

# Good Anger & Bad Anger

by Tim Conway

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**Scripture:** Ephesians 4:26, Proverbs 29:11, James 1:19, Colossians 3:8, Proverbs 15:1, Psalm 37:8

**Topics:** "Righteous Anger", "Conflict Resolution"

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## Description

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## Transcript

This morning we are in v. 26 and 27 of Ephesians 4. Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger and give no opportunity to the devil. The first thing I want to say about these two verses, v. 27 goes with v. 26.

And give no opportunity to the devil. That's not separate. It's not a separate thought.

In the original, it's clear. There's no question about it. The ESV uses the word and to connect these two verses.

Other translations use neither or nor. And the way the ESV says it, that can be misleading. Because and can connect it in the way that it's simply Paul introducing another stand-alone concept that we need to put off.

As Christians, but that's not the case. V. 26 and v. 27 are intimately joined in the Greek by a negative particle that indicates where the ESV has and, that's actually a negative particle. So those translations that do neither or nor, that's capturing that far better.

It's actually a negative particle that indicates that the thing before the particle, namely, don't let the sun go down on your anger, and the thing after the particle, namely, don't give opportunity to the devil, they're progressively exclusive. In other words, when it comes to anger, don't let the sun go down on your anger, neither give opportunity to the devil by your anger. And another place where we see the exact same particle used is in a sentence like this.

In Mark 2.2, many were gathered together so that there was no more room. Well, the first thing that's said, the exclusive thing here is, there's no more room. Not even.

There's our particle at the door. And you see the negative progression there. No room, not even at the door.

It's the same kind of thing. In secular Greek, this was used this way. It was a complaint of a wife about a husband.

You have neither thought of returning, nor, and you recognize originally this was in Greek, but you have neither thought of returning, nor spared a look for our helpless case. That nor right there is that particle. So it's like this thing is something that's negative, and then you get the particle, and it's progressively something even more negative.

There's no room, neither even is there room at the door. This is no small matter. We want to be clear about this.

You think with me here. This is being addressed to professing Christians at Ephesus. And you just think about what that means.

This is clear teaching, one, that the devil is real. And sometimes I think we live our lives almost like that's a fairy tale. That is not a fairy tale.

The world may think so, and the world may hit us with that propaganda. But, you know, the apostle under inspiration does not talk about the devil as though he is some kind of myth. Clear teaching, the devil is real.

This is clear teaching that the devil is looking for an opportunity to get at the Christian. This is also clear teaching that anger can offer the devil the precise type of opportunity that he's looking for. And this is clear teaching that you being a Christian doesn't change this reality.

You can't say, well, I'm a Christian. The devil can't touch me. No, that's not the truth you get from a passage like this.

It doesn't matter how much of a Christian you are. If you let anger in, you are also giving opportunity to let the devil in. Know that for a reality.

That's the truth. I'm going to hit on this part of anger giving no opportunity to the devil a little more at the end of the sermon. I want us to look at the beginning here.

Verse 26. Be angry. You just think about those two words.

Be angry. I love Scripture. Because it just catches us off guard.

Because I'm thinking that if you had written this, you would not have put that there. It's full of surprises. Be angry? I mean, remember.

Remember what is happening. Remember verses 22, 23, and 24. What is Paul teaching? Paul is teaching us about putting off the old man who is corrupt, being renewed in the spirit of our mind, and putting on the new man created in the likeness of God.

That is what's on the table here. Be angry. Okay, Paul, please tell us practically what it looks like to put off the old man and put on the new when it comes to anger.

If somebody asks, okay, what does this look like? What does putting off the old man, putting on the new look like when it comes to anger? How do we respond? And the truth is we might say what this same apostle says right down in verse 31. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you. Listen, you remember verse 25 from last week? We dealt with dishonesty.

We dealt with lying. Well, think about it. Think about if Paul used the same construction.

Having put away falsehood. We are to speak the truth with one another. And why? Because we're members of one another.

Think if Paul had basically applied that same format to anger. We might imagine he would have said something like this. Having put away anger, put on... and if you look at verses 31 and 32, you see what some of the opposite things are to that type of anger down there.

