

Marriage: Anger, the Great Destroyer

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the destructive power of anger in relationships and the necessity of love and self-control in communication.

Duration: 57:21

Scripture: Proverbs 13:15, Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 15:18, Acts 3:19, Romans 8:5-6, James 1:20, 1 Peter 3:1-4, 1 Peter 3:7

Topics: "Anger Management", "Personal Revival"

Description

This sermon addresses the issues of anger, highlighting how it can be a destructive force in our lives, fueled by selfishness, jealousy, pride, addiction, and guilt. The speaker emphasizes the importance of repentance, turning back to God, and seeking times of refreshing in His presence. The message calls for personal revival, urging individuals to address their anger, seek forgiveness, and embrace a deeper relationship with God.

Transcript

We're doing something a little different tonight. As you can tell, we just did a few songs, two songs, because we wanted to switch it around and not just do a few songs after the service and get out of here, but to actually have the end of the service tonight be a time of worship, more songs than just two and hurry up or one and let's leave. So we're kind of structured to where I came up a little bit sooner and then we can worship at the end.

A lot of that is due to the weight of this type of message. It's not easy. I've been challenged by this topic all week on the issue of anger.

And I called it the great destroyer because it is. I mean, I'm not looking for titles that'll tickle the ears. I'm looking for titles that'll challenge the heart.

And anger is a very destructive influence in our lives. If you want to go on and get last week's message, we talked about marriage builders, and that's more of an encouraging message. And we talked about the importance of love.

And you hear this word all the time in church, love, yeah, yeah, love this, love your neighbor. I know, I got it. But Paul broke it down in Corinthians when he said, you can speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but if you have not love, it profits you nothing.

You can have great faith. You can understand all mysteries and have the gift of prophecy. But if you have not love, it profits you nothing.

You can sell everything you have, have your body to be burned at the stake. Or burned, if you have not love, it profits you nothing. And so I thought about that in the church today.

We can have sound doctrine. And if we have not love, it profits us nothing. We'll become repulsive to the world.

Because love must be that undergirding force. It must actually underscore and undergird everything. It undergirds our messages from the pulpit, hopefully, our words, how we treat others, what we say.

And I'm concerned in the church today that finding that healthy balance seems to be a challenge. Because we can have all love, but we don't want to talk about the truth. Is that really love? When you love someone, you tell them the truth.

But then we can have so much truth that we become dogmatic and arrogant and angry and forceful, and we blow people out of the water. So it's finding that love. And you guys have heard that story I've told many times before, and I actually just thought of it just now, of that older lady who came to her son.

She said, son, I love our new pastor. He goes, why is that? He goes, because he says you're going to go to hell if you don't accept Christ. What the old pastor used to say, you're going to go to hell if you don't accept and know Christ.

And her son said, well, they say the same exact thing. And she said, no, but our new pastor says it with tears in his eyes. And that's the difference.

That's what love does. It softens your words. It seasons them with grace.

Because in our culture today, when we've got to proclaim the truth, it better be in love or it's going to be offensive. Somebody sent me a YouTube clip this week of somebody confronting Rosie O'Donnell on alternate lifestyles and different things. And he was just calling her a pig and all kinds of stuff.

And I'm thinking, what is he thinking he's going to accomplish? What is this? No wonder Christianity or Christians have such a bad reputation. There's no love. There's either no love or there's no truth.

There's no truth. You become a coward who doesn't want to confront anybody. And you want to tell everybody what they want to hear so you can be their friend.

If you have all truth and no love, you become a modern day Pharisee. And we repulse people. And it's hard.

It is hard finding that balance. But that's why I want to emphasize and I magnify time in the Word of God, time in the prayer closet, time broken and humble. Because through that, that's when you can minister to a fallen and broken world.

Because that prepares your heart. A lot of times we go out and our heart is not prepared. We go out and the heart's not ready.

So we snap at people. We get upset. And actually this topic of anger has been on my heart for a long time.

But just finding the time and finding the energy and finding the resources, number one. But number two is being led of the Spirit to bring this message to you guys. Because it's a difficult message.

And that's why I don't like preaching a lot of times on certain things. Right before the marriage series, we got hit with a lot of things that I would consider spiritual warfare. I'm talking on anger and it seems like all hell's breaking loose this week.

I mean, many of you know I had a root canal done and now it's hurting again. The same tooth this week. And it just irritates me.

You spend \$1,200 now to go get it pulled out and it's just hurting again. And I'm going through all this. And then the kids this week and challenges at work.

It seems like half the emails I got were negative confrontational emails that just get me. I don't even want to go on the computer anymore. Things at work falling apart.

We get home, the kids are, I've made a mess or broke this. And it's like, wow. Because when I'm going to teach on something, usually that issue becomes very, very relevant that week.

And to be honest with you, on this type of topic, I'm not up here as, you know, like a weight loss client. I lost 70 pounds. Let me tell you how to do it.

Because this is an area most, a lot of people struggle with. I have not mastered this area, but I want to die trying. I don't want to get upset at my family or people.

I want to lean towards being conformed into the image of Christ. And the funny thing I realized about anger is you can control it. My son does the same thing here as he does at home.

But all you guys are here. I'm like, oh, son, that's okay. That's okay, little buddy.

Just try to do it better next time. But at home, what do you do when you're messing up the wall? What's going on here? You can control it a lot of times. I've never seen an angry tantrum from adults in the church in a year and a half, never.

But you get home, something changes, right? Because you're loose. And I often say you want to see a person's true personality or their true heart. That's their home life.

The home life reveals who we truly are. It is a gauge of our, I would say, even our spirituality. Because we can come and play church for an hour and a half.

