



Caleb Tames the Fire of Anger

Caleb was a boy who was known for his strong arm and quick feet. He loved baseball and practiced almost every day in his backyard. Before games, he would bow his head and ask God to help him play his best and honor Him no matter the score. Back then, Caleb understood something important. He knew that talent was a gift, and winning wasn't everything.

On the field, Caleb played with heart. He encouraged his teammates and tipped his cap to the other team after a good play. He didn't like to lose, but he handled it well. But during one close game in the middle of the season, something inside him began to change. A bad call from the umpire lit a spark in his chest.

Slowly, that spark grew into a flame. Caleb was sure he had been safe at second base, but the umpire called him out. The other team cheered. Caleb felt his face grow hot. Without realizing it, he was letting the **vice of anger** take root in his heart. Anger can start small, but it spreads quickly if you let it.



Source Teaching: Scan the QR code to access this source teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more.
Or, visit horseandchariot.com/the-vice-of-anger

For Caleb, anger sounded like a roar in his head. It said, "That's not fair!" He slammed his helmet into the dirt and refused to look at the umpire. When his coach tried to calm him down, Caleb crossed his arms and turned away. He wasn't just upset about the call. He felt embarrassed and wounded.

After the game, he snapped at his little brother for touching his glove. At dinner, he barely spoke and answered his parents with short, sharp words. He didn't realize that anger doesn't stay on the field. It follows you home.

The next practice, Caleb played rough and argued with a teammate over a missed catch. He rolled his eyes and muttered under his breath. Anger had made him short-tempered. Instead of focusing on the game, he focused on what had gone wrong. His heart felt hard, and he didn't like it—but he didn't know how to stop it.

By the end of the week, Caleb felt miserable. His teammates kept their distance, and even baseball didn't feel fun anymore. Anger had made him feel powerful in the moment, but afterward he felt empty. The fire burned away his peace.

One night, Caleb sat alone on the edge of his bed. He replayed the bad call in his mind again and again. The more he thought about it, the angrier he became. Then he remembered something his coach once said: "You can't control the call, but you can control your response."

Caleb realized that his anger wasn't really about the umpire anymore. It had become personal. He had let it grow and spill over onto everyone around him. He knelt beside his bed, feeling tired of carrying the heat inside his chest. He reached for stronger weapons: the ***virtues of meekness, forgiveness, and prayer.***

He whispered, "God, I'm sorry. I let my anger take over. Help me to have strength under control. Help me forgive the bad call and let it go." He asked God to soften his heart and teach him to pause before he reacted.

The next day at practice, Caleb walked up to the teammate he had argued with. "Hey, I'm sorry I got so mad," he said quietly. He even told his coach he was working on keeping his cool. When he felt frustration rise again, he took a deep breath instead of shouting. Each pause felt like choosing strength instead of weakness.

Choosing meekness didn't make Caleb less competitive; it made him steadier. He still played hard, but he didn't let anger rule him. When another close call didn't go his way, he tipped his cap and ran back to the dugout. He felt something new—a calm that didn't depend on the umpire's decision.

Caleb learned that anger may roar like a lion, but it doesn't have to be his master. Meekness, forgiveness, and prayer are stronger than any outburst. When he let Christ rule where anger once reigned, peace returned to his heart. And that peace made him stronger than anger ever could.

Simple Reflection Questions (5 Minutes)

Ask the kids these three questions to get them thinking:

- 1. The "Feeling" Question:** How did Caleb feel when anger took over his heart? *(Answers: Hot, embarrassed, frustrated, restless, empty)*
- 2. The "Warning" Question:** What were the warning signs that anger was spreading in Caleb's life? *(Answers: Losing temper, arguing, rolling eyes, yelling)*
- 3. The "Grace" Question:** What changed when Caleb chose meekness and forgiveness instead of reacting in anger?

The "Fire vs. Calm" Exercise (4 Minutes)

This is a physical way to show the difference between Anger and Meekness.

Step 1 (The Fire of Anger): Have everyone clench their fists tightly and scrunch their face. Tell them: "This is what anger feels like. Our muscles tighten. Our face gets hot. We feel ready to explode." Ask them to hold it for 5 seconds.

Step 2 (Strength Under Control): Now have everyone slowly open their hands, take a deep breath, and count to three. Tell them: "This is meekness. Meekness is not weakness. It means strength under control. It means pausing before reacting."

The "Calm My Heart" Prayer (2 Minutes)

Have the kids close their eyes and repeat after you:

Dear God,

- Sometimes I feel angry.
- Help me pause before I react.
- Teach me strength under control.
- Help me forgive quickly
- and choose peace instead of shouting.