That is brother to slander and clamor and wrath. He might have said having put away anger, put on kindness. And then why? Give us a reason.

It could even be the same one because we're members of one another. Or because you're saved. There might have been a number of reasons that he could have given.

But to start out by saying, be angry? And the thing about it is it's an imperative. And you can't say, well, you know, it's just a teaching style. It's just rhetoric of some kind.

This is an imperative. And he is actually looking at these Ephesian Christians and the first thing he says to them. This is critical.

Of all the things that Paul could have said first about anger and the Christian, about what it looks like for somebody getting saved and putting off the old man and putting on the new man, the first thing he says concerning anger is be angry. You can't get away from that. This is an imperative.

And it's not be not angry. Just the opposite. When it comes to anger and the new man, Paul's first words on the subject, be angry.

And again, it's one of those strange animals that we looked at when we were back in v. 23. It's actually one of these passive imperatives. What Paul is commanding is that you let yourself be made angry by something outside yourself.

When a verb is passive, it means somebody else does it to you. Something else does it to you. You are being imperatively commanded to let something external to yourself make you angry.

Yeah, I don't think that's what it means. Okay, I mean, you look at the Greek. You study it.

That is what it means. Paul is commanding you to let yourself be made angry by something outside yourself. And we say, what is this? Paul really advocating for angry Christians? It sounds like it.

Okay, let's first move further into the verse. Because there is a qualifier here, and I think you all see that. Be angry and do not sin.

So in whatever way we're being commanded to clothe ourselves with anger, the anger must never, ever, ever be mixed with sin. I mean, this concept right off might startle some of us. It can almost be automatic to assume that anger and sin go together.

In fact, I think we would have to admit that v. 31 seems to suggest that. I mean, when you look down there, I don't know about the all, but I'm thinking that the all in v. 31 covers anger just as well as the other things that are described there. I mean, you have him saying be angry, and then just a few verses later, he's saying that we're to put off that.

But I think what we have to capture is this idea that down in v. 31, that anger is the kind of anger that is opposite of kindness, opposite of forgiveness, opposite of compassion, and it's brother to slander and clamor. It's brother to bad things. Whereas, this anger back up in v. 26 that we're looking at is obviously an anger that does not have any element of sin attached to it.

The idea of righteous anger, it can be somewhat of a foreign concept. I mean, think about it. If you think of somebody that's angry, you say that's an angry person.

The typical idea that we have in our minds is some unhappy old curmudgeon. He's just angry. You know, he's just a nasty person.

The idea of angry Christians, it can almost seem to be a contradiction of terms. But I want you to consider two really important realities. The first one is this.

The first one is you can't get away from v. 26. I mean, Paul's statement in v. 26 affirms that anger and sin do not automatically go together. Be angry and do not sin means exactly what it says.

It says, I can be angry without sin. Righteous anger is real to Paul. Paul isn't just saying... this is what I want you to capture.

Paul isn't just saying it's possible to be angry and not sin. That's not what he's saying. The very first thing the Apostle emphasizes about anger is that we're commanded to be angry and not sin.

There's a difference there. It's one thing to make an allowance for it. It's one thing for Paul to simply say, well look, it is possible to be angry and not sin.

He's actually giving us an imperative to be angry. We must be. The second thing to consider is this.

You know that v. 24 says that the new man is created after the likeness of God. Now, you just think about that for a moment. The aim of putting on the new man is that we are putting on a likeness of the God who created us, the God who saved us.

Okay, here's the question. What's God like? So we ask the question, can God sin? Of course. Can God be angry? So, is it possible to have anger without sin? Yes.

And in fact, if you look at Scripture, you can find where the Father is angry, you can find where the Son is angry, you can find where the Holy Spirit is angry. You say, really? Where? Well, okay, let me give you one. Jesus tells a parable.

You may remember it. It is the parable that the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. And you remember what happens.

Who's the king? The king is God the Father. The son is Christ. The king gives a wedding feast.

You remember what happens. The servants are sent to invite. They're sent a second time to invite.

The people don't come. It specifically says, the king was angry. Now look, the Kingdom of Heaven can be likened unto this.

