

Anger - One Letter Away From Danger

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of finding balance between righteous indignation and unbiblical anger, and provides practical advice on how to take thoughts captive and err on the side of grace.

Duration: 1:00:55

Scripture: Ephesians 4:26

Topics: "Anger Management", "Righteous Indignation"

Description

Shane Idleman addresses the dangers of anger, emphasizing that it is often just one letter away from danger. He discusses the fine line between righteous indignation and sinful anger, sharing personal experiences from his upbringing in an angry household. The sermon highlights the importance of self-examination, taking thoughts captive, and the need for humility and grace in managing anger. Idleman encourages the congregation to serve others as a way to combat anger and to cry out to God for help in overcoming this struggle.

Transcript

The title of the message today is anger, one letter short of, isn't that true? It is a very dangerous and deadly thing that most people struggle with. If not, God bless your heart, but most people struggle with anger. And I think it's challenging because there is righteous indignation, and then there's anger that we express that is not biblical.

And so you have an emotion that can be good and God-given, and if it's targeted in the right direction, for example, how many people are doing ministry today because of anger? The homeless ministry, or families not having enough food, or abortion industry, or the sex trafficking that we've announced things in the bulletin, you can get involved with that. And there's anger, and sometimes some of my best sermons, what I would consider my best sermons, came out of a heart of anger. You know, anger at what they're doing, anger at the state of our nation, anger at God's word is just being mocked and ridiculed, and plays in Hollywood or New York of the gay Jesus, and things that just, there's the zeal for God's house burns us up.

And so we're going to talk about trying to find that balance, but I will tell you up front, it's a struggle for me to find that balance. And I was raised in what would be considered an angry home. Can anyone relate? You're just not putting your hand up, right? But that's how my dad did things, really, and his dad, and Farms of Oklahoma, and anger.

And he was actually an All-American in college football, and then went to A.V. High School here, and just got rewards and different things. And I remember he would say, how you succeed is you just get as angry as possible, and that's your enemy. You spit in their face, and you just drive that ball, and like, whoa.

But that's how many people would cope and get through life, that anger. And it runs in the military sometimes, and in law enforcement. And it can be good in some cases, because that, you know, it's hard to be a passive Navy SEAL.

It is a hard balance to find. We're going through the Bible. So if you're joining us for the first time, or watching online, we're actually going through the entire Bible.

Not verse by verse necessarily, but chapter by chapter overview. It's going to start going a little quicker now. And so if you have your Bibles, turn to Hezekiah chapter four.

Hezekiah chapter four. Anybody find it yet? Okay, you're not going to find it. I'm just testing this early morning group.

It sounds good, doesn't it? Jireh, you gave me that bit of advice yesterday. He almost got me yesterday. I'm like, Hezekiah.

I don't know even know where to find that. Genesis chapter four. Genesis chapter four.

I'm just surprised so many people are looking for it. But it's how the mind works, because you think, I even thought Hezekiah four. Yeah, what is he? He's a king.

He didn't write a book. It takes a little while to think about that. Genesis four.

Now, Adam knew his wife. And anytime the Bible talks about this, especially in the Old Testament, it is with sexual intimacy. And as a result, she conceived and bore Cain and said, I have acquired a man from the Lord.

And actually, if we break down his name in the Hebrew, it can mean a gift from God, something along those lines. And she bore again. This time, his brother was Abel.

So Abel was the younger Cain was the older. And Abel was a keeper of the sheep. But Cain was a tiller of the ground.

So they had different roles. And that even jumped out at me studying because jealousy comes in when we want the other person's role. We want the other person's job.

And that's why I just want to just, you know, just praise if possible, our worship team here, because I've never seen so many people just not the center stage. You take the song not. And it's genuine.

You can tell it's Jen. I've been to places where if I speak, it's like it's like rock stars up there. I don't want to talk to the pastor.

You know, I am too busy or and you can see it's all about me and all about and we want that position. And if we're not careful, sometimes out there, we look up here and we say, that's what I want to do. But Jesus said, if you take the lower road, he who serves is actually greater in the kingdom of God than he who is elevated.

And in that servant's heart and removing jealousy. And people say, well, it's easy for you to say you don't get jealous. No, it happens.

Pastors will struggle with when is the church big enough? Because I think you measure success by numbers. And I remember we are considered a small church and then a medium church. And now we're a large church.

And each stage, you know, people are how big's your church? How big's your church? What's your budget? And I'm like, that's to not be part of our discussion. And so there's a, there's a struggle out there that it's part of the flesh that wants to elevate himself. And I don't know if a keeper of the sheep was better or a tiller of the ground, but in the process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of fruit of the ground to the Lord.

Now it's interesting because they started the offering process early on. There was something about giving back to God that is innate. It's, it should be in us to give back to God.

And those people crack me up that email us all the time and say, you shouldn't talk about tithing or anything. That's not in the, that's old Testament. Your heart's wrong.

The tithe, the 10% not bound to that. Okay. But God loves a cheerful giver in the new Testament.

Are you cheerfully giving? And is there a cost to that? But it's always those people who like to avoid giving that use that old Testament example. I'm just telling you, I've been around the block. I've talked to enough people and we can check the tithing records if you want.

We can find out who's, you know, who's, who's really saying that. And again, we don't, it's really not, the church has been blessed financially since day one, but it's about giving back to God. And that's why we don't push it or promote it or always asking about giving.

God just brings in what he wants to do to accomplish his purposes. We sometimes announce the needs and we had a need for air conditioning next door to get the kids and, and different things. And people just bring in a \$10,000 check.