But can you hold your tongue when your spouse is upsetting you or others are? Can you, like James says, be slow to speak? Are you one of those people who want to get the last word in? Like me? I'll get texting and email. Let me get the last word in. Let me get the last thing in.

Let me get angry, angry, angry. And anger begins to dominate our lives. And I believe that the enemy uses this probably just as much as any other sin.

And I'll call it sin because anger, unrighteous anger, is sin. But righteous anger, it's okay to be angry about things, angry that Planned Parenthood is coming to Palmdale or is here. It's okay to be angry about that.

Being angry about abortion and the condition of sex trafficking of these little kids it just makes me angry. The news showing that the parents abusing their children, that girl that they made run for three hours until she died. Angry, very angry, very upset.

That's why Martin Luther said, you see your quote there, when I am angry I can preach well and I can pray well. And I can sympathize with him because out of that righteous indignation flows boldness to speak God's Word. Look at Jesus going into the temple, throwing over the money changers, driving them out.

Righteous anger, zeal for your house is what's inside of me, Jesus said. And so there's nothing wrong with anger but a lot of it is the motive behind it, the heart issue behind it. What are you, why are you angry and what are you doing with that anger? I mean anger sparked the Protestant Reformation.

Anger sparks often revival. Anger drives men to their prayer closets. Anger can be a good thing and I realize that if we don't have righteous anger, we would never pray for the condition of the church or society or all these laws that are being passed or our leaders if we weren't getting angry at some of these things.

So anger can be good, it's defined by the nature, by our motive. What do we do with it? Are we killing people with our words, that type of anger? Or are we taking that anger and harnessing it for good if it's godly anger? So on that note, let's begin with this introduction to James 1.20. James 1.20, if you have your Bibles, I'm not going to read the first part, I'm just going to read the second part of this. James says, and I love what the King James says, because I memorized it probably, that's why I like the King James and the English sometimes, but anger worketh not the righteousness of God.

James is saying anger worketh not the righteousness of God. In a nutshell, you'll never get anything right through wrath. You'll never get anything right through anger.

You'll never repair your marriage through anger. You'll never repair relationships through anger. As a matter of fact, anger a lot of times puts us outside of the wills and ways of God.

It's amazing, when I was looking over the qualifications for eldership or qualifications for pastor, bishop, teacher, all those things, gentle, peaceable, easy to yield, not quick-tempered, not hot-headed man, not violent, not greedy from the anger. God says, when you're going to lead my people, you need to have a spirit of peace and of gentleness. Yes, be bold.

Yes, be firm. Yes, but be flexible. Be loving.

Leadership in the church, it's a qualification. You cannot fly off the handle and lead the church. You cannot scream at everybody to try to push your agenda.

Sometimes I feel that way, but you can't do it. Leadership, God looks at leadership highly. And I would submit to you, there's a lot of things that destroy marriage.

I wrote down the silent storm. You know, it's the one that goes to the grocery store and never comes home. They've been silent for years and silence in this, there's silence in the home and this is breaking the family apart.

Then there's, of course, lack of communication. We've talked about that. You say this, I said this, we just don't get along.

And then apathy, the apathetic storm that comes against your house, just laziness and being apathetic. Those things can wear on us. What about, of course, infidelity and adultery? We talked about that a lot, how that can break the home apart.

But I would submit to you that I think anger can do just as much damage as all those combined. I mean, I've seen people recover from an affair and it's difficult and they do and they become stronger. But I haven't seen too many people recover from an angry, abusive spouse.

They walk around like the dog you buy at the pound, always flinching when you go to pet it. Because anger has driven that into the person. Men coming home, flying off the handle, punching holes in the wall, yelling, screaming.

It's destroying our families. It's destroying our children. Do you realize you can break their spirits? You can break them.

They're right now, when they're little, moldable, impressionable, even as they're young adults. Anger. Anger worketh not the righteousness of God.

And I've seen it destroy many homes because you kill with your mouth. You murder with your words. When you come home, does everybody have to walk around like on eggshells? Don't want to upset, don't want to offend, just waiting for that volcano to erupt.

Yeah, this is hard, I know. But it needs to hit home. It needs to penetrate the heart.

Anger worketh not the righteousness of God. We'll never get anything right through wrath and anger. And I know, I mean, my mom and brother here, we had a pretty difficult home life when we were younger.

My dad, bless his heart, was an angry man, you know, from the farms of Oklahoma and just angry and driven. And it can really damage the family. It can damage your heart.

It can damage your soul. It can damage how you even look at the Lord, I think. Because a lot of times when a spouse is angry at another spouse and they call them names or they belittle them in front of the children, the children then have this impression of the man who's supposed to be the leader.

Now it's the man mommy is mocking and yelling at and getting upset. Same thing with the men, demeaning the wife. Demeaning them and yelling at them and becoming upset.

And the kids then take away this view. And what is even scary, then we pass that on to them on how they should treat a spouse. Role modeling.

Character is not only taught, it's caught. Remember what I've said many times before, mom and dad, the lessons you give me may be very wise and true, but I'd rather get my lesson by observing well. I'm not going to tell you what you do, for I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give, but there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

As my son walked in today as I'm studying this, he goes, what are you, I know what you're doing. You're studying the Bible and you're going to preach it. I said, that's right, but God help us if I can't live it.

That's going to carry more weight. Do you realize that? If I quote scripture yet scream at him, what's he going to look at? The lessons you give me may be very wise and true, but I'd rather get my lesson by

observing what you do. And I know this isn't for everybody, but it is for some people that anger is keeping you out of the wills and ways of God.