What you want to know is this. When we take the Gospel to people, even if you're sitting here and you are refusing the invitation, God is angry. I mean, you think about that mercy we heard about in the first hour.

And when God comes and offers mercy to you and you say, no, I think not. I think I'd rather give my attention to my fields, my ox, and my wife. God is angry.

That's the Father. Have you ever read the second psalm? Kiss the son. There's the son's anger.

Isn't it amazing? When a sinner doesn't kiss the son, the Father is angry that you've refused the invitation. And the son is angry. Do you know where I might go to prove the Holy Spirit's anger? Exactly.

You want to outrage the Spirit? What do you do? Sin deliberately after you know the truth. You turn your back on Jesus Christ after you know the truth and you walk away from Him. You have outraged the Spirit.

And you know what's interesting? When I read Scripture, I come across verses like this. Exodus 15.7 In the greatness of your majesty, or some translations, in the greatness of your excellence, you overthrow your adversaries. You send out your fury.

Or the New American Standard says your burning anger. What I want you to recognize is this. Anger found in God is magnificent.

It's excellence. It is not a fault. It is not a defect in God.

It is His glory to be angry. And we don't want to miss that. Because when we put on the new man, it is that which is created in the likeness of God.

So for Paul to come along and say, be angry and sin not, that is being like God. Not unlike Him. That's not being sinful.

That's not being an old curmudgeon. That's not a defect. That's actually something that God has designed into man.

Brethren, what's one of the most famous sermons of centuries past? Sinners in the hands of an angry God. Jonathan Edwards was not being hyperbolic in that. God is angry.

I remember the seventh psalm primarily from my King James Version days. It reads this way, God is angry with the wicked every day. To be God-like is not to be anger-less.

There is a good anger. Anger is something God has designed into us. The capacity for anger is not something that we are to kill and to crucify.

We might compare it to sexual intimacy, sexual desire. God designed it. It isn't sin in and of itself.

It's only sin when we use it in a way that God has never intended. It's the same thing with anger. Anger is something that God has designed into us.

He's placed it there. It's the capacity within each of us that results in our being roused by certain things. And I know, it almost seems safer to say, hey angry man, just stop being angry.

Isn't it safer to say that? And Paul would say, quite honestly, he would say no. Listen, if anybody was a realist, it was Paul. Does Paul know about angry men possibly in the church? Yes, he does.

You say, what kind of counselor is he? What kind of preacher is he? Doesn't he know about that poor wife over there that has that angry husband? I mean, for him to come along and say that, what's he doing? And Paul would say, no, it is not wrong to say that. It is not wrong to teach that. And the question is why? Well, I think this demands that we take just a few moments and we look at the nature of anger.

What is anger? And I'm not asking the question right now, what is sinful anger or what is righteous anger per se, but anger in the most basic sense, what is it? Now look, this isn't theory for any of us. We know by personal experience. You see, the issue with anger isn't that we don't know what it is, it just might be that we grasp for proper words to put it into a definition.

I mean, if I asked you to define anger, see, that's more difficult. You know what anger is, but if you're going to try to put it into words, that's where we run into the difficulties. So, I guess the first thing I would start with is let's just grab a few of the biblical synonyms for anger.

That's a good place to start. That helps us. What are they? Biblical.

Wrath. Fury or furious. Indignation.

Yeah, I think we probably don't have to go a whole lot further than that. These are the biblical synonyms. And I stress that because culturally, we have synonyms as well.

But they do tend to be words that focus on the sinful side of anger. Like what culturally? What are some of the words that we use that describe an angry person on the sinful side? Mad. Well, that's kind of going back to some of the biblical.

But just from the world, I mean, annoyed, impatient, irritable, resentful, bad-tempered. Someone has said that if you want to scream and kick, you're experiencing anger. Have you ever kicked anything because you've been angry? Or maybe you kicked something and you stubbed your toe and you were angry, but you didn't want to kick something else because it already hurt bad enough.

This certainly is not the sort of anger that we want to ascribe to God, nor is it the sort of anger obviously that Paul is calling for among Christians. So what is it? What is it? Anger is basically a strong feeling of displeasure that's aroused by something that we... We could say by something that's wrong or by

something that we perceive to be wrong. It's just not right by our estimation.