And we don't even, we don't, they don't even know and how that's only God. It's like the George Mueller approach. And I love the George Mueller approach.

He just prayed down the giving and God funded his orphanages. But anyway, that's a rabbit trail. Me and Joe are keeping track of how much my sermons change at each service.

It's like, there's a different message at each service. And I usually go, I gauge the atmosphere of the congregation or what God brings something in my heart. He, he revisits something.

He plants something in my mind to share here, or this sticks out. So the services often are a little bit different. I often say it's a skeleton and each service puts the clothes on differently.

It's, it speaks to people in different ways. So anyway, back to the offering, Cain brought an offering of fruit and Abel though, brought the firstborn of his flock. And it is, especially there when commodities were, were in your wealth was a gauge by probably livestock and how much livestock.

And that's why God blessed Abram. God blessed Isaac. God blessed Jacob.

God, you would see that God blesses people often through the livestock in the old Testament. And so this probably cost a little bit more to bring one of your flock to give to God versus some apples. Well, actually you probably tilled the soil.

So maybe some vegetables growing in the ground. And so they brought these to the Lord and the Lord respected Abel and his offering of the what? Of the flock. But he did not respect Cain and his offering.

Now, what gets interesting is if you read, and sometimes I'll read Jewish commentators and what their thoughts are, because the Jewish history and what they believe, and they have some great insight or other commentaries or my own thoughts, your own thoughts. But we don't know why he didn't respect his offering. Now, there are good suggestions out there.

There's people kind of wondering if it was because the cost was too great. And maybe, I mean, that's probably where I would lean, that it's much easier, here's some turnips, then here's a sheep. And maybe, but the heart wasn't right.

So I don't think God was looking at the sacrifice being better, but was he looking at the heart of the person? And did one of them give grudgingly? And see, that's what we don't know. And I'm glad that God doesn't let us know on some things. Because we just, it allows us to let everything affect us in Scripture.

As far as Paul said, we know that Paul struggled with something. God would not remove it. And thank God, now we can all relate to it.

But if he would have said a certain thing, then we wouldn't be able to relate to it. Same with, I'm glad they didn't describe Jesus. Five foot ten, brown hair down to it, it's like, okay, that's not going to be fine.

And there's just no type of reason that we can think of. But because of this, Cain was, what's the last few words here? And if you can go easily nowadays to the Hebrew language, and it's a, it's like anger, but then a fury, furious anger, like boiling and red with anger. And I don't know why he would get that angry.

Because I would wonder, why wasn't he mad at himself? It's a hard issue. And this is a great test of character. How we rejoice in the success of others.

Let's take that test real quick. How do you rejoice in the success of others? If somebody's serving in ministry, how do they rejoice in the success of others? Let's say a worship team just nails it out of the park. And another worship team's here.

Are they excited for that? Or is jealousy come up and backbiting? And what about a job? Or when you see a Christian, even a Christian, your friend, say, oh, I can't believe it. My mother left us \$100,000 in inheritance. Do you get excited for that person? Or it is a great test of spiritual maturity.

It's how we rejoice in the success of others. And I can always see it here at the church too. Anytime we appoint somebody to something, you know, a deacon or an elder, or, you know, you can watch how people respond to that.

Are they truly, truly rejoicing with that person or is envy eating them up inside? Special, it's a very important test of our character. And what's interesting here about ease, very, very angry. Did you know that leadership in the church to be an elder, and even I would say a deacon and in leadership, you can't be a person who has angry outbursts.

Now that's interesting. You can be angry, but do not sin. Be angry and point it in the right direction.

But the qualifications in Timothy, I love the King James, not a striker, not a striker or easily angered. Now it doesn't mean a person's not going to have an emotional outburst from time to time, but usually they'll apologize and say, hey, I'm sorry about that. They're not known for angry outbursts and just always.

And that's why it's hard with my type of preaching is I've got a, how I preach is not how I talk to the individual. If I did, it would be, be in trouble, right? A single mom comes up to me. I just, you just need to repent, just repent, stop crying, just go home and repent.

What's wrong with you? What? And that's why people get confused. They don't understand the difference between preaching corporately, what dynamic takes place because the spirit of the living God can hit and hit and hit versus individual conversations. So people go to my dad, how's it like to my kids? How's it like living with your dad? Oh, it must be intense.

And like, no, he has fun. He jokes around. He, you know, plays with us and, and they just don't can't make that, that different connection there.

But in leadership, you actually can't be known as a person who is angry, a striker, mean spirited. And so there are even people at this church who've been coming a while that we really can't consider for that position of elder or deacon because they're known as an angry person, always upset, always angry. But again, it doesn't mean you won't struggle with it.

It's what you do with that struggle that may really makes a difference. So I'm going to give you a few keys here. This is, I actually could have preached a whole sermon on this next point, and I'm considering doing one on it and it might grow some legs on it and we might not finish.

So just, this is just so important. Anger is often fueled by fiery darts. I know we have an image up.

I think we can put up, I want to give you this image. It's a little grainy, but that is the role of a parent protecting their child, of course. But also that's the image of fiery darts, that the enemy, that's the only weapon he really has is those fiery darts.

And sometimes you'll see a movie where the flame was, you know, already burning and they shot the arrow. Normally a flame like that would burn out. So what the arrows that they would really use back in Rome and early Jewish history was actually hollow, like a bamboo.

And they would have something on the end that would cork it and some things inside that were flammable and light diffused. So when it hit the soldier, it would just, the oil or whatever it was would open up and he would be caught on fire. And so these flaming darts, that's how the enemy really works.

That's why 2 Corinthians 10.5 is so important. We demolish arguments and every pretense that sets itself up against the knowledge of God and we take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ. That is so important.