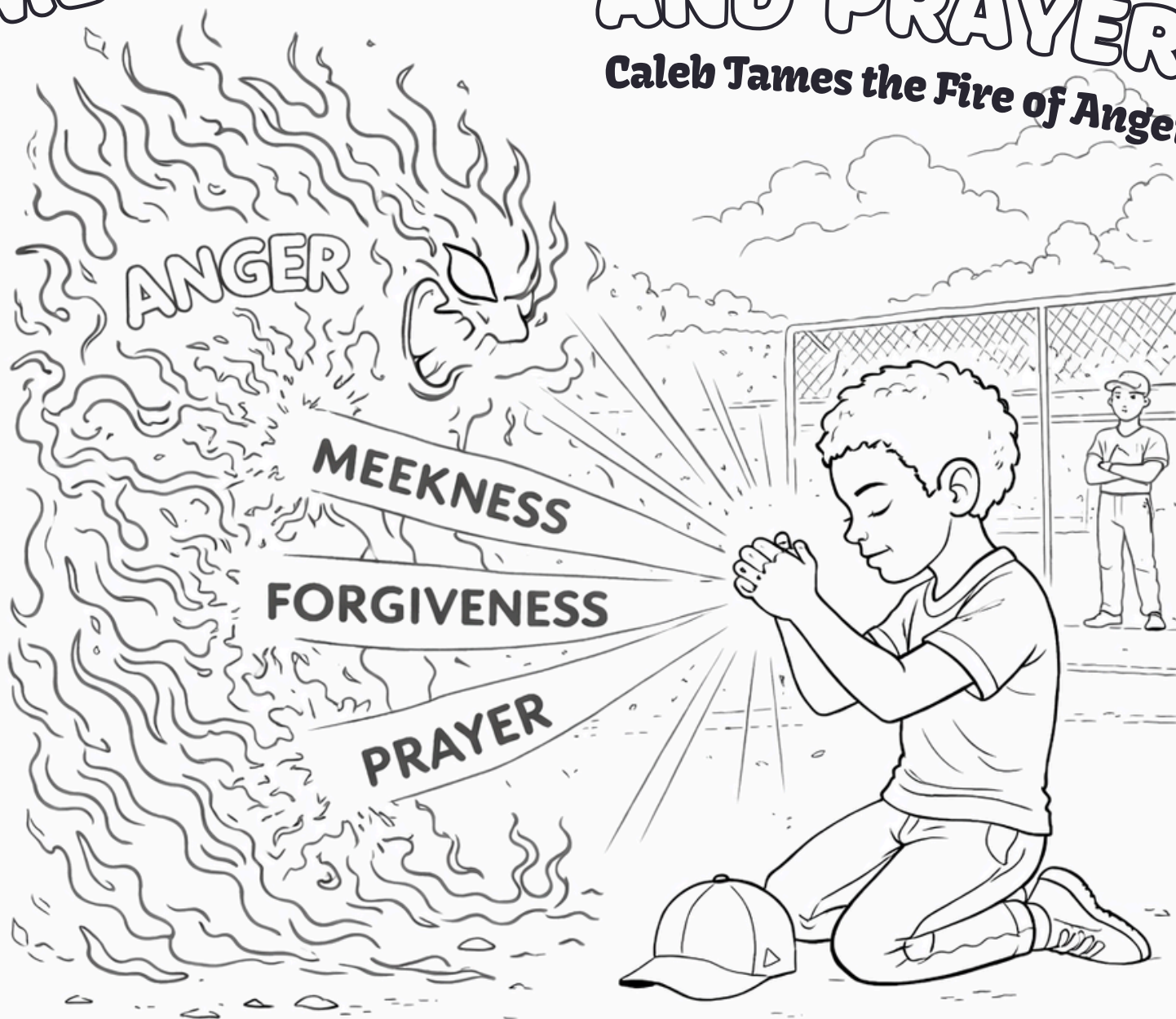
Amen.

Fun Extras:

- **Coloring Page:** Give the kids time to color and fill in the page on the back
- **Virtue over Anger:** Talk through the examples at the bottom of the coloring page. Try to relate them to real-life situations you've encountered recently. This is a great way to connect the lesson to everyday life and gently challenge growth.

CHOOSE MEEKNESS, FORGIVENESS AND PRAYER!

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Circle what it looks like to choose virtue over anger

- Yelling when someone makes a mistake — or — Taking a deep breath and speaking calmly
- Saying, "You always mess everything up!" — or — Saying, "It's okay. Let's try again."
- Choosing to forgive and move forward — or — Refusing to talk to someone who hurt you
- Slamming a door when you're upset — or — Walking away to cool down
- Listening before you answer — or — Interrupting and arguing to win
- Thinking about ways to "get them back" — or — Praying, "God, help me respond with love"