

How to Be Good and Mad

by Richard Siple

Anger is a normal emotion that can be managed and used for good, but it can also lead to sin if not handled properly.

Duration: 52:39

Scripture: Proverbs 14:29, Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 16:32, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:26, Colossians 3:8, James 1:19-20

Topics: "Anger Management", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the topic of being both good and mad. He shares a personal story about a man he knew who had a terrible temper and was always angry. Despite this, the man had a supportive wife and eventually experienced a transformation by God. The speaker also mentions a counseling session with a man who came seeking help for his daughter's psychological issues, but the speaker emphasizes the importance of addressing the man's own anger first. The sermon highlights the need for individuals to confront their own anger and seek God's transformation in their lives.

Transcript

Good morning. How to be good and mad. That's what I'm going to speak about this morning.

How to be good and mad. I used to know a man who always seemed angry. He was a board member in church where I was pastor, down in the southern states.

He had a terrible temper. He worked in a steel plant, but he had a couple of cows, milk cows that he kept in a field, and then he would bring them in and milk them, and then he actually sold some of the fresh milk. And so they would line the jars up on kitchen counter and fill them with milk as they come in from running them through the cooler, that kind of thing.

And so one morning he had the whole cupboard filled with jars of milk, different sizes, as people wanted different amounts of milk, and he spilled a little bit of it. He had a great big jug in his hand that he was pouring it with, and he spilled some of it. And he flew into a rage of temper and said, spill then.

And he swept the whole thing off on the kitchen floor. Four gallons of milk and glass, and what a mess. He had a wonderful wife who stuck with him.

He and I had a few rounds. God finally straightened it all out, but without me getting punched, though we came close. God finally changed that man.

Wonderfully. But I never saw him for years when there wasn't that kind of heat in his face. Anybody understand what I'm talking about? Some people that just, even if they're not doing anything outwardly, it's sort of there.

You can feel the heat and energy, you know, behind everything out of their eyes. And whatever they say and do, that's just kind of coming through. A man made an appointment with me for counseling and came in to see me.

They had been coming to the church for only a short time. And so we sat down and had prayer, and I asked him what the problem was. And he started telling me about his young teenage daughter who was having some serious psychological problems and possibly some other kind.

And so we talked about that for a little bit. And then he said, what can you do to help me? I said, well, the first thing I want to do is talk to you about you. Oh, he said, I came to talk about my daughter.

I said, I know, but we can't talk about your daughter till we talk about you. He said, what do you want to say to me? I said, first, I want to tell you, you are a very angry man. He said, how do you know that? I said, it's just all over you.

It's just coming out through your pores and your face and your eyes and everything you do. There it is. You're a very angry person.

He said, you know, my daughter just said that to me the other day. Oh, I said, well, you know, we have some problems here besides the daughter's problems. Anybody listening? Yeah.

And so we talked about his problem and why he was an angry man and how long he had been an angry man. And the fact that his father had been an angry man and his grandfather had been an angry man. And I said, it's time for you to stop it.

It's coming down generation after generation, father, son, father, son, God wants you to put a stop to it. And, uh, shortly before I left that church, he came to see me one day, his face looks so different. And he said, you know, God has delivered me from being an angry man.

That's wonderful. Isn't it? Anger. When I was a child, my older brother, who has always been very good at mechanical things, had made a go-kart and we didn't have much to do with, but he had gotten the things together from the trash heap and wherever.

And he had made a little go-kart that really worked in the steering wheel, actually worked on the thing. And, uh, he got it to where it was working and I wanted to ride in it. And he said, no, you didn't know me then.

Whoa. I flew into a rage, grabbed a hammer, hit him over the head with it, cut his head open and did not get to ride in the go-kart. I, I got to spend the rest of the day in bed without supper.

They had good ways of working with you in those days. Besides the thrashing I received before I went to bed just to make sure that I was comfortable. Yeah.