It doesn't feel right. It wronged us. And here's the thing, and I think we can all relate to this, Scripture talks about anger like it's fire.

Just listen to these. Moses' anger burned hot. See, it's that emotion that we would ascribe that kind of terminology to.

Burning. Heat. We talk about somebody getting hot under the collar or they're heated up.

Listen to this. God's anger consumes them like stubble. Exodus 15.

Numbers 25. The anger of the Lord was kindled. You know what kindling is.

Yeah, you're building a bonfire or something. You say, bring me some kindling. It's that which you get the fire started with.

Kindled. It means it's the stuff that you start a fire with. God's fire is getting kindled against Israel.

Judges 6.39 Gideon said to God, let not Your anger burn against me. Or Psalm 74 Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture? Or maybe some of you are familiar with this. Psalm 18 The foundations of the mountains trembled and quaked because God was angry.

Smoke went up from His nostrils and devouring fire from His mouth. Glowing coals flamed forth from Him. See, anger is that which God has designed into men whereby their emotions are able to rise to a raging level.

It's an upsurge of emotion. God designed man to get heated. Our emotions are designed to burn when confronted by certain things.

Now here's the thing. Remember what all of this is being said over against? If you go back up to v. 17, you'll remember. Now this I say and testify in the Lord, you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds.

Well, let me just remind you of something that's true of the Gentiles. Did you notice in v. 19 they have become callous? But some translations say what? Past feeling. You know, it is a Gentile-ish characteristic to be past feeling.

Paul doesn't want Christians who are unemotional. Do you know passive, passionless Christians are pathetic Christians? People who never feel anything. Be angry.

Christians who can't get stirred up and angry over certain things are certainly not like God. They're not like Christ and they're not like Paul. Do you remember the Apostle Paul? He looked at those Corinthians.

Do you remember how he wrote to them in the first letter? And he said, you guys have problems there. You guys are proud. You have people in your midst that are sinful that you need to deal with.

You've got this sin. You guys are separating. You guys are divisive.

You guys have problems. You've got some bad teaching there. You guys are suing each other.

You've got sexual immorality. And you guys have problems. Do you know what he said to them in the second letter? He said to them, see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation! Do you know what happened to the Corinthians after they read that letter? The Spirit of God came, moved among them, and they got angry.

That's what indignation is. They were angry. At who? Who were they angry at? Themselves! You ever been angry with yourself? I have.

You want to be angry about something that a Christian ought to be angry at? That's worth being angry at? How about you and your own sin? Not at your wife. Not at your kids. Not at the guy who cut you off.

At your own sin. At your own self. They had indignation that they had not dealt with the sin in their midst in a proper fashion.

You talk about some things that are worth getting angry about. They got angry that they had tolerated sin in their midst. And God gets angry too.

God gets angry. And you can only find one thing in Scripture that He gets angry about. It is sin and sinners.

That is all that makes Him angry. I did a quick survey. You know the kind of things that especially make God angry? When you take advantage of widows.

When you take advantage of orphans. That gets Him. Idolatry.

That really stirs the wrath of God. Unbelief. Calling Him a liar.

Not obeying His voice. Forsaking God. Turning your back on Him.

You want to talk about something to stir His wrath. That's what enrages the Spirit of God too. Bottom line, it's always sin.

You can read in Scripture, provoking Me to anger with their sins. Our Lord Jesus Christ. You remember what I brought up to you about putting on the new man? Another way that Scripture says that is put on Christ.

Ah, let's think about Christ. When He was rebuked, when He was mocked, when He was scorned, when He was abused, when He was basically tortured, how did He respond? Did He take personal offense? Did He get grieved? Did He get bent out of shape? I'll tell you, you can find Him angry. But it's not when people did things personally to Him.

He wept for people who rejected Him. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Those are the kind of words to men who drove spikes through His hands and feet.

You want to see Him angry? I'll tell you where to look. There was a day, it was the Sabbath, and there was a man there who was crippled in his hand. You remember, a withered hand.