Anger is what's dividing your marriage. Anger is what's coming in. And if we're not careful, it can break us apart.

Angry men, angry women. I'm not talking about perfection. I mean, I'm sure it's all of us are going to deal with some forms of anger and getting upset, but when it becomes a sinful lifestyle and we use it to bludgeon, we use them to hit, we use it to control people and the spouse, we need to confront it.

Confrontation is good. Conviction is good. If we're feeling convicted, that's good.

God means he's changing our heart in this area. So with that said, there's so many places to go with this. I started to think of how many, and I was going to talk to some of you about this and get some statistics, but I wonder how many people are in prison today because of anger.

They're filled because of anger. Angry men, angry men detoured from their destiny. Now spending the rest of their lives locked up because of anger.

It worketh not the righteousness of God. You can look back at the beginning of the Bible when Cain, right before he slew Abel, God said to him, why are you angry, Cain? Why are you angry? Why do you look sad and down? If you do not well, will you not be rewarded? But if you do not well, be well. If you do not be, basically, if you don't sin, or if you do sin, sin is going to be crouching at the door and its desire is to have you, but you must master it.

God told Cain, why are you angry? Just do good. Sin is right there crouching at the door. Reminds me of a tiger.

You get ready to open that door, a lion's just going to jump in. That's what anger does. It opens the door.

Nobody murders anybody that isn't first angry and upset, and they just, out of a moment of passion, they do something. Anger opens the door to sin. And then what happened? Cain slew his brother Abel because of his anger, jealousy.

And God said, the blood of your brother cries out to me, but you slew him in your anger. What about Moses? He couldn't even go into the promised land. God said, speak to the rock.

Now, I know different Bible teachers and commentators are a little divided on this, but to me, it's a little bit clear that God said, speak to the rock, but Moses smote the rock twice, and God said, you're not entering into the promised land. You misrepresented me. Anger detoured his destiny.

What about Joseph? You know, Abraham, Isaac, oh, I'm sorry, Jacob. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob's name was turned to Israel, changed to Israel.

God wrestled with him, changed his name to Israel. Right before his death, the Bible says that Israel strengthened himself on the bed and sat up, and he called his sons over to him. The 12 tribes are over to him.

He was gonna bless them. This is what all Jewish boys look forward to. This is my blessing.

This is my reward. I've waited all my life to receive this. My father's gonna bless me.

He turned to Simeon and Levi. He said, you are cursed because you are a hot-headed man. In anger, you slew men.

Simeon, Levi, you're cursed because of anger. It's throughout the whole Bible. David, we talk a lot about Bathsheba and adultery, and yes, that's true, but when Bathsheba's husband came back from the battle, Uriah, David said, go be with your wife.

He said, I cannot do this when my men are in battle to go be with my wife. David asked him again, and he didn't do it. David got upset.

He told Joab, when Uriah comes back into battle, pull back from him and let him be killed. Anger, anger worketh not the righteousness of God. I'm trying to break this down to show you where men and women throughout history have taken detours.

It's because of anger. What about Saul? When Samuel was taking longer than he should have to get to the sacrifice, Saul said, let me do it. You're anointed to be king, but you're not anointed to be prophet, Saul.

You cannot do this. This is not, you wait for Samuel. He said, no, let's just burn this incense.

Let me take care of it. And because of his anger, God, not that his anger took away his kingdom, but because he did that, did not wait for Samuel. His kingdom was taken from him, and God raised up a shepherd boy, David, and came in to be the next king.

But Saul sought to kill David from that point forward because of anger. So let's talk about that for a minute. Why are you angry? God asked Cain, why are you angry? Sin is crouching at your door.

Its desire is to have you. You must master it. And what happens? We talked about anger jumping in, and I have this verse from last week, but I want to use it this week.

1 Peter 3. 1 Peter 3. We're going to go back into submission a little bit, but I want to show where this parallels. Likewise, wise, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if they do not obey the word, that they may be won by your conduct, by the conduct of their wives. When they see your respectable and pure conduct, they say, why is your unbelieving husbands are going to look at your respectable and pure conduct, not angry, hot-headed women flying off the handle to win that person and have them understand the Lord? Because I realize that we represent the Lord.

We represent how we live as Christians. Will you ever be arrested for being a Christian? I mean, if they looked at your lifestyle, could you ever be arrested for being a Christian? I mean, they'd say, you know, bring in the witnesses. And is there anything in our lifestyle that reflects the nature of Christ? And that's what he's telling the wives here.

Be respectful and have pure conduct. And then he says, do not let your adorning, you know, how you dress and all these things, be external. The braiding of your hair, the putting on of gold jewelry, et cetera.

But let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty, gentle and a quiet spirit. Gentle and a quiet spirit. That's what he's saying women should be.

Don't worry, he gets into men too. But look at that verse. We should take that verse and apply it to Facebook.

Be careful what you post on there. Let's read it in that context. When posting pictures on Facebook, let not your adorning be external.

The braiding of hair, the putting on of gold jewelry, clothes you wear, what you're wearing. Don't even worry about that stuff. But the message we're sending through the media or however we went, is it a gentle, quiet spirit? Is it a woman who's gentle and quiet and a man who leads his family in the fear and admonition of the Lord? We're representing Christ.

What happens is anger comes in there and it breaks all of that. It's not a gentle, quiet spirit. It's an angry spirit.

An angry, upset at everybody, flying off the hook, flying off the handle, yelling, getting upset, throwing everything around, this and that. That's not what God's calling us to be and we get outside of the wills and ways of God and then we wonder why there's challenges in our marriage. Why aren't I happy? And then it goes on to say to the men, likewise, husbands, verse 7, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel.