I remember when, uh, and I'm sure my wife remembers it when we were first married, she would say, why are you mad? And I'd say, I'm not mad. And why did I say that? Because I grew up in a Christian surrounding where it was wrong to be angry, where anger was a sin and you never sinned by being angry. And if you admitted you were angry, you were sinning because you shouldn't be angry.

And that's the kind of a surrounding which I grew up. I heard that preached and taught and I believed it was true. And so when I was angry and my wife would ask me why I was angry, I couldn't, we couldn't come to grips with it because I couldn't admit that I was angry because after all, I'm the pastor.

How could a man that godly be angry? Well, I could show you. And so God had to begin to open up my heart and mind to what the word of God has to say. Is it wrong to be angry? You're not quite sure what to say, are you? After that? Well, no, just as a simple answer.

No, it's not wrong to be angry. All three persons of the Godhead experience anger. God, the father, God, the son, God, the Holy spirit.

They all experience anger. The word of God says so. For instance, God, the father, Psalm 7 verses 11 to 13 says, God is a just judge.

That's very important. God is a just judge and God is angry with the wicked every day. Whoa, that's a lot of anger considering how many wicked there are.

If he does not turn back, he will sharpen his sword. He bends his bow and he makes it ready. He also prepares for himself instruments of death and he makes his arrows into fiery shafts.

Wow. God, the father is a just judge and God is angry every day because he is a just judge. He is angry with the injustice of the wicked every day.

The wicked do not think that God is concerned about their injustice or their wicked ways of living, but he is concerned about it and he's angry about it and he's threatening them that his anger may be poured out on them in judgment. So God, the father is angry. God, the son is angry and we have some demonstrations over the new Testament, but I'll just give you one.

Mark three, beginning with verse one. And he, Jesus went into the synagogue and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus.

So they watched him to closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. See, because they considered that practicing medicine on the Sabbath, which would be work. And so you're not supposed to work on the Sabbath.

So they were watching him. Jesus said to the man with a shriveled hand, stand up in front of everyone. Then Jesus asked them, which is lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill.

But they remained silent. He looked around at them in anger. I'd like to, I'd like to have seen that.

You know, I've never seen, I'm an artist, but I've never seen a painting of Jesus angry. I'm not sure if anyone's capable of doing that. How do you express anger and divine love out of the same face? I don't know, but it says he looked around at them in anger and deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts.

Said to the man, stretch out your hand. He stretched it out. His hand was completely restored.

So there's Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, second person of the eternal Trinity. And he is angry and he is even showing it. He looks angry.

He looks around on them in anger. And you remember later how he went into the temple and made a whip of small chords and kicked over the money changers tables and drove out the animals and shouted, get these things out of here. He was expressing anger.

Did you know that was in the Bible? Well, some of you are saying, wow, am I glad to hear that? Whew. That makes me feel better about how angry I am. Well, I'm not finished yet.

God, the Holy Spirit. Oh, you say the Holy Spirit wouldn't be angry. Yes.

Yes. First Samuel 11 verse one, King Nahash of Ammon led his army against the Israelite city of Jabesh Gilead, but the citizens of Jabesh asked for peace, make a treaty with us and we will be your servants. They pleaded.

All right. Nahash said, but only on one condition. I will gouge out the right eye of every one of you as a disgrace to all Israel.

Give us seven days to send messengers throughout Israel, replied the leaders of Jabesh. If none will come to save us, we will agree to your terms. When the messengers came to Gibeah, Saul's hometown and told the people about their plight, everyone broke into tears.

Saul was plowing in the field. When he returned to town, he asked, what's the matter? Why is everyone crying? Remember Saul now has just been anointed king by Samuel. So they told him about the message from Jabesh.

Now listen, then the spirit of God came mightily upon Saul and he became very angry. Wow. I'll bet you didn't know that was in the Bible.

Then the spirit of God came mightily upon Saul and he became very angry and the Lord made the people afraid of Saul's anger and all of them came out together as one. He said, follow me. And they all grabbed their swords and followed him.