And he said to those standing around, because he knew what they were doing, they were standing there trying to find fault with Him for healing on the Sabbath. He says, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm? To save life or to kill? They were silent. He looked around at them with anger, grieved at their

hardness of heart, and said to the man, go ahead and stretch out your hand.

He stretched it out and his hand was restored. You want to see Jesus angry? Jesus is angry when people were cold and unsympathetic, unbelieving, when they wouldn't show mercy to others. I'll tell you, you know another thing that would rouse Him? It's when His Father was dishonored.

You ever hear of Him making a whip? I know the word anger is not in that passage in John 2. You can imagine Jesus whipping the people with a smile on His face, but I'll guarantee you, He had indignation. And He drove those money changers out of the temple, and He drove their animals out, and He overturned their tables, and He had that whip. What do you think He was doing with that whip? And He was angry, because they had made His Father's house a den of thieves.

You know something worth raising your ire? Anger is when other people suffer, and there's not sympathy. Abortion's a good thing to get bent out of shape about. When God gets honored.

Many times we think of anger as selfish and a destructive emotion that should be eradicated from our lives altogether. But the fact is, Jesus got angry when men were hard, when men were unbelieving, unfeeling, unsympathetic, and especially when they dishonored His Father. The Apostle Paul could say to the Galatians at a time when they were being duped by false teachers, I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves.

You say, emasculate? Brace yourselves. Thayer's Greek lexicon says, cut off your privy parts. You say, well, I never.

Well, that's right. You've never been stirred up like Paul has when somebody comes in with teaching and is trying to lead people away and possibly to their damnation. And he gets stirred.

And he knew what that word meant. And he used it in mixed company. Why? Because he was angry.

And he was stirred up. And when people came with false doctrine, he got that way. And there are some things as Christians that are worth getting bent out of shape about and worth getting stirred up about.

Unfeeling people are called callous. Unfeeling people are Gentile-ish, not Christian. Passionless people, passionless Christians are pathetic Christians.

There are things in this world worth getting stirred up about. There is darkness out there. There is wrong out there.

There is evil out there. There are people taking advantage. And there are devilish doctrines.

And there are people trying to deceive our brothers and sisters and deceive your children. You know when you see Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses walking around your neighborhood, that's worth getting bent out of shape about. On a regular basis, I come up there, Clark Street, right to Martin Luther King, and I look across, and on that wall is this Catholic picture.

And I'm confronted by it all the time. And Mary is big. The Queen of Heaven.

And she's got this little, pathetic infant in her arms. And Jesus is just emasculated of all of His majesty. And I think of the day.

That day of mercy that we heard about. When Jesus Christ comes and all the idols come crashing down. That wall is going to come crashing down.

And you ought to get stirred up about these things. And when Jesus Christ is dishonored, we ought to be, brethren. You feel a fire arise in your own self over sin? Brothers and sisters, you ought to be angry.

Those of you that struggle with sexual sin, you ought to be angry over yourself. There's things worth getting stirred up about. And Paul says, be angry.

And if we're going to be like Christ, then let us be like Him. If we're going to be like God and put on that new man, there should be things that make that fire arise within us. But now let's talk about the bad anger.

Because obviously, at the end of v. 26, do not let the sun go down in your anger. The King James Version, the New King James Version, do more justice to this because the anger in the second part is not the same word as the anger in the first part. They're all together different Greek words.

And the KJV, New KJV, what it does is it brings the first word they translate, anger, the second, wrath. And it is a different word. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

And the word means to stay provoked. It's a stronger word than anger used at the beginning of the verse. It means exasperation.

It means anger that is aroused, anger that is nursed and nourished until it becomes a settled state and condition. It goes hand in hand with hatred and vindictiveness and bitterness of spirit are closely associated with it. It means that you're determined to get your own back.

You're determined to seek vengeance. You're absolutely determined to get it. It's a settled condition of anger.

It's become part and parcel of you. That's the idea of this. It's a mood and a condition that's permanent.

That's the idea here. This is bad. You know the thing about it is you can move from a scene where Jesus is angry to the next scene and He's not still carrying the anger.

There are things to get angry about, but Jesus was never out of control. He was always balanced. He was always well-ordered.