Guys, here's going to be the key to your success in this area. One big key. Take those thoughts captive.

It's one reason why I try not to look at texting or email before church. Because you know that little, gotcha. And the fiery darts, what happens is there's somebody makes a comment or they look at you a wrong way or here comes thoughts, here comes the fiery darts or a doubt or a sinful idea.

Do you ever just, you're just sitting there like, where did that come from? Well, that's not good. Well, who, sometimes who plants that fiery darts into your mind about another person, maybe even in doubting and gossip. And, and I know it's hard because I would, I would, and I'm not just saying this because to make a sermon point, but me and Morgan probably have the hardest job with, at the church here, dealing with fiery darts in our own minds.

I mean, it starts every day. What people say, their comment, their suggestion, what was that person thinking? What was their ulterior motive? What's going on here? And the fiery darts, the enemy just loves that. So taking the thoughts captive and like, Lord, you know, you're my defense, you know, and even if they were trying to gossip or slander, Lord, that's on you.

I'm not going to let ruin my day. And so you take those thoughts captive, but if you don't, anger and the enemy, false prophets feed off fiery darts and they often plant them. False prophets, what we would say a person who's coming in stirring division.

Do you know those people that they call it stirring the pot? They are pot stirs. And there's been a few here over the years and they will feed off fiery darts and they will sometimes plant them themselves. I was going back and forth on this praying all week and I want to make sure maybe some of the people aren't here that were involved in this, but about a year and a half ago, we had a guy that was what I would consider, if not a false prophet, he's walking close to that line.

And he would subtly come in and say, you know, that thing at the stadium really isn't biblical. Oh, and so we plant those thoughts. You know, the real way to have church is in your home.

The stadium's not biblical. That's not really all these people. That's not church.

Guess what? I have a home group at my home. Also say, you know, there's really nothing for marriage couples here. Does that church not care about marriage? I actually do marriage counseling.

Oh, whoa. And so you see those fiery darts and people, if they're not skilled in the word, they thought, yeah, the stadium, a JetHawk stadium that they did at home churches. It was really about smaller gatherings.

True. But is it really a bad idea to walk, reach out to the community, have worship on fire, 150 some baptisms and people coming to, is that really a bad thing? Come on, grow up. And so, but they'll take that.

And there's a few families who left because of these, that's not biblical. We shouldn't be doing that. You don't offer anything like, okay, where is this coming from? Fiery darts.

And that's how false prophets will work. They'll begin to subtly. Now, guess what? Nobody is with him anymore.

And we told them that would happen, but we have to be careful by fiery darts, planting those fiery darts, feeding off of those fiery darts. Because what happens? Bitterness begins to build up and unforgiveness and jealousy. And so I would think you are getting a lot of head shaking.

Yes. That the biggest struggle with this area of anger is fiery darts. I mean, daily, your family close to you, maybe outside your home, but you know, the fiery darts and the contention and the trying to stir the pot and the enemy's just feeding those fiery darts, especially if you're struggling with an issue, he'll fuel those

fiery darts.

And so the big, the big key to overcoming anger is obviously taking thoughts captive. For example, what I did, and that, and that made me, that made me mad. That, that guy, we actually had a meeting with him.

He ended up walking out. I've never seen him again. Cause I said, you're slick.

You're sneaky. You're slippery. You know the word of God, but you're twisting everything and got up and left so upset, but guarding the flock.

But I did take my thoughts captive because I could, it's, it's, it's, you know, the temper's flaring. Voices are increasing volume, but Lord, you got this. We know we didn't do anything wrong.

You got this and erring on the side. Even now, what I would love the person, forgive him. No big deal.

Run into him at a store, but you err on the side of grace. That's why you'll see throughout the new Testament. They, they would err on the side of grace because our sinful inclination is not to err on the side of grace.

So many times, even Morgan will say, what do you think they meant by that? I'm just, you know what, this is error on the side of grace. And, or she'll sit, tell me. And I don't know, I can't, I can barely keep up with this little household of five kids we have.

And I don't know what other people are thinking and what the enemy's scheming and erring on the side of grace. However, there is a time to take a stand and can lovingly confront. It's interesting.

Jesus said, err on the side of grace. Somebody slaps you, turn the other cheek. But then when he was slapped, did you know he didn't turn the other cheek? He confronted the guy who slapped him, said, why are you slapping me? What evil have I done? People say, well, wait a minute.

He said, no, context is important. Err on the side of grace. I mean, but there comes a time when I will have to lovingly confront.

But you have to be in that position to err on the side of grace. For example, it has, I'm just letting you into my life a little bit. There are some churches in town that are not happy that we stayed open throughout the pandemic.

And he's just a rebel. He's arrogant. That's what I hear.

He's this arrogant, rebellious man. You ever hear him preach? Oh my goodness. And so I just have to err on the side of grace.

I'm not going to defend myself. If you want to capitulate, it's easy. It's easy to be a coward.

It's not easy to stand up for the truth. And God knows the heart. And so erring on the side of grace.

Couldn't we learn from that? Absolutely. Can we be better on that? Absolutely. I've even told a few people, I've apologized that I was pretty heavy handed on things a year, a year and a half ago, even with like the masks, you know, just because I, for me, it felt like manipulation control things that, you know, and, and, and I would be kind of heavy handed on that.

And I'd have to kind of just back off and Romans 14 and let people do what they want to do the vaccine. And so, but see, the problem is a lot of times we don't, we don't have grace with others. We don't have grace with others.

