things worse, in that anger and despair, it can be easy to move from anger to hate. Justin Welby speaks about disagreeing well with those who have different views. That can be very difficult and it can feel like a betrayal of those we are angry on behalf of. In those circumstances, hate can sometimes feel like a friend. Hate is manifested not just in physical violence, but more commonly also in words, sometimes typed and said with a smile.

But we know that is not the Jesus way. Hate is destructive, it does not help, it cannot create. Hate is also a symptom of giving up. Anger moves us to action, hate moves us to just vent. It absolves us of having to do anything. Hate dehumanises our opponents and us. Jesus said "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you - Matthew 7:12. How would I want to be treated by those who strongly think differently to me? I would want them not to pre judge me, I would want them to treat me with dignity, and not to write me off, I would want them to make an effort to understand me and where I am coming from, I would like them to acknowledge something good about me, and I would like them to listen to me and treat my views and action fairly. Well. I suppose I should practice what I preach then!

[The Children's Society](#), moved by hot anger are making a huge difference to children, and are also influencing government policy. Keep hate at bay, but be moved by anger to change the world. That kind of anger, is a form of love