And he went and delivered that city. So well, anger in itself can't be sinful because God is holy and without sin. Amen.

But God, the father, God, the son, and God, the Holy spirit express anger. Now we're made in the image of God. And that's one reason we have this possibility, this emotion in our lives.

This is also made clear by God's direct instructions to us in Ephesians chapter four. I'm going to read a few verses out of Ephesians chapter four, which make it clear that you can be angry and not sin. All right.

It starts off verse 26, be angry and yet to not sin. All right. So it's possible to be angry, not sin.

Do not let the sun go down on your anger and do not give the devil a foothold. Well, a good one way to translate that would be don't go to bed angry and you husbands or wives need to hear that one. If you have a problem of anger between you, don't go to sleep at night without getting it taken care of.

Amen. I'll tell you how to do that. Get together and pray together before you go to sleep.

Both of you praying out loud, and you're going to find it very difficult to go to bed angry with each other. If you have both prayed out loud, because it's so hypocritical, you'll break down somewhere. You'll get about halfway through your prayer and you won't be able to stand it because your wife knows that you told her off and now she's listening to you pray or the other way around.

And you're going to get stuck. It's going to stick in your throat and you're going to have to deal with it before you go to bed. Amen.

Hey, that would solve a lot of problems. Boy, oh boy, I could go to preaching on marriage right here. Wow.

There's a whole lot of problems in marriage that are not the problem you think they are. Well, that's something different. It goes on to say, let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouths, but only such a word as is good for edification as for building people up according to the need of the moment that it may give grace to those who hear the things come out of your mouth.

Let them build people up, not tear people down. See, when we use our anger wrongfully, sinfully, we say things to people that tear them down, that put them down, right? And God says, don't do that. Don't do that.

Some of you'd have to really change your whole conversation because you're always putting people down. Everybody can think of and God says, let the words that come out of your mouth, build people up. Let it build people up.

And when we're angry is the time when we're most likely to tear people down with our words. Isn't that true? Sure is true. So he says, don't let that happen.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you along with all malice and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God and Christ also has forgiven you. So he's saying there's a possibility of being angry and not sinning.

But the trouble is that when we are angry, the tendency is to sin with our mouth and to tear people down instead of building people up. He said, if you've been doing any of that, take care of it before you go to sleep. Deal with it.

Talk about it. Ask forgiveness. Get it straightened out before you go to sleep at night.

Oh, I'll tell you, some of you change your marriage completely. Well, there are times when you ought to be angry. There are times when I ought to be angry.

There are times when I am angry. You say, man, I'm sure glad I haven't been around. Probably so.

But there are times when I ought to be angry. I was angry in Campbell River when a guilty drug dealer was turned loose by a local judge on the basis of illegal technicality. That made me angry.

I am angry that 14 year old girls are being drawn into prostitution in Vancouver and even younger. And our government is not tough on the pimps. They ought to be executed.

I am angered by the lust and greed and cruelty prevalent in our society. I am angered by battered women, abused children, violent teenagers who kill girls and little children and senior citizens. I am angered by the

worldliness, powerlessness, and passiveness of God's people when the lost are perishing all around us.

And we're going about our business as usual. I am made angry by the lukewarmness I sometimes find in my own heart, the sin that makes Jesus sick to his stomach. Then I'm angry at myself.

You ever get angry at yourself? If you use it right, it'll help you. Yes. So I must not waste my anger.

That anger, listen, that anger produces the energy intended to enable me to do what God wants me to do about those things. God has given us the emotion of anger. It is an energy producing emotion.

Why has God given it to us? To produce energy, to enable us to come to grips with the things that have made us angry in a proper way and deal with them and accomplish something to the glory of God. That's why God has given us this emotion. I must not waste my anger.

I waste anger when I fuss at careless drivers. Don't I Anita? That brought a lot of you guys in. Scream at the children, rage about politicians, use profanity.