He was always in control. He was always rational. And the anger didn't settle on Him because He could weep and He could sigh and He could groan and He could turn to teaching and He could turn to seeking to help people and He could put out His hand and say, I will be clean to the leper.

He didn't cleanse the temple and then walk around the rest of the day in a nasty mood and be ugly to people. And that's what Paul's talking about. You don't let this hang on.

There are people where it hangs on and you say, well, that guy, he's testy or he's on the edge all the time. He's easily provoked. He's a guy that flies off the handle or you have to walk on pins and needles around him.

It's that. Ready to explode. People that hold grudges.

This is what we need to be putting off. Selfish anger. It's not because it's sin.

It's not because the Lord has been dishonored. It's because life delivers up something that I didn't like. I liked five car lengths between me and the car in front.

And somebody just... Where are you going? You see, you're going through life and there's that thing. Somebody deals with you in a way that you don't like it. It's just selfish.

Life isn't just like you want it to be. Anger should be aroused by sin. It should be aroused against evil.

We should feel an indignation when the Lord is dishonored. But this is not that. This is the guy who barks at his kids and at his wife because he doesn't get exactly his way.

His exact expectation is not met. Now look, let's just be very practical here. Where do these kinds of things? Mothers.

Mothers. Mothers have that special and unique place in most of our families where they are around the children more than the husband. And if there's something to cause a mother to snap, it's oftentimes something with the children.

I mean, can you imagine if I had a recording up here on my phone of your worst moments with your kids and we started playing them one after another? You wouldn't like that. But you know the thing about this bad anger? It's especially a problem for men. Men.

You explode. You shout. You scream.

You profess to be a Christian, but just let your wife do something that doesn't sit right with you. Burn the toast. She doesn't agree with you.

Her conduct isn't just exactly what you want. A lot of men ready to fly off the handle, verbally abuse their poor wife. If you're a man who's angry, hot-tempered, you bark at your wife, you lash her with your tongue, but then you walk into this building, you put on a smile like the holy aura is around you, and your wife knows you were just talking to her on the way here in a certain way, or you dealt with her last night in a certain way, not only do your wife and children know you're a fake, all the more the Lord knows.

And Paul's saying put it off. It doesn't work to say, well, you know, I'm just that way. I'm naturally hot-headed.

Paul's saying quit that. Quit acting that way. And what you are at home is what you are for real.

What you are when you walk in here, that's not the test. What you are at home, that's where the real you is. You come into the church and you have this glowing testimony, but you know your wife walks on pins and needles never knowing what's going to set you off.

And there you are out there, and you're sitting there next to the very wife that you've blown up at. And she knows right now I'm talking about you. And you're uncomfortable.

I know it. You really don't want to look over at her right now. But hear me.

Don't run. Don't hide. Confront this ugly thing head-on.

You want to be angry about something? Be angry about your anger. Be angry about the right thing. Have indignation over your own sin.

Get angry about the right things. What we need to ask ourselves is this. Look at what makes us angry.

Think about the things you get angry about. This is a question I think that's fair for each one of us to ask. Do I get angry about the things God gets angry about? Or do I get angry about things that are just purely selfish that God never gets angry about? Do I get angry at people about things God doesn't get angry at them for? Then I can know I'm not in a good place.

I'm in a selfish place if that's what's happening. Put away all that selfish anger and fury and humble yourself. And what we're being told here is don't let the sun go down on your anger.

What does that mean? That means you deal with anger quickly. You don't let it simmer. You don't let it stay.

We're not to be people who are out of control. Even when our Lord was angry, it was controlled. It was balanced.

There was order. He didn't lose His mind. He didn't become irrational and blustering and fuming.

He didn't carry it around with Him all the time. Remember, we're to be renewed right in the middle of all of this. In v. 23, we are to be renewed in the spirit of our minds.

We need to think right. And here's the thing, if you let the sun go down on your anger, I'll tell you what else the sun is going down on. It's going down on you not thinking right.