Now the other half of the scripture blows my mind and you better memorize it. Since they are heirs with you of the grace of life so that your prayers may not be hindered. Men, if you do not treat your wife right, your prayers will be hindered.

My prayers will be hindered. And let me tell you right now, anger hinders prayers. I believe there's many men, many women walking through a 40-year wilderness never to see the promised land because of that anger.

Sure, God's there. He's, you're a child of God. He's gonna oversee and protect and you're part of the kingdom of God.

But here, I believe it's holding a lot of people back from experiencing what God truly wants to do. I know He won't promote people to leadership if they're angry. I know that He won't open certain doors in Christian ministry if people are angry.

Anger prevents all of those things from happening. Look at husbands, love your wives, showing them honor. You know what showing honor means? We kind of miss it with that word.

But in this culture, it means the value of something. Show everybody, show yourself, show your family that your wife, you value her. It's like you get this vase in an auction.

It's worth \$10,000. You're not gonna put it up on this table right where the kids are playing. You're gonna show that value.

You're gonna pack it up. You're gonna hide it probably. You're gonna put all kinds of those little styrofoam things that I hate that get everywhere.

You're gonna show it value. That's what Peter's saying. Husbands, show your wife's value.

She's a help me and Aaron, the kingdom of God. But we despise them or we ridicule. We cast off.

Oh yeah, you're just there to help me and please me and we don't truly honor them. And that's what Peter's saying. If you want to have your prayers answered, men, and I think we all do when we're praying.

We don't wanna waste any time. You must love them in an understanding way, showing honor as the weaker vessel. We talked about this.

Not an insignificant vessel, not a vessel that's less than and you're better than. A weaker vessel, which means it's more fragile, which means it cracks under pressure. And that's what anger does.

It goes and cracks that vessel. You see women that her husbands are angry men. They walk around like that little dog.

I mean, they do. It's like, anything's gonna set them off. We can't do this.

We can't do that. And that's wrong. It's not her responsibility.

It's your responsibility to change and to be the man that God's called you to be. Now with that said, let's get into a few practical applications on this issue versus just leaving it hanging out there. Shane, what are you really trying to say? Well, I'm glad you asked.

Here's what I'm really trying to say. Let's read this scripture in context. James is saying, know this, my beloved brothers, let every person be quick to hear.

That means you got two ears, one mouth. Shut your mouth a lot more and just listen. Listen and try to understand.

Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak. Don't interrupt. Don't try to get the last word in.

Don't want it. Slow to speak, quick to listen. So what it is now, you see this analogy of a person, ears wide open, mouth is shut.

What about if a spouse is sat down to discuss something and they each did that? Tell me what, tell me, let me just shut up for 10 minutes. And just listen. Wow, that's the picture he's trying to present here.

Be slow to speak, quick to hear, and slow to get angry. He's saying you can't control it because the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. And I want to talk about some practical application.

And when I thought of anger, I thought of what it is, it's little kids inside. Really, they throw tantrum tantrums and they don't get their way, this and that. And that anger, if we're not careful, can grow up and it's still the little kid inside.

It's still that little kid wanting this, wanting that, getting upset. They're not getting their way. So when we talk about anger, let me give you a few practical applications.

Number one, what starts a lot of anger is selfishness. Let's just be honest. Let's get right to the point.

I'm not getting my way. Things are not going like I thought. This is not my plan for today.

I wasn't wanting to do this. And we don't think of what the Bible talks about. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God did not consider Robert to be equal with God.

But that whole thing there is he's talking about Jesus became obedient to the point of death, even death upon a cross. So he's saying, let this mind be in you, humble yourself. The humbly teaches his ways.

So one element of anger is selfishness. And so what I've tried to do is, okay, the day's going. I just know it's not going to go like I think.

Just waiting for something to come up and just, Lord, thank you would redirect my path. I'm on my way here. I spill stuff on the shirt and on the pants and tell Morgan to bring me an extra.

Hey, okay, it's no big deal. Now, have I mastered this? Of course not. But when you put yourself out of the equation and things come up, it's a lot, you don't get as angry because okay, Lord, and who's in control? He is, all things work together for those who are called according to his purposes, those who love him.

So as we're going through life, and I want to get here, I got to do this, I got to do this. You get a phone call that changes everything. Just understand that God is redirecting the path or something is happening.

And it's not about us. A lot of times he'll use those things until you say, okay, Lord, I'm just going to be happy and thankful that I have breath, thankful the kids are healthy, thankful for everything. And that anger, anger cannot exist in a thankful heart.

Being thankful about everything and being angry, they just don't exist. When you're angry, you're not thankful. That's why you say mean or hurtful things.

I wish I never would have married you. When you're thankful for the spouse, you would never be saying that. So the first part of practical application is selfishness.

Now, of course, again, this is not going to be easy. That's why you've got to spend time in the word of God, spend time praying and being broken and saying, Lord, what do you want to do in my life? Show me today. I'm just going to live my life as if you're directing it versus me directing it.

Because Morgan knows I have a whole pad at home now that I have to start putting. Here's what I got to get done today. And then when I don't get done, start over tomorrow.

And if it's not going to be good by 12 o'clock, I start getting a little irritated because I've got all this stuff to get done today. Now, part of that, of course, is good. You've got to have plans.

You've got to have a procedure and you've got to be able to accomplish things and get things done. But a lot of times now it's just like, what do you want to add to this, Lord? What do you want to take away? Show me. Let me try to get through this day.