I don't break things. I'm not, I never have done that. My son used to put his fist right through the wall.

Anybody here ever see that? Gossip or slander, wasting, wasting, wasting a powerful energy producing thing that God has put in my life for his glory, not for destruction. Well, anger is an emotion. Emotions are neither holy nor sinful in themselves.

I want to say that again. I've said it before in this pulpit. I want to say it again.

Some of you would get a hold of that. It would change your life. Anger is an emotion.

Emotions are neither holy nor sinful in themselves. Emotions are involuntary. That is, they are automatic reactions at the level of our feelings.

All kinds of emotions are involuntary. They are automatic reactions at the level of our feelings. We just automatically react with sorrow or with joy or with anger or with fear or whatever.

And those emotions are amoral. They have no morality in themselves. Sin always involves the will, knowledgeable choices.

James 4 17 says, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it to him, it is sin. Anger is reactive. It is a response to a life experience.

Anger is reactive. It's not active. It's reactive.

It is a response to a life experience. Are you understanding what I'm saying? Are you getting it? Because I'll stay on this if you're not. Okay.

Anger produces energy which can be used for good or evil. What causes anger? Well, anger can be triggered by physical problems or demonic pressure, but I'm not discussing those this morning. Those are other things.

There are physical problems that can make a person angry, but that's not normal anger that is different and has to be treated physically. There's the possibility of demonic anger, but that again is another thing that has to be treated separately. But what I'm talking about this morning as a general rule, anger springs

from our sense of justice.

Don't you hate for people to treat you unjustly? And you know, North Americans are the worst in the world because of all the freedom we have. We're wonderful about saying it's not fair. You know, doesn't it bug you if somebody breaks into the line in front of you in the bank or the store or something? It doesn't.

Well, you're a lot more godly than I am. And what causes anger? It can be triggered by an experience that we have that attacks our sense of justice. It is a feeling that we or someone else has been or is being in some way wrong.

I'm being wronged or someone is being wronged and that's not justice. It isn't right. I'm angry.

You with me? Okay. Anger can come from frustration, being hindered from doing what I want. In some way, I feel wronged.

My mother is in heaven, a dear, wonderful woman who had a very difficult life in some ways, but was very strong and loved God with all her heart. She would spend some time with us after my dad died. He died fairly early on in life, 61.

And so she lived many years and she would spend some time with us. And sometimes when she was together with us and we're just talking, she would start telling us about something that happened to them years ago in the past. And she would really get excited about it.

She had had red hair when she was young and she'd get really excited about it. And she'd really get into it and get really angry. I mean, this is 50 years ago or something, you know? And she'd tell this story and her whole body would get into it and her whole face and her fists would be clenched like this, you know? I'd say, mother, mother, mother, forgive those people.

She would say, oh, I forgave them a long time ago. Say, no, no, no, no. Mother, if you had forgiven those people a long time ago, you wouldn't still have all this anger.

And she'd say, oh, I'm not angry. Oh, I don't know if I ever did get her to see it. I did try though, didn't I? Oh, yes.

She'd been treated unjustly. Yes, absolutely. And it was still boiling inside of her, the injustice.

I was wronged. It wasn't fair. They didn't treat me right.

Things did not work out like I expected them to work out. I didn't get what I wanted. Oh, yeah.

Our children help us see that, don't they? Some of our big children. It didn't go like I expected. I didn't get what I wanted.

I'm frustrated with life. I'm frustrated with this situation. And that frustration produces anger.

Yes. Well, it actually arises from the law of God written on our heart. And the fact that we're made in his image.

The truth may be that we are not really being wronged, but if we feel wronged, it has the same result and we get angry. In a sinless universe, it would never be experienced. Now, let me ask this question.

How do people generally handle anger? Most people handle anger one of two ways. They blow up or they clam up. Got it? Which one are you? A blow up or a clam up? Because almost everybody handles anger one of those two ways unless they have learned how to manner.