Somebody from Santa Clarita came down here. He's in the production and thing in Hollywood really helped out with the church with some was actually the lighting. It's way too bright in my eyes, but they say it works better.

So, okay. I have to err on the side of grace, like turn those things down. But anyway, so he said, you know, I heard something is actually from Jack Gibbs's church, where if you find a church, if, if, if you, if you go to church and they have to meet that, you have to check off every box and agree with everything.

You're not, the problem is you. Because, but a lot of times do that. Unless you do this, unless Shane, unless you, unless you go through the Bible verse by verse, unless those worship songs, aren't by Hill song, unless you don't get too emotional, unless you don't wear that the altar for you're, you're kind of manipulating the emotions.

And I've got, is it the King James only trying to fit this box in and church I've realized is just a bunch of people who struggle coming together. Yes, there's going to be problems. Yes, there's going to be challenges.

And the way you grow is to work through it. That's how you grow spiritually. There's so many disgruntled people going from church to church who never grow.

They're still sucking their thumb. And they've been a Christian 25 years. We get the call it hop.

Church hopping. Is that a good bunny rabbit impression? My two year old likes it. But there is valid reason sometimes to leave a church.

And the heart is right. And they say, listen, I can't continue with this type of, of church anymore. And just the watering down the truth or they're not standing for things.

And so that I believe God pulls people from that type of, of a place for sure. But again, it goes back to where is our heart erring on the side of great. I mean, I'm just telling you, that's, what's helped me a lot because I can get those fiery darts come in.

Don't they? And especially leading an entire church from children's ministry to ushering to security, everything falls under this umbrella that I'm responsible for. And people just sometimes want to help, but you know, they can just be on a power trip. Not saying anybody's right now.

I'm just saying over the years. Okay. But they, and they just rub you the wrong way.

Want to take control. And I don't think it should go that way. And I'm like, ah, erring on this.

Here come the fiery darts and taking those thoughts captive to the obedience. That is half the battle. I would say with anger is where we let our thoughts go.

Because I've noticed when the thoughts come in, what you do with them is going to determine the level of your anger. Even spouses, even spouses that can happen. I'll tell you a big struggle we had recently this week.

My wife will laugh at it. I mean, it's not, but and I dread this time of year. It's, it's the, it's the week of family pictures.

The week of family pictures. Right? You can't be sick. The clothes have to match.

Find the perfect spot. Better not be windy. The sun matches.

And I'm like, you know, saying, you know, just that, just that, because you know, the women, thank God the women like to take pictures. Because we have a, we have a record. And if it were mapped to me, we'd probably have no pictures of anything.

Because I forget a lot. And so that's been a little challenging. So trying to err on the side of grace on both things.

I'm like, let's just go somewhere, take a few pictures and be done with it. It doesn't need to be a whole big production. But that's not how you do family pictures.

Correct? You guys know. So pray for us. Oh, but I don't want to forget this on the fiery darts.

That's why the shield of faith is so important. That's the, that's the, the way Christians defend those fiery darts. That shield was, was so true.

What is the shield of faith? We think it's our salvation, which is true, but really faith, the definition of faith is believing something is true or believing it like jihadist. They, they have faith in what they are doing, even though it's, you know, way, way, way off course. And so for a Christian believing something is true, that that shield is Lord, I'm trusting you, Lord, you got this, you'll fight my enemies.

I want to side on, I want to err on the side of grace. I'm, I'm, I'm have faith, God, that you will get me through this. You'll be defend me.

Maybe I could learn from this. And that faith begins to guard those fiery darts. Also taking those thoughts captive and thinking my mom used to drive me crazy with this, but it's true.

Shane, try to think the best in others. Because with what God has called me to do, I don't think, I'm like a correctional officer preaching. I don't see the, I, I, it's white, it's, it's, it's black or white.

You know, the, the world's falling apart, California's sin, Oh my Lord, God, help us in preaching heaven, hot and hell. I'm sorry, hell hot in heaven, sweet and, and preaching repentance. And, but at the same time, believing the best in others and, and erring on that side of grace and showing love.

And it's a hard challenge. It's a hard balance to find, but you can do it as long as you are filled with the spirit. That's another key.

It's hard. It's do you ever leave here and it's hard to get angry? Or just me? I'm not, I, you could do whatever, you could run into my truck and I wouldn't be angry after church, but come Monday afternoon. Hmm.

I'll never forget the day. It was about five years ago. I went to visit somebody at the hospital, just got my truck, Dodge truck, and the wind was blowing and it went right into a fire hydrant.

I said, that is going to be such and such as dent. I'm going to just remember them by it. And you know, just went with the flow, but it was that, you know, you feel you just, these things, these emotions come on you and taking those thoughts captive and anger is also fueled by hurt.

Anybody hurt ever get hurt out there? Everybody in this room has been hurt. And when we're hurt, we get angry. I'm not going to email them anymore.

I'm not going to do that anymore. I'm just going to ignore them. I'm hurt and angry.

And there might be a time to take a break and not fuel things. But if we're not careful, hurt will transmit into anger. And the best thing mature believers can do is actually a couple of things.

If you always go to the person when you're hurt, you're going to a lot of people a lot. People say, Shane, just go. No, sometimes you just got to let it go and just forgive and move forward and not hold it on.

But sometimes if it's eating at you and it's hard to process to go to the person and say, this hurt me and here's why, you actually remove a lot of the power of the enemy because you expose it. Anybody come out better after talking about things and working them through? You come out better, stronger. The anger is subsided because you're able to talk and hear them.

And so don't let that, because what happens with hurt is the walls we build to protect us end up imprisoning us. And we become known as a person that has been hurt, hurt deeply and hurt in many ways. And Christians can hurt.