Your mind isn't thinking right. Because you know what? If you think right, you will not carry around unrighteous anger. You say, well, why is that? What are you angry about? Are you angry that God saved you? Are you angry that Christ died for you on the cross? Are you angry that you're going to go to heaven when you die? Does that make you angry? Are you angry that God gave you a wife? I mean, how many people in hell do you think if you resurrected them, they might be kind of glad to have what you have? But you're angry.

Why? Because it didn't work out just the way you wanted it to. Isn't it interesting that right after lying, the very first thing as Paul is hitting particulars is this. And I just wonder if I asked wives, how many of you have this problem with your husbands? How many of you are just wanting to throw your hand up right now? If this is second, then I can be certain of this.

There's a prevalence here. This is something that men and women, I would say especially men, we need to put off. We need to be done with.

Are you saved? I mean, you have to think about what do you deserve? What is there really to be angry at? You have so many things in your life that God has given to you. So many things that are a blessing. So many things that other people don't have.

You're angry at your wife. I wonder if the single brothers here would be very sympathetic with you. You'd probably say, I wish I had a wife to be angry at.

I mean, you know, if you let the sun go down and you're angry, you're not thinking right. And if you're thinking right, you know what you're thinking? You're thinking, what do I deserve? What do I really deserve? I mean, where should I be right now? If God wouldn't have shown me mercy and had dealt with me according to my sins, where would I be right now? What would I have? Where could I be? I mean, you

have to ask yourself, what are you angry about? Well, then look at verse 27 very quickly. We're going to wrap up.

Give no opportunity or give no place to the devil. You remember, they came to the inn. Mary was pregnant.

There was no place for them in the inn. Same word. Place.

That means there was no available room in the inn. Do you know what this is saying? When you get angry, you open up a bedroom for the devil. You give him place at the inn.

That's precisely what's being said here. You notice what's happening here? You give opportunity, the ESV says. What this ought to make you recognize is this.

What Peter says really comes to fruition right here. The devil, he's prowling about and he's looking. He's looking for someone to devour.

And what this says is you want to give him a place to stay? Anger? You know, when we have Grace Group or Tuesday Bible Study, my wife puts a little sign on the door that says, please come in. So that not everybody's knocking, ringing the doorbell, causing Rex to go crazy. Just come in.

You know what, when you get angry, you just put that sign on your door. Devil, please come in. And he likes that invitation.

He's not going to say, well, you know, I think I won't. I'm going to go look for a better place down the street. No, he'll come in.

And that's precisely what's being said. He wants in. And nothing opens the door to him like anger.

Why? Why is that so inviting to him? Well, we could ponder various reasons, I'm sure. But I'll tell you one thing that happens when we get angry. I mean, the bad kind of anger.

We're not rational. You know, one of the things that you see about Christianity, especially about putting on the new man, is we're to be renewed in the spirit of the mind. One of the things that when you come into a rage, you don't think.

You just act. What do people say when they're in a rage? Do they ever say things they wish they could take back afterwards? Why did they say something they wish they could take back afterwards? Because they lost control. Oh, the devil loves it.

Do you know that's one of the things about drugs? You'll notice that witchcraft in the original actually comes from the same Greek word that has to do, pharmaseia, has to do with drugs. Do you know what's so inviting about drug use? Or intoxication of any kind? You don't think right. That is the devil's playground.

And you know what happens when you get angry? You don't think right. You're not rational. You say and do things.

You don't think straight. Sinful anger. It leads to all sorts of horrible things.

Nursing of grievances, desire for revenge, get vengeance for your own self. You feel like you have to protect yourself and get back at others who have harmed you. It leads us to despise and hate, treat others with contempt.

The devil will feed that fire. You know, if you talk to any police officer, what is one of the most dangerous calls they have to make? Domestic. Why? Because you know what, when you catch a bank robber or you catch the drug dealer, they're typically not in a rage.

But when you answer a domestic call, you've got people with jealousy and anger and fury. And it's most dangerous because most police officers are going to get shot, they're going to get stabbed, they're going to get punched in that kind of environment. Why? Because it's open playground for the devil.

And you know what happens? What does Scripture say? A soft answer does what? And you see, if you are full of anger, you're not giving a soft answer. So what you're doing is you're provoking others. See, anger is infectious.