And you'll be amazed at how much anger subsides because your plans aren't being ruined because they're going to be ruined every day. Every day. Flat tire.

The boss wants you to stay an extra few hours. Things aren't working out. Things get canceled.

Events get canceled. Things you're planning on, things you're counting on get canceled. Things don't happen the way we thought.

And we get upset about that. The next area, which is vitally important, this actually fosters anger. And that is something known as jealousy.

That's why Cain slew his brother Abel because of jealousy. Joseph's brothers. Highly favored.

Joseph is highly favored. Jealousy comes in. If you want to help master anger, you've got to work on this issue.

Because gossip is the sister of jealousy. When we're jealous about people, the tongue begins to put that person down. I don't like them, so I'm going to put them down.

I put them down so I look better. Yeah, but did you hear this? But you do that. In jealousy, you get mad.

You get upset. That's one thing about Facebook. You see everybody doing all this stuff.

I'm like, when do I get a vacation? When do I get a new car? When do I get all this? Nothing. You get upset. You get jealous.

Off to Europe again. And off to the gym four times a day. And doing all this stuff.

And the kids are with the sitter. I've got the whole day down in Valencia relaxing. And it's like, wow, you can get jealous of that.

It's not right, but that's what happens. You get angry at those things. Why aren't I doing it? Not realizing that those are unrealistic things.

The pictures people are painting that aren't realistic. We want to have a better impression of ourselves and really what's happening. So jealousy comes in.

And what happens is, let's read James again. Chapter three. But if you have bitter jealousy.

Now this is different. He didn't just say just jealousy. Because jealousy rises up in most of us.

You know, we get jealous. I wish I was doing that. I wish I was, you know, this or that.

And that's okay. I mean, we just repent of it. Say, Lord, this is right.

But bitter jealousy. If you look up that word, bitter jealousy. It's almost a hatred for the person.

They're so bitter and so jealous. And they just can't. They think of a layup at night.

You know, we think of plants to destroy. Or tarnish their character. It's bitter jealousy.

James says, if you have this, or selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. False to the truth. You have a truth.

You think you have the truth, but you're false to it. This is not the wisdom that comes from above. It is earthly, unspiritual, and demonic.

It's demonic in nature. And there's a word we don't want to use too much today. Oh, demonic or demons.

Yeah, but there's powers of darkness coming against us. The Bible's crystal clear on that. And that bitter jealousy is demonic.

It's a demonic influence. Now, of course, I don't believe that people can be possessed that are Christians. I just don't see that anywhere.

But they can be darn well influenced. They can be influenced by demonic things that come in. Bitter jealousy.

Most of the fights in church, church splits, this and that. I'm not gonna talk to that person again. It happened because of bitter jealousy.

Why aren't I up here? I used to play drums in a band. Why aren't I singing? I would tear this place up if they would let me have that microphone. I'll tell you right now, your heart's not right.

God promotes you. God lifts you up. You humble yourself, and he'll exalt you.

I mean, when the church first started, we had people coming and leaving, coming and leaving. I'm saying, what's going on? I start to talk to them. Well, it wasn't working out like they thought.

They thought they were gonna do certain things or be in certain positions. And when that didn't happen, oh, I'm out of here. Well, that's not right.

God will promote you. God will raise you up. God will open ministry doors.

That's his job. All my job is to identify it and to help when necessary. But God doesn't.

And if you appoint someone before it's time, that will be destructive. As a matter of fact, elders aren't even supposed to be appointed, the Bible says, until they're older and more mature, lest they'll be prideful, the Bible says. But that's what bitter jealousy does.

James goes on to say, for where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. Like I said, disorder, chaos, where there's jealousy, because jealousy at its core is thinking of yourself more highly than you should. You're jealous.

You want to be in that position. I mean, you guys know when I write books, and you see, oh, a number one bestseller, this book, this book, boy, that'd be nice to put \$100,000 in my pocket. I mean, of course, Rick Warren or your name, well, you fill in the blank.

I mean, it's top of the list. We're selling millions of copies. And I honestly, I don't get, I'm excited for these guys, but there's a part of me that says, oh, that would be nice, but I have no bitter jealousy on it.

And God's calling me to do whatever he's calling me to do. And he'll open those doors. But you gotta understand that he opens those doors.

He's in control. It's not about glorifying me. It's about glorifying the cross.

One of my main, main fears with the church is that people come and they want to hear me. And they say, we're seeing, we're seeing, you know, let us know, where are you going to speak again? We're speaking, but look to the cross. Mine is like John the Baptist, for him to increase and me to decrease.

That's my job. That's the gifting is to come and call the church back to him. You follow me around for a week, you're going to be disappointed.

That's just the truth. All of us are using our giftings to glorify him. Don't look to Shane.

Shane did this, he did that. Yeah, exactly. I'm a work in progress, just like you.

Point to that. That's why if I hear another person say, you know, I'm leaving Christianity or I don't like it. Look what happened to this guy.

Look to Christ. Don't follow men. When churches fall apart or these big pastors that everybody knows fall from grace, and oh my gosh, look at that, how are we going to make it in the church? Look to Christ.

That's not good, but it's to be expected because there's a spiritual battle going on and men are falling and women are falling by the wayside by the hundreds. It's look to Him and Him alone. We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the power and the excellency may be of God and not of us, Paul would say.

We are a broken, fractured vessel. By the grace of God, there go I. I can't get through a sermon without stumbling over my words, without forgetting where I'm at, for this and that, what time is it? And I've got, you know, it's because it's pointing to Him. Sometimes I leave here and I think, God, what was I saying? It's like bricks are coming out of my mouth.