Cheap bite. Don't they? Big teeth. And so it's good sometimes to go and apologize or talk it through.

And then as you're taking your thoughts captive, talking about the hurt, anger begins to subside. Because the problem with fiery darts in the enemy is he will plant them and he will feel it for days, weeks, months, even years. There's family members hurt at each other from years ago.

And that just eats them up inside. And then also, here's a biggie, men mainly take note, anger is fueled by pride. Anger is fueled by pride.

And one verse that really pops out is 2 Chronicles 26. I don't even know if we have it on the screen. I kind of threw it in a little bit later.

2 Chronicles 26. Oh, we do. Uzziah was a king.

Here's what's interesting. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Oh, I love that.

But then you keep reading. I don't know what's wrong with these guys. I have notes in my Bible.

What's wrong with this guy? Like what? It cleans out the temple. It does right. And I think a lot of it has to do with they weren't filled with the Spirit of God, really.

Sometimes they were. Sometimes they weren't. It's a whole different concept.

But he did right in the eyes of the Lord. But when he was strong and his heart was lifted up. That's why I'm so glad I tell Pastor Abrams sometimes that God really humbles us when we're preaching.

Because sometimes you don't feel it. Sometimes it stinks. Sometimes, you know, people humble you and critique you.

But it keeps you from being lifted up. Because there's a... Now that's not permission to come and critique. I'm just saying that God will keep his people humble.

But when he was strong, meaning he'd accomplished a lot. He was financially successful. He was doing things for God.

He was actually... He did a lot of things for God. And so he was strong. His heart was lifted up.

And now he said, guess what I'm going to do? I'm going to boldly enter the temple. And I'm going to do what only the priests do. He began to burn the incense.

And he angrily, angrily... The Bible says he was very angry. He confronted the priest. And he became furious when he was denied.

Has that ever happened to you? That little voice rises up inside of us. It says, you don't say it just yet, but you're thinking it. Don't you know who I am? Whether I'm your dad, or I'm this position, or this administrator, or this technician, or this pastor, or this preacher, or this leader, or that... Don't you know who I am? That's what he was no doubt thinking.

He became furious when he was denied. So be encouraged when you're denied some things. I often tell people, whether it's trying out for the worship team or this, we're like, oh, maybe not right now.

Here's some areas we want you to focus on. What they do with that is pivotal in their success. Absolutely life-changing what they do with that.

Is it this? Well, fine. I'll find a church that likes my talents. Or will they say, no problem.

I'll submit to that. I'll work on it. And then watch out.

God will bless that. And we see that it is just this need to when we're denied something. And that's how we grow often.

God will deny something. And we learn from it. We say, okay, Lord, I trust you.

One example was, many of you know, I was all set to go speak at a church in Torrance that has already canceled me twice now. So three days prior, I get the call that it's not good timing, lots of things going on. My daughter's looking forward to it.

They've already found a place. We're going to go eat, make a date out of it. I'm ready.

Pastor Abram's going to speak. And to tell you, I wasn't a little bit irritated, would not be honest. Two times.

Come on guys. And so, but just, okay, Lord, I give it to you. And then that same time, Rob McCoy asked me if I would speak at his church, God speak in Thousand Oaks, the end of November.

And so God, God will open doors that no man can shut. And I don't like that to just speak. I like it to go and bring that sense of revival to different audiences and different people to get the message out there.

And then denied in other areas. You go into the city, for example, and they deny you. You can't build that.

I've been there. Stuff we want to do at this church. You can't do that.

You're limited on parking or the, and you're, you're denied. And so do you become furious? Because that's pride. Now, listen, it's okay.

When it happens, notice it and say, take your thoughts captive. Say, Lord, I'm just going to submit to that. I'm going to submit.

And I'm just going to, Lord, let you, because here's my thought. If God wants to do something in your life, no man can stop that. And so often at the church, when we tell somebody, Hey, no, not right now.

Let's give it some time. What do they do with that? No. Do we not see them for a month? Do they get disgruntled? What, or do they grow from it? Say, no problem.

I respect that. God's going to open the door when it's his time. He can't, you cannot shut a door that God wants to open.

I've told you that story many times before. There's, there's a few churches or one church in particular. I applied to it when they need a pastor.

And they said, we're not even going to look at your application. You didn't go to seminary. Bye-bye.

And so you kind of leave there like, Oh, okay. Well, God, they're not going to tell me if I should speak. They're not going to tell me what I should do because you're calling me.

If you're going to call me. And I remember some of the men at the men's ministry would tell even the pastor like 15 years ago, when I spoke at men's ministry, you got to let this guy speak. He's the men are challenged.

And he said, that's a pipe dream. Shane Idleman will never speak here. And now our church probably has as many people as they do.

And a lot of those people left that church and have come here. And see, what do you do with that denying? Because God will often use that to test you and to break you and to humble you. So you can now be a vessel that he can use.

And don't say in your heart, Oh, Shane must've perfected this. No, I'm preaching to myself throughout this whole sermon. Things make me angry every single day that I have to take those thoughts captive.

One thing I'll go to the mall and I'll park as far as I can. And I'll come out and there's a car right next to me. I can't even, I can barely even open my door.

I'm like, really? Nobody else thinks that way? Gene, I know you do. I'd seen your car parked way out there too. I told you this can be a different sermon.

So are you angry when challenged? Are you set in your ways? Set in your ways is great for concrete, but bad for a human heart. I'm set in my ways. Well, as a Christian, you better be pretty flexible.

You better be pliable and usable. James 1:19 through 20 from the ESV. Know this my beloved brothers, let every person be quick to talk, slow to listen.