Both of those responses to anger are sinful. To blow up or to clam up, both are sinful. So let's talk a few moments about blowing up.

I want to read you some scriptures quickly, and they'll have to be quickly so you're not going to be able to all these up, but I'll give you the reference as I go. Proverbs 14, beginning with 17, a quick tempered man acts foolishly and a man of evil desires is hated. Proverbs 14, 29 and 30, he who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick tempered exalts folly.

A tranquil heart is life to the body, but passion is rotteness to the bones. Boy, I could preach on that for a while. For the healing of our bodies, a lot of our physical problems are caused by our anger that has not been handled properly.

Proverbs 19, 11, a man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression. Proverbs 19, 19, a man of great anger shall bear the penalty, for if you rescue him, you will only have to do it again, and that's a good one. I mean, you can rescue somebody that's always getting into trouble with their bad temper, and no matter how many times you rescue them, you're going to have to do it again.

Quit doing it. They've got to change. Proverbs 22, 24 and 25, do not associate with a man given to anger or go with a hot tempered man, lest you learn his ways and find a snare for yourself.

If you have a friend who's hot tempered, get rid of him. I'm serious, because it'll rub off. Proverbs 25, 28, like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.

Proverbs 29, 11, a fool always loses his temper, but a wise man holds it back. I didn't say that, God said it. Proverbs 29, 22 and 23, an angry man stirs up strife and a hot tempered man abounds in transgression.

A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor. Anger is energy that needs proper control in order to channel it constructively. If it is not under control, it's like electricity running wild or a can of gasoline not used properly.

It is power God has given us to energize us to do things for his glory. Yes, so it needs to be channeled to do the will of God, not just to blow up and to hurt other people. One morning, Ralph woke up at five o'clock to a noise that sounded like someone repairing boilers on his roof.

Still in his pajamas, he went into the backyard to investigate. He found a woodpecker on the TV antenna pounding its little brains out on the metal pole. Angry at the stupid little creature who ruined his sleep, Ralph picked up a big rock and threw it at the bird.

The rock sailed over the house and he heard a distant crash as it hit his car. Whoa, some of you must have done that. In utter disgust, Ralph took a vicious kick at a clod of dirt only to remember too late that he was still in his bare feet.

Uncontrolled anger, as Ralph learned, can sometimes be its own reward. Yes. Martin Luther said, and I'm very impressed with this, he said, I never work better than when I am inspired by anger.

For when I am angry, I can write, pray, and preach well. For then my whole temperament is quickened, my understanding sharpened, and all mundane vexations and temptations depart. Wow.

So if you want good preaching, pray I'll get angry when I get up here. Yes. So ventilation, you say, that's the answer.

Vent your anger. No, watch it. Ventilation is not the anger.

I is not the answer. I know about this because I counseled this woman later to help her get straightened out. A woman who was suffering depression because of anger toward her mother-in-law.

She went to a psychologist who directed her to ventilate her anger by taking a pillow, pretending that it was her mother-in-law and beating on it. She did this until the pillow burst. In her heart, she had murdered her mother-in-law.

Naturally, she got no relief, only guilt. Ventilation is not the answer. No.

That is exactly the opposite of what God wants. I was preaching in Gabon, West Africa, and with an interpreter to a little packed mud and a straw church bamboo. And after the message, I won't tell you the whole story, but we were with the help of the interpreter, we were praying with people who wanted to meet God.

And this young housewife, young mother come up and she was the first one they were going to deal with. And I said, ask her, what is her problem? And she said, the problem I want to deal with is I want to stop screaming at my children. Interesting.

We're way out in the bush of West Africa. And what is the problem? Same old problem. No different than you would find right here in Canada.

No different. A screaming mother. No women here understand this at all.

But it doesn't really help. It doesn't help the kids. It doesn't help the mother.

It helps the neighbors have got something to talk about. But no, I had a cartoon of a woman in prayer meeting and the caption said, please pray for my husband. He ruptured himself, venting his spleen.