I didn't feel anything. And then you guys are all so nice and you know, that was great. I'm like, well, thank you, God, because I sure didn't.

I want to run out of here. That happens sometimes. I mean, when you mess up, or you feel like you just, you can't just leave.

I've got to stay here for the next 45 minutes. I've got to get through it. I've got to persevere.

I can't just go out that door. You know, and that's what, but that's good because God humbles us. And I thank God for that sometimes.

And there's also the group out there who likes to email me. Oh, you said Peter is really James. It wasn't Proverbs.

It was in Ecclesiastics. Okay, thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. You know, but that's good because it keeps you on your toes. It's like, okay, Lord, if you don't do this, if you don't come, and if you don't quicken the service, if you don't awaken the people, I don't even want to come and preach.

It's just dead words falling without the Spirit bringing life. I mean, I've been amazed. Some people, some of the things I thought were so boring and dead, and why did I even say that? Some people came up after me and said, that I, you don't even know how that ministered to me.

It changed the whole course of my week now. Now I see what God's doing. Like, really? I would have thought from something else.

No, no, no. But He uses us. And that's why there's no place.

There's no place for selfishness and jealousy in the body of Christ. There is no place for jealousy in the body of Christ. And I can say that because, do you know who receives the most amount of jealousy in this church? Mia Morgan.

Gossip, I should say, rather. Not jealousy, gossip. Because we're leading it.

So the gossip comes, oh, yeah, they must have a maid. They must do this. Must be nice to go to the gym twice a day and all.

No, no, we don't have any special. It's difficult. Life is challenging.

It's very difficult. And what happens is because we think God's not blessing us and we want to pull others down. Peter's saying that's demonic.

Jealousy fuels anger. You get angry, you get upset. So if you can remove selfishness, and remove jealousy and gossip, and just start to thank God for people.

And I get that a lot. People go, oh, have you heard of this pastor over at this church or that church or seeker sensitive or this or that. I try to just, you know what, guys? I've got my flaws as well.

Trust me. And we're not going to sit here and put down all the other churches. And that's that jealousy.

You've got to stop it before it even starts. Because it's like a little fire. It gets bigger and bigger.

You throw more in there. And now it's gossip. And now it's a bigger fire.

Did you hear? Did you hear? I remember, I think I told this probably when the church first started. But Morgan and I, I don't know what it's been now, four or five years. Somebody said to us, oh, I heard you guys are having problems.

And it's got around to some other people. And we're like, now, maybe the first year it was difficult. But this time it was, there was nothing going on.

But it's funny how that just gets around and people just pick it up. Well, believe it. We might have problems in the future and have to work through things.

It's not, we're not perfect. And that's what we have to realize when we start putting down people and gossiping about them. Instead, why don't we build them up? Finding out about something.

Why don't we seek to protect them? That's what the body of Christ does. This arm doesn't chop off this arm. We protect, the body protects itself.

Something's coming at my head. I protect myself. Something's coming to a snake or whatever.

I get a shove, I'm protecting myself. That's what we need to do in the body of Christ. Stop shooting brothers.

Brothers are shooting brothers. Sisters are shooting sisters and pulling each other down. These things are demonic and they are not in the wills and ways of God.

So those are two things to get rid of anger is to get rid of selfishness and jealousy and backbiting and pettiness and gossip. We all have our struggles. We all have our issues.

And the next issue, pride. And I've hit on this many times before, but it bears repeating with anger. Pride.

Pride fosters anger because you don't like to be criticized. You don't like to be challenged. Amen.

I've said it, thus saith the Lord, don't respond to me. Leave me alone. Perfect example of this.

And me and Morgan laugh to this day and I hope this person doesn't hear this. But somebody heard me on the radio talking about pit bulls and like if a pit bull was coming at my son, I would grab him and defend him. Well, she went on this whole thing about pit bulls are nice and you just don't understand pit bulls and this and that.

And instead of saying, thank you, ma'am. Great advice. I understand.

That's good to know. You know me. No, I don't think pit bulls are nice.

And I went back and she's like, I'm never listening to your radio program again. Well, that's fine. I don't care.

Why did you email me about pit bulls? You know, it's like, why am I so angry? Why am I so mad at this? I mean, constructive criticism is fine, but for the love of God, defending pit bulls. And then I get the King James only crowd and then I get in debates with them. Like, why didn't I just say good point? Thank you for that.

I mean, it's just like, I bring in a lot of this stuff on my own, but a part of me is like, I can't stay silent. I mean, these guys are challenging me, gosh darn it. But you know what? Scripture comes to mind.

Proverbs 15.1, a gentle answer turns away wrath. There's your secret to half your anger problems right now and fostering arguments, a gentle word, a gentle answer turns away wrath. And all those incidences, I could have said, thank you for the time, greatly appreciate it.

I'll take that into consideration. But no, sir. You're going to challenge me? I'm coming right back at you because I've got time.

And that's where I'm learning a lot of anger comes from. I get texting them, I'm going to pull over, I'm going to text them right back. I'll tell them, man, email some, I don't even respond to anymore because it's anger, anger, anger.

Now, some of that can't be prevented, but a lot of that you bring upon yourself too, especially the type A leader administrators. They're more of the, you know, in everybody's face and they're getting it back and they're like, they don't want to get it back. And we get angry.

I get up preaching to myself here. If anybody else is benefiting, that's great. But I'm learning to say, thank you very much.

I appreciate your time. And, you know, because you can, and I wonder that, how much of this anger am I bringing on myself? You know, challenging these things and getting upset and it's just amazing, especially on the articles in the paper too. A lot of people want to, you know, critique on those and that's okay.