That doesn't even sound right. Quick to hear, which means stop, just stop and listen. Don't, don't prepare what you're going to say as they're talking.

Slow to speak and slow to anger for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. In other words, you won't be in God's will with anger. You won't accomplish his purposes with anger.

And what really stood out to me was quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger. So does that mean I can be slow to anger? So your excuse of I'm just hot-tempered, I'm Irish, isn't going to fly. You can be slow to anger.

It's the, it's the mastering of the human heart led by the Holy Spirit. Fill with the Holy Spirit. One of the fruit of that, I don't say fruits because it's love, joy, peace, contentment.

One of the, the last points is self-control, controlling self, bringing the, the, the anger under submission. And if people ever tell you, you're not a good listener, this applies to you. My kids tell me that sometimes.

I already know where you're going with this. I already have an answer, but you're not a good listener, dad. Okay, well I need to listen, right, to hear them out.

90% of friction is caused by the wrong tone of voice. I don't know the exact number is true, but I think that's true. Something I've been telling all of our staff and all of our leaders, I think we have a hundred now, volunteers and leaders and people helping with, with the church.

If we have quarterly meetings or different things, it's not what you say, it's how you say it. It's not what you say, it's how you say it. Back when I was at 24 Hour Fitness, we were really taught on this big time with Stephen Covey, Zig Ziglar, all those motivational guys.

And, and I, I would, my goal was to have people thank me after I fired them. Because you listened and you talked, you know, I, I, you know, I'd love to, to help you, but your production is so low and you can't really do that with the opposite sex in the spa area. And we just, you know, and, but I want to help.

And like, oh, I understand. I, thank you so much. Give me a hug.

They're crying and they're happy that I fired them, but it's not what you say, it's how you say it. Now, I've made many mistakes in that area to continue to do that, but keep that in mind. It's the tone of voice.

And often, is it an angry tone? That's where that word snippy comes from. And I'll call people out sometimes. Why are you being snippy? Why do you have that tone? You really think that's going to accomplish anything? And then anger is fueled by changes.

Well, before I fill this in, I don't even know if it's up there. Any type A personalities out there? Be honest. No, there's a lot more than that.

And I see some of you are not raising your hands. Front row. You're not type A. Carrie? No? Okay.

I can go through this. I can go through, I can pick Tim for sure. Right? Okay.

Brian. Okay. I know who you are.

Maybe I'm learning to this sermon. Maybe some of you aren't. But anger, and here's my big struggle, is fueled by changes to my agenda.

How often do we get upset when things do not work out? I've got it laid out. I actually have today laid out. I don't know if you knew that or not.

What time me and my daughter are leaving in the morning at 5.30, we're getting here, this is going to happen. Then we're followed by this, and then this, and later today I'm going to try it. And then we've got it laid out.

This is my agenda. And it never goes completely like I like it to go. And so what happens? Irritation, anger.

And so one key really to overcoming anger is going with the flow. Lord, you're sovereign, and if you want to change my plans according to your sovereign plans, I can't tell you how many times he's disrupted my plans, and I run into somebody who needed help. Whether it's a flat tire, whether it's at the store, whether it's walking on the aqueduct, I didn't get in early enough, I need to get up there now, and now there's people I prayed with up there.

And so God, you have to be pliable. And it's hard for the leader type, got to get this done, doing this. And so anger is fueled often by when things change on our agenda.

Ephesians 4.27, be angry and do not sin, do not let the sun go down on your anger. I'm going to read the last half in a minute, but this is so important. To me, it's saying there's anger, you deal with it, don't keep festering on it, don't go, did anybody go to bed angry? That's hard to sleep, because your mind is working overtime, and resting in that, and just trusting God, and let, Lord, I'm going to deal with it, and then give no opportunity to the devil.

That actually goes together. When we do let the anger continue, we are giving the devil opportunity to do what? To plant fiery darts in our minds, and to fuel anger. What has really helped us, Philippians 4, be content in all things, be content in all things.

Now this one, I went back and forth on, but I think it's important. Did you know that, many of you do know, but it's a good reminder, there are physical causes of anger. There are also physical causes of anger, from hormone levels, to dieting, to fasting, to drugs.

These things can, anybody happy the first day or two of fasting? I told my, I can't fast half the time, because of my mood swings, and so there are physical things as well, being prepared for that, and I read some of the fasting experts, you know, say make sure when you fast, it's in a nice calm environment, and I say, I'm never going to fast then. I am never going to fast then, but progesterone imbalances, low testosterone, low estrogen, excessive cortisol, you know, all these things we hear about can really lead to anger. Really, you really fuel that inside of you, and there is a connection between food and mood, and I like this part, because so many people say, I'm so glad you talk about this, because nobody else does.

Nobody else goes into the physical aspects of our body, and God created us. It's not priority, but it sure is important, because this is how I minister. So, if I'm drinking 400 milligrams of Christian crack every day from Starbucks, I'm going to be irritable, and I'm going to be angry a lot, and I'm going to be snapping at people, and I'm going to be, that's what caffeine does.

It's a drug. I'm sorry to burst your bubble. I'm just being speaking.

So, if a person struggles with anger, I would start there, and then be prepared for hell for a week. I saw a guy early in the morning. I don't know.

I was getting gas. It was five in the morning. He's got three big monster drinks.

Like, is that for, he goes, yeah, I drink one every three hours. I'm like, oh Lord, help him, but because we're talking about fasting this month, this is actually from PubMed.gov from a medical industry. The positive effects of complete water fasting played a role in the reduction of oxidative stress, body weight, and blood pressure, and it talks about how taking care of our physical body can actually really help you in this area of anger.