Oh, I like that one. The other way of handling anger is to clam up, to suppress it, to never say anything, do anything to just be one of those kind of people that gets angry, but just says, that's it. You don't do anything about it.

Well, the Bible says, do not let the sun go down on your anger. You can't do that. It says in Ephesians 4, 15, speak the truth in love.

I want you to look quickly at a biblical example of clamming up. Second Samuel 13, one to 29. I'm going to have to read this fast, but I feel like I have to read it.

Absalom, the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar and Amnon, the son of David, loved her. And Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. Now this is stupid, but very realistic.

This young man had this lustful passion for this beautiful girl who was a half sister. And he was, he was so eaten up with it that he was sick. He was frustrated.

So he was already angry because of his frustration. He was angry because he wanted this woman. And so his friend told him, why don't, I'll tell you how to work it out.

Said, you're sick. Let the King know it. And then when he wants to know what to do about that was King David, his father, then say, you would like your sister Tamar to come and bake some food in your room and then serve it to you in bed.

And that'll make you feel better. Well, it was all stupid in the first place. And David should have had more sense, but he went along with that.

And Tamar did that. And then her brother, Amnon, her half brother, Amnon grabbed her and raped her. She tried to stop him, said, don't do this.

You know, speak to the King. He'll give me to you as a wife, you know, don't do this. It's wrong.

But he raped her. And then he said, get out and had his servant throw her out. Now this is what happened.

And Tamar put ashes on her head and tore her long sleeve garment and put her hand on her head and went away crying aloud as she went. Now this, this woman has been wronged, right? Right. That's injustice.

That's terrible. It's horrible. World's full of it.

Crying aloud as she went. Then Absalom, her brother said to her, has Amnon, your brother been with you? But now keep silent, my sister. No, no, no, no, Absalom.

Keep silent, my sister. He is your brother. Do not take this matter to heart.

So Tamar remained and was desolate in her brother, Absalom's house. Now, when King David heard of all these matters, he was very angry. I'm reading from the Bible, but Absalom did not speak to Amnon, neither good or bad for Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar and David didn't do anything about it.

And he was the father and he was the King and he didn't do anything. And the brother didn't do anything. And they all said, well, you know, just let's not say anything or do anything.

How did it result? Anybody know? Murder. Yeah. Not too good of a finish, huh? Resulted in murder because Absalom had his brother Amnon murdered to get even.

See, clamming up, covering up, holding it in, refusing to deal with the problem does not solve the problem. It is not the Christian way to handle anger. Absalom was right to be angry.

King David was right to be angry. They should have done something about it. They should have brought this young man to justice, right? But they didn't.

And because they didn't, this is what happened. You see, when you clam up, when you just hold it all inside, you don't deal with it. You don't talk it out.

You don't pray it out. You don't do anything about it. You just suppress it because after all, well, that's your personality or your Christian or whatever it is, and you're not going to do anything about it.

So you suppress it. But the trouble is it stays in there and it keeps on fomenting and it keeps on boiling and it keeps on stirring and getting worse and worse and worse. And then some little pinprick of a thing comes along and woo, it explodes.

And somebody says, how could that cause that explosion? That didn't cause it. That was just the last straw that broke the camel's back. No, so you don't clam up.

Both King David and Absalom were very angry at this terrible injustice of raping Tamar, but they said nothing and did nothing. And the outcome was murder. Now, how should we handle anger? We should face anger honestly and ask, what is making me angry? What is making me angry? And that's hard to do sometimes because we don't want to face the truth.

You say, well, preacher, do you ever get angry? Yes, I do. And you say, do you always handle it like you should? Probably not. No, not always, but I'm trying to learn God's way to make use of this wonderful energy producing thing, right? The first thing is to honestly ask ourselves, God, by your Holy Spirit, show me what is making me angry.