But being, I want to be careful how I word what I'm going to say and then they want to write an editorial about me. And he said this and this and it's like this big old thing. And I'm angry.

Why didn't I just end it right there? So I don't want to belabor this point, but Prober says, a gentle answer turns away wrath. Now, I'm not saying to never contend for the truth. You know me better than that.

I'm not saying to just passively ignore everything and oh, no problem. Thank you. I'm so sorry.

And I didn't mean to. Sometimes you've got to stand for the truth and it's going to hurt and you're going to get upset. But for the large majority of the time, a gentle answer turns away wrath.

So let's try this tomorrow. If you say anything that I don't like, let me say, that sounds good, honey. Can I take out the trash too? Does that work? I'm going to try that tomorrow.

It's a joke because she'll take out, she'll get all the trash ready and put it right by the front door. And I'm like, the trash can's just right out the door. Just take it a little further.

Open up the lid right there. You know? Opening up. But those are jokes.

We don't get upset. I'm glad to take out the trash. I do it all the time.

So what do we learn from that? A gentle answer turns away wrath. But what's this? Let me read the second part because that was good. But a harsh word stirs up anger.

Do you realize you can control the majority of your anger when your spouse says something? Do you know how many times I hold my tongue at work? When somebody says something, okay, let's pray about that. But if I come back with something, it's going to stir up anger. Anger, it's like a fire almost.

It's just barely there. It's barely there. And you can go get the gallon of gas.

Oh yeah, but this. And you just keep building that fire until it explodes. And you're saying things you wish you would have never said.

You're apologizing for words you wish you would have never said. You're having to repair holes in the wall that you shouldn't have hit. For God's glory, I haven't done that in 12 years.

But I used to, if you listen to my testimony, coming back angry, drunk, punching holes, ripping doors off their hinges, just raging because of selfishness, pride. You go down the list. These are biblical things.

I'm preaching from experience here. These things work. When you humble yourself, you're not selfish, you're not upset, you're building other people up.

Yeah, that's hard. That's right. That's why Paul talks about discipline and fortitude and perseverance and long-suffering.

Those things are not easy, folks. Have you ever tried long-suffering and patience with somebody who's very difficult? It's very, very challenging. I've got so many stories on that.

I'm gonna tell you. Well, one, when I was in construction a while back, Ryan will probably remember some of this. But sometimes these guys would send me labor-ready guys just stand there on the shovel, just trying to collect the paycheck.

And I'd have to hop off the tractor and uncover stuff and dig for them. They're like, come on, guys. And it's like, and just getting so upset and just this apathy and this laziness, and it's just there.

And it's hard to control those things, to be given gentle words. Okay, guys, you're doing good. You know, can you try to help me out here? And just, I'd say, don't even send out help anymore.

I'll handle it myself. These guys are worthless. But anger, you get anger.

Man, you get angry at these guys and say things that I shouldn't say or things. And that's how it can build and foster. It just keeps building like the fire.

You keep throwing gas on it, gas on it. The next thing, and I really didn't want to talk about this point, but I'm gonna have to. When it comes to anger, there's something called, and I should probably do part two on this, addiction.

Addictions in our culture today foster a lot of anger. If somebody's addicted to something and that addiction has taken over and the flesh is winning, the most miserable Christian or the most miserable person on the planet has been said as a Christian who's walking outside the wills of God and doing what they know is wrong. And the addiction takes over and it actually feeds the flesh.

And as Romans says, the flesh and the spirit are constantly at war against each other. And as you feed the flesh and the flesh wins, now the flesh is winning. Now I'm upset.

Now I'm angry. Now I'm irritable. But you fill in the blank there.

I don't want to go down the list of addictions and get letters in the mail again on this thing. I talked about caffeine once with fitness or alcohol. I mean, you fill in the blank.

These things are mood altering and they will trigger anger. Look at that. Ask anybody who's come off of four, five, 600 milligrams of caffeine in a day.

They're a highly strong, irritable, anxious, angry person. Very angry, very upset. They're linking psychological disorders to over 600 milligrams of this.

Now I like it now and then. So don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that. But I'm just trying, I can't talk about these things and not talk about them.

Let me avoid all these things that people don't want to hear. All I'm saying is watch what you're consuming. Alcohol, the caffeine, pain meds, whatever it is, those things a lot of times foster anger.

They fuel anger. You get upset and you get irritable. That's why alcohol, they say obviously he's a mean drunk.

Why do they say that? Because it alters the mood. You fill in the blank. I know people who have problems with the media, the video games.

It's four, five, six hours a day of this addiction. And it's making them angry. They can't control it.

And that's why people become angry. There's something in my life I need to get rid of, but it's mastering me and I can't control it. It upsets me.

Paul said I will not be brought under the slave or bondage of anything. Paul said I discipline my body and I bring it into subjection unless when I preach to others I myself should become disqualified. There's a word we don't like to talk about.

When you mention addiction, Shane, you better say it's a disease. Don't talk about discipline and willpower and perseverance and getting into the Word of God and having it. No, no, don't mention those

things.

No, we have to. When you can overcome addictions with the Word of God, with different things, they will destroy you if you don't get to them first. And that's why I didn't want to go down the long list.

Because addictions affect the mood, they affect your emotions, they affect your attitude, and they affect your actions. Things that you're addicted to you just can't let go and you know it's driving you crazy. That brings in anger.

I know some guys are so mad they can't quit smoking and they just get so mad when they have it. It's just, I gotta break this habit. So I just had to throw that in there because if you're addicted to something and you're wondering why you're angry and you can't overcome it, well, there's one of the issues right there.