What about hyperactive kids? Some of them do need some time. There are natural supplements that can really help those with ADD and hyperactivity, but I think a lot of that connection is also in their dieting, in their diets as well. That's sugar, man.

You turn a little kid into a bunny rabbit to a monster with a little bit of sugar. They just get so, their little bodies are so high strung, and I just ran into a lady. I've got a lot of personal stories.

She had a dozen donuts, right? I'm like, oh, your staff is going to be happy. She goes, this is for my kids. I'm like, whoa.

Those little things are going to be bouncing off the wall, and so my point is look at these things. Take them to the Lord. Angry people are four to seven times more likely to die.

I think I'm pretty sure that played a pretty big role in my dad's early passing. He only died two years older than I am right now. Nicotine, caffeine, just, man, always angry.

That's how you got things done. Give me that shove, and angry, and angry, and angry, and angry, because it can really lead to electronic or electrical instability in the heart, one thing, but also these things produce certain hormones. Anger produces, can produce adrenaline and cortisol, because they can be good.

Here comes a lion at me, and I need to get angry and fight, and so here comes this rush of cortisol, rush of adrenaline, and so, got me through it. But if you're constantly filled with what they consider toxic hormones, it will lead to inflammation, early death, because you shouldn't be consuming all, and your body just filled all the time. That's where inflammation can come from, chronic inflammation, and heart disease, and different things.

There's just always cortisol, always adrenaline, always these toxic, toxic hormones. It can be good in the right context, and again, back to food, and even mentioning, I know it's convicting, but I have to tell you the truth. With high levels of, let's say, coffee, what does coffee do? It produces cortisol.

So, if you're getting to get up in the morning, and just, Brant just sang that song, remove the idols. I don't know if you, clear the stage, just remove the, remove the pew in the crowd, if there's few, and bring revival. Idols, anything that comes before you and God, and how many of us have to have something before our study time? God, I'll get to you after I make my pot of, and you realize, okay, there's an addiction here.

Now, I know I'm camping out there for a while, but that, I'm just telling you, that affects anger. Now, one out of 10 people come and say, but it doesn't affect me that much. Well, bless your heart, bless your heart, but most people, it does.

You get irritable, you get anxious, and I believe that's a connection with a lot of the road rage that's happening, and we're high strung, and we're always upset, and that's what it does. It's a fight or flight drug. It's a central nervous stimulant, so you're being stimulated.

So, if you struggle with anger, wean off, wean off, because it will affect you. Okay, I'm getting off that topic. Anybody say praise God? All right, good, but you can't say I didn't try to help.

I'm well aware not everyone follows the advice I give on the physical aspects, but at least you have the knowledge. So, verse 6, so the Lord said to Cain, why are you angry, and why has your continence fallen? In other words, his faith, he could tell he was angry. If you do well, will you not be accepted, and if you do not well, sin lies at the door, and its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.

This is why self-examination is critical. Why are you angry? So, do that. Ask yourself, why am I angry? Why am I angry? Because what that leads to is repentance, hopefully, because most people who are angry, that want to be angry, don't want to change.

They don't ask. They don't say, why am I angry? Lord, help me. What's going on here? What's going on my heart? Why am I so mad? Lord, is this jealousy? Is my schedule being changed? God, help me with this anger.

Take it from me. God, I don't want to deal with this from here on out, and self-reflection, self-examination is critical because that's where repentance follows, but it's a person who says, I'm not angry. I'm not angry.

I'm not angry. No. Here's my favorite excuse.

I'm just passionate. Give me a break. If you do right, he said.

If you do right? So, did he not obey God? Did he bring the wrong type of sacrifice? But I will tell you this, another way to just kill anger completely is start serving. Start serving. One of the hardest things for me to ever do is go to the hospital homes that we used to go to before COVID, and you go and visit the patients.

You're like, okay, got to do this. And as soon as you walk in and begin ministering, you just break. You're just so humble to be there, so happy to help, and if you went there angry, you left there encouraged, and so stepping out and serving, because when we don't, we don't do anything.

We just come and be fed, it leads to often anger, because I'm designed to go do something, but I'm not. I'm just going to be fed. I'm just going to just, it's all about me, and I can become very angry.

He said something interesting as well. Its desire or its urge is for you, so there's something within us that is opposed to God, and there is a desire and an urge within us that wants to fight against God. Here's a commentary.

I believe it's from one of the Bibles. It's not a literal translation. It's more of a commentary, I would call it.

Sin is crouching at the door, so sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you, but you must subdue it, and it must be mastered by you. Now, this is an interesting concept, because rule over it. This is why

many Jewish scholars, and again, I read the Jewish scholars, and if you even look at a lot of early church fathers, like Tertullian and Justin Martyr, Polycarp, and early church fathers, except for maybe Augustine, that's where this whole concept of free will comes from, and that's why Jewish historians, many even conservative pastors and theologians, they still believe that there is a free will.

It doesn't mean man is good. It doesn't mean man is bent towards just doing good, and he's not really evil. What it is, though, it's this desire, or it's this understanding that God says, you rule over it, you control it, and I believe that is true, because you don't see too many rapes occur outside of a police house, police office.

People can control, to some degree, their emotions, but when it takes off, and it's anger, and they don't know what to do, and it's hard to control that, and that's why people say, I just can't control myself. The problem with that is it makes you a victim instead of responsible. So, as believers, the Bible, I believe, teaches you can control yourself.

Even to unbelievers, to some degree, there is a restraining aspect. You can restrain yourself. Now, there's demonic opposition.