Why am I an angry person? Why am I getting so upset about everything? Why do I fuss about everything? Why do I fume all the time? Why do I snap at people? Why am I so upset? What is this anger inside of me? What does it come from, Lord? And seek his face in honesty and humility, and I tell you what, God will show you. Now, I can't give you any other answer than that because that's, it's always where we do business with God, right? You say, what I want to do is go to a counselor and have him show me. Well, go ahead, waste your time and money.

But really, God wants to show me, right? Well, he does me. Maybe he doesn't love you, or maybe he just has more trouble with me, so he works on me. You go to God in humility and ask him, what is causing me to be an angry person? And God will show you.

Then ask God, how do you want me to channel this anger, this energy in a way that will honor and glorify Jesus Christ and accomplish the things that God wants accomplished, that will accomplish the changes that God wants accomplished? For instance, I get upset about politicians. Do you ever get upset about them? If I get so upset about them, and sometimes then I just quit looking at the news, you know, see, you know what my problem is? My problem is that I'm not going to do anything about it. That's, that's my problem.

I'm not going to do anything about it. I have on occasion done something when I was put in a corner and I had to, but normally I'm not because God didn't call me to be a politician. He called me to be a preacher.

And you say, that's worse. I know, but that's what he called me to be. And so I have to do what he called me to do, but I couldn't do both.

If I were to give vent to the energy produced in me by my anger against the wicked injustice and corruption in our public system, I'd have to leave the ministry and run for office. And I can't do that because God hasn't called me to do that. So I'm just saying there's something.

So what I have to do is I have to be careful not to let myself listen to it too much. And then I have to pray about it. Amen.

The Bible says, pray for those in authority over you, right? So I have to pray for them. I have to pray for them. I have to pray for George Bush, even though I don't understand why he's in Iraq.

He's my president and I have to pray for him and for his family. And I have to pray for those people and I have to vent my energy instead of fussing about it and talking to everybody about it and slandering and running them down. I have to go to God and vent my energy from my anger in earnest prayer.

Are you beginning to understand what I'm talking about? You can vent a tremendous amount of anger in prayer. You can storm the gates of heaven. Absolutely.

Then I must speak the truth in love. Ephesians 4, 15, speak the truth in love. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

Speak the truth in love, same passage. And some of you are never going to be able to get on top of the anger problem until you're able to get honest and speak the truth in love to the people in your life and get your anger out into the open and ask their forgiveness and forgive other people and say what needs to be said, right? Hey, that's the way to do it. And then finally, attack the problem, not the person.

When we get angry, we have a tendency to attack people, right? Right? I mean, that's the easiest thing. When you have a problem, attack the people that are around you and you say, but they are the problem. No, they're not the problem.

The problem is his dirty clothes dumped in the bathroom floor. So deal with the problem. You know, don't put the dirty clothes back in his clean clothes drawer to get even.

That's not a bad idea. So deal with the problem. First, how do I deal with anger? I get honest before God and have him show me what is making me angry.

Number two, I ask God to show me how to use the energy of that anger to deal with the problem, whether it's something I have to do, or whether it's a person I have to deal with, or whether it's to vent it in prayer and cry out to God. But I need to vent that anger in worthwhile, biblical, godly action. So the energy flows.

Then I need to speak the truth in love and finally need to attack the problem, not the person. Well, we should forgive as God forgives us, but I'm going to bring this to a close. You say, I'm glad to hear that.

The only way to triumph over anger is to fully accept and trust in God's love for me, to love God fully and return to pass that love on to all around me and pay the price required. Joanne Hunter tells the following story. My two grandsons had discovered a new word to use when upset with each other.

Their mother was shopping with them when suddenly they became angry with each other. I hate you and I hate you too, they yelled back and forth. That's not very nice, their mother said.

I'm certainly not going to take two little boys who hate each other to McDonald's for lunch. Five-year-old Jamie quickly backed down. I don't really hate you, Billy.

But Billy, with a clear logic of three years, responded, I still hate you. I'm not hungry. Okay.