You're feeding the flesh. The flesh is taking control. The flesh has mastered you.

The flesh is controlling you. It's like it's pulling you along. You don't want to go.

I don't want to go. And you're angry at the situation. You're angry at this thing that you used to control now is controlling you.

The thing you used to control is now controlling you and you know what it is. It's those things that God says you must get out of your life. Because the flesh, there's a few verses here.

First Peter says, Beloved, I urge you to abstain from the passions of the flesh which wage war against the soul. When you feed the passions of the flesh, you're waging war against the soul. That is one of the dangers with pornography, man.

You're feeding the passion of the soul. You're committing adultery in your mind. You're mad at your wife.

You're upset. You're an angry person because you're engaging in something you know you have no business in. Because it's pulling you away from the Lord too.

You better get something in there good, accountability software, something to get you away from this because it will destroy your marriage. The Bible is crystal clear on this. Proverbs says, Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by them is not wise.

What about the fulfillment of the flesh? Paul talks about not being brought under the bondage of the flesh. And the bondage means under control of the flesh. We become a slave to it.

Do you not know yourself, Paul says, that whatever you choose to obey becomes your master? You can choose the things of the flesh or choose the things of the spirit. That's where anger comes from. And I don't want to keep going on.

I'm already getting close on time. But Jordan, you know, you guys can come ahead and come up. We're going to go into a time of worship.

But the last thing I want to talk about briefly is what fosters anger is guilt. Not doing what you know to be right. Do you know that makes people angry? I talked about that before.

There's nothing worse than an unhappy Christian halfway on the fence because they're guilty about certain things. Guilt is building up inside of them and they're guilty about this, guilty about this. And I

remember I was reading St. Augustine's Confessions or St. Augustine's biography and he talked about how guilt was good.

Guilt and the fear of the Lord, a healthy fear and a healthy guilt as long as you don't, you know, get mad at God is good because it can pull you to God. You're guilty, you feel convicted. I'm talking about a good guilt, not the bad kind where you God's your enemy and everybody's out to get, you know, but a good conviction, a good guilt is healthy because that conviction, it's like the inner alarm clock.

Oh, I know I need to work on this. I know I need to work on this. Why do you feel that way? Why are you saying that? Because I know I need to work on this.

What's something that needs to be worked on? Not put to the side and, and, and, you know, fed even more and more and more. A couple of verses. Proverbs 13, 15.

I want to read this. Proverbs 13, 15. Hard is the way of the transgressor.

Listen, if you're walking outside of the wills and ways of God tonight or if you don't know Him, the Bible says hard is the way of the transgressor. This is why life seems challenging. Life seems difficult.

It's because you're outside of the will and ways of God. He wants a relationship with you. That's what the whole point of Jesus and the cross.

That's why we get so excited. That's why we talk about the cross because it provided the way of redemption. So if you're going through life and it's challenging, it's difficult.

Hard is the way of the transgressor. The prodigal son, the Bible says it was not until he came to himself. He was eating the food of pigs.

He was eating pig food. Forget the name of it now, but you know, there we go, slop. Okay, he was eating pig food.

Will you guys come up here and try to talk for 50 minutes? It's not easy, especially when I'm trying to bring humor into a hard message. But in closing, Acts 3.19, I think this is for somebody tonight. Acts 3.19, Peter's giving his famous sermon.

He says, repent, repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out and times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord. Do you realize that that sin in our life, hard is the way is the transgressor. Confess your sins, your faults to one another.

Peter's saying, if you just repent and turn back to Christ, turn to Him, repent. If you have anger in your life, repent of it. If you don't know God and you need Him and your life's hard and you're saying, I'm here for a reason.

I want what she's talking about. I need that relationship. The Bible just says repent.

You don't have to come up here and make a scene. You don't have to. You just have to sit your seat and say, Lord, I repent.

I repent. I turn to you for the sake of our families, for the sake of our children. We need to turn from anger and we need to get right relationship again with God.

If anger is controlling your life, this is we're going to use this next 15 minutes of worship just to get the heart right. So Bernie, you can hit the lights and we're going to, I'll probably just be in the back with Morgan if you guys need any prayer, but this is just a time to worship and repent. And if you need prayer, if you don't know Christ, you need a relationship with God, you want me to pray with you.

I'm back there. Come and see me. And let's make this a time of personal revival because God is calling you.

He's calling. If you don't know him, he's calling you and you have a chance to accept or reject. Do you embrace that conviction or do you run from it? And those who you know in this room, you need to repent of anger.

You need to get back on the right track. You need to stop the silliness. Stop this little kid inside.

It's manageable at four. Anger is. It's bearable at 14, but it's embarrassing at 24 and 34 and 44.

This is an area God is wanting to shape in our lives, I believe. So let's end in prayer. Lord, I pray tonight that this is an area that we need to repent of.

Lord, show us. Show us, Lord. We give you our anger, Lord.

We give you our passions and our desires. Lord, help us. Show us those areas in our life that trigger these things.

Lord, but we want to spend time in your Word. So give us a hunger for your Word, a passion for your Word, Lord, so we can serve you better instead of yelling at our spouse to love them and to cherish them. Be so thankful for what you've provided.

So thankful for what you've given, not only us, but our nation, Lord. And I do want to pray for our nation at this time of crossroads and crisis, Lord, that you would come and bring revival. Bring a spirit of brokenness to this nation, this prideful, arrogant people that do not know you, Lord.

They have left their first love. They have rejected your Word. We call you back, Lord.

Please come and revive the churches so we can revive the nation. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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