Maybe somebody has demonic bondage. Maybe somebody snaps. There's a lot of things that could happen, and I believe that's what happened with that story that's been breaking on that girl who was killed somewhere in that camping area, and then they found the guy's body in Florida that they've been looking for.

My thought is when it comes out, he snapped, and then he realized he was going to be in trouble, and he took his own life, and that's what anger does, one letter away from danger, and taking that into control, and I guarantee guys like that that are probably abusive and controlling. See, there's a consistent thing here. I don't want to speak out without having a lot of information, but that is common among those kind of guys who do type who have their spousal abuse in the picture is that they are controlling and domineering, and you can't do certain things.

You can't get outside of my box and my agenda. I'm controlling this, and they get very angry when they people break those boundaries of control, and so those type of men need to find their selves on the altar. They need to be completely broken by God because he does not call us to control.

Leading is not controlling, and then the scriptures go on to talk about the highlights. I think we have the highlights there. They're in the field, and what happened? Cain rose up against Abel and killed him.

His blood cried from the ground, and Cain was banished from the garden. It's interesting. This word blood can mean bloods, and some Jewish scholars even would interpret this to say generations were affected.

Generations were affected because of the death of Abel. Think about the whole generation wiped out, and I hope we're not doing that to our families and hurting our families, and on this point the question comes up, why was there no death penalty? He killed his brother. Well, a couple thoughts.

Either it wasn't instituted yet. God hadn't said an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, or it would be what they consider a crime of passion, and you know in the legal system a crime of passion or something that's not premeditated. Premeditated murder carries a heavier weight because it was planned and premeditated versus just a crime of passion, and God may have dealt with him differently on that area, but he was banished.

He was removed from this area, and then verse 25, Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, for God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel who Cain has killed, and then this is interesting. I think we have it in verse 26. You see the end of it? Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.

So God is saying this finally, finally after 130 years, men finally begin to cry out, call upon the name of the Lord. In Exodus, they cried out for help because of their bondage. Moses cried out to the Lord.

He said, these people are going to kill me, and he cried out. Samuel said, I cry out to the Lord on behalf of the people. Judas said, we are surrounded by armies, so I cry out to the Lord.

From the Psalms, it says, from the earth I call to you, and my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. Josiah said, because God said, because your heart was tender, you wept and you cried out to me. I have heard you.

Could it be the secret to our success here in America that we are praying for and we are waiting on? Could it be that we're not waiting on God, but that he is waiting on us to cry out to God and say, Lord, you are my all-consuming passion. I will get to this altar. I will come every night next week.

I will come early. I want desire like a deer that pants after the brooks. My heart pants after you.

God, we're crying out to you. He hears the cries of his children. Listen, folks, sitting in church is not going to bring revival.

Listening to the word of God is not going to bring revival. Having some songs with our hands held like this, bored, is not going to bring revival. We've got to cry out to God again.

And the irony is those who don't know God, you need to cry out to the Lord as well. All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. All you have to do is say, God, I can't pray.

I can't please you, but God, I cry out. Would you save me? Would you save me? And that's why I'm not real concerned on the eloquence of someone's prayer or they say everything just right. Do they say the sinner's prayer? And check this off and check this off.

The key is, did you repent of your sin? Confess Christ as Lord and Savior and cry out to God. Do you know that people get saved without even speaking sometimes? Wait a minute, Shane, what are you talking? They get to the altar and they're weeping and they're weeping and God is breaking them. The Holy Spirit is convicting them and they're crying out to God.

God, take my sin. Take my guilt. Take my shame.

And the tears begin to flood their hearts and God begins to save them and redeem them and says, that's a cry of my child. I can hear that cry. That's a cry I will answer.

I will never leave you. I will never seek, let you go, forsake you. If you seek me, you will find me.

That's a tear. The cry I always hear, God says, is the cry of the person crying out to God. But we're going to open up the altar and it's a time of reflection.

It's a time of, the Bible will talk about, present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy unto God and laying our lives on the altar and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So to me, it's a step of submission. God really dealt with me many, many years ago.

I was at a speaking event. I'll never forget that day. And I'm in the back, back there.

I like the back. My wife likes the front. I don't know.

And, and there's an altar call and, and the Lord's just, I'm like, I'm like, I'm not going up there. I'm speaking next. That's embarrassing.

Lord, these guys are going to think I got it all together. I'm the speaker, go to the altar. And the pressure was just so great.

Have you ever felt, it's almost like somebody who's pushing me, you know, it's like, and I came to that altar and, oh, if I could repeat that day, the tears, the power of the anointing of God was so strong because of that step of obedience. See, it's not in and of itself, the altar, it's a step of humility. And there's 300 guys there is a rock church in San Diego, up in the mountains.

And after I gave this call to the altar, 150 of the guys came forward. And we were there for another hour and a half praying with people, addictions being broken, felons being coming back to the Lord. It was amazing.

But I think it started with that initial step. But what was preventing me? There we go. I'm the speaker.

I'm not going to the altar. What are these guys going to think? You've got to get to a spot where you do say, I don't care what people think. What does God think? Because that's how we're going to get through these dire times.

What does God think? Let me also encourage you, tell King's stomach to shut up for a while. If anyone's hungry, let me tell you, three sermons, an hour long, since 5:30 in the morning, I'm hungry, but I'm more hungry for God. I'm more hungry to hear God.

We've got to hear from you. Anybody want to intercede for their children? You have children, your children are going to grow up in this type of environment in this nation where all kinds of filth and perversion is being pushed down, slammed down their throats. And we're going to sit by idly and not pull down heaven.

I don't think so. I don't think so.

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