Oh, I like that one. How hungry are you? How hungry are you? Still not hungry enough for God and his blessing to do something about the anger? Are you hungry enough to deal with it? That's the point. I had been preaching at a revival conference.

This was back in the early 70s when the Canadian revival was in full bloom. And I was the weekend speaker, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday. I had been preaching three times a day, a huge crowd.

We had tremendous responses, prayer rooms packed with people. So I was in the prayer room much of the time. One night, I know, till midnight, praying with people, just utterly pouring out our lives.

And finally, that conference was over and I was flying home. And on the plane were a number of people from the conference who had really done business with God during the conference. But I was absolutely exhausted, probably never been more tired in my life, younger than I am now, a lot.

And so I said, Lord, I'm going to try to get some sleep on the way home. I'm just totally exhausted. And I said to people around me from the conference, please don't bother me unless it's absolutely essential.

So I put the seat back and went sound asleep. I don't know how long I slept, but I woke up with a start. Somebody was tapping on my knee.

And there was one of the ladies from the conference. She was kneeling down the aisle of the plane and looking at me so pitiful and said, Pastor, I'm so sorry to have to wake you up. I don't want to do this.

But I've been talking with a lady on the plane who's sitting next to me. Her 23-year-old son has just died and left a wife and two children. She's totally devastated.

Her husband, who is wealthy, has given her a bunch of money and said, go and try to get over it, which was a stupid way to try to deal with it. And she was a member of a church, but not a Christian. And she said, I've been talking to her about the Lord.

And she wants to receive Christ, but she's full of anger. And I just wondered if you would talk to her. So I said, yes, I will.

So I said, you sit in my seat. And I went up and sat down with the lady. I introduced myself and we started talking.

And I was crying out to God, what am I going to say to her? She was pouring out this tremendous anger over what had happened. And I said, you know, you're very angry with God. And she said, yes, I am.

And I said, well, there's a whole lot of things I can't explain to you, even if I understood them myself. But I said, you're going to have to let go of it and you're going to have to forgive God. Now, somebody says, well, how are you? You can't forgive God.

He hasn't done anything wrong. I know. But if you feel like he has, what's the difference, right? If you feel like God has wronged you, then of course, God hasn't wronged you intellectually.

We know that, don't we? Because he never does anything wrong. So God hasn't wronged you, even if you don't understand it. But if you feel like he has wronged you, it's no different than if he had, as far as your concerns, as far as your feelings are concerned.

And she was full of anger at God. So we talked about that. And she said she wanted to receive Christ.

And so I said, well, would you like to follow me in a prayer? And she said, yes. And she started to follow me in a prayer. And then she took off on her own and she started praying about all kinds of things.

And she was far field. And I knew she was running. And I said, ma'am, you're going to have to stop and forgive God.

And she stopped. And then she burst into tears and she said, I, God, I forgive you. I forgive you.

I forgive you. I want Jesus. And God saved her right on the spot that moment.

Okay. So she had to let go of that to God and give it to him. And then, of course, God loved her and her son and the wife and children and the family, of course.

And so God was ready then immediately to respond to her. And she was born again right there. And we prayed together some more and talk a little bit.

And then I let the lady go back and she got her name and address and was going to follow her up and try to help her to go on with the Lord. And some of you may be here this morning who are angry over, I have no idea. It may be that you that you're justly angry, but you haven't dealt with the anger properly.

And so it's affecting your life and everybody around you. And God is saying, if you'll just come to me and turn it over to me and let me show you what to do about it, I can set you free. And God wants to do that.

So let's bow our heads in prayer. As you know, we have a prayer room up here on your right, on the side of the auditorium, your right up, there's steps to come up to the platform and then through the curtain, there's a prayer room there. If you would like to spend some time with God before you leave this morning, you do that.

Father, I bring to you every person who has heard my voice. I pray that each and every one of us will be willing to deal with anger as you want us to deal with it, that you may be glorified through it and that we may be healed. We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9478.mp3>

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