You get angry, people around you, and they make other people angry. And it goes back and forth and it just escalates. Oh, the devil loves that.

If he can find a Christian man and woman who are going at each other's throat, how perfect is that? You say, oh, we can forgive each other. Oh yeah, you say certain things, you can forgive each other, but you can't undo it. It is so destructive in churches and in families.

As I was thinking about this, my mind was, I don't know why it came here, but there was a time right after Craig and I were converted, we were up in Michigan, and we went to the Reformed Baptist Church in Kalamazoo. Kalamazoo Reformed Baptist Church. And he and I and another guy from up there, we were three young guys and we were going to this church.

And I think they were excited about that. It was breathing some new life into this church. And of all things, they invited us to like an elder deacon meeting.

And we were just three young guys and we were with all the church officers. And I was just appalled. I mean, I didn't know how to process this.

These guys just blew up at each other. And I guess as a new Christian, I just thought, oh, you know, Christianity just so radically changes people. Stuff like this could never happen.

You remember that? Christian, the greatest incentive to put away your unrighteous anger towards others is God's willingness to put His own anger towards you away and place it right on the head of His Son. Let not the sun go down on your wrath. That means deal with it at once.

Think right. Renew your mind. Don't go to bed.

Don't give yourself to any sleep while you're seething in anger. Clear it at once. Never go to sleep without settling the accounts.

Don't go to sleep with your backs towards each other. Don't do that. Open up the books.

Deal with it. Put the blood of Christ across it. Don't sit there mulling over the sins other people committed against you.

Do you realize when they sinned against Jesus, He prayed for them? He wept for them? He called out in their behalf, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they do. Don't sit there and harbor it.

You've got to deal with it. And that means you've got to think right. The things that kill anger is when you think right.

If I got what I deserve for my sin, I'd be in hell. I wouldn't have a wife. I wouldn't have children.

I wouldn't have anything. I wouldn't even have a drop of water. Look at everything I've got.

Who am I to complain? Who am I to be angry? I should be angry about my own sin if I'm sitting there angry about that. Indignation because I haven't dealt sufficiently with my own sin. Okay, that's a good thing.

If I'm laying there feeling some kind of indignation because somebody's trying to bring false doctrine into the church to lead astray the brethren, that's worth being upset about, bent out of shape. But don't go to sleep bitter, hateful, angry. Don't give those things a lodging place.

That's what He's saying. Be angry and don't sin. And don't have that kind of anger that is a defending of oneself.

Look, you may have a great struggle. You may have to get out of bed. You may have to go out and walk and pace and think and pray to God.

But argue it in your minds. See, this is the thing. This is the thing I've been saying all along.

Listen, brethren, if we're going to think right and we're going to be rooted in the Spirit of our mind, you've got to be able to talk to yourself. And you've got to be able to reason with yourself. And you've got to be able to preach to yourself just like the psalmist did.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? You've got to be able to talk to yourself. Why are you angry? What are you angry about? What do you really have cause to be angry about before God? You have to work through it. Forwards.

Backwards. This is where we have to be. Don't let the sun go down on this.

Because if you do, you are going to give an opportunity to the devil and he's going to come in and he doesn't come in to do you favors. He comes to destroy and kill and be certain of it. You just throw the door wide open to him.

Do not rest until you've settled it. Renew your mind. Hear the groans of Christ on the cross.

Think about your own forgiven sins. Are you going to have the kind of debt you have with the Lord and then you're going to hold a grudge against somebody else after they've done something? You know, there's a parable that rings with that truth. Put it off.

Be feeling. We need to be feeling. Don't be pathetic.

Don't be the kind of... get stirred up about anything. No, we need to be stirred up. You need to be stirred up.

But let's be stirred up. Let's be people who have indignation over the right things. We need to be emotional people.

God made us that way. But not this unrighteous anger. Don't let the sun go down.

Keep your accounts short. Don't be these ongoing angry people. You men... I know some of you need to repent of this.

It comes through. It comes through. I mean, we hear about each other.

We get to know each other. The longer we're in the church and you hear about some men that are just so brutal with their wives. It's the way they speak to them.

The way they act. Some of you men, you need to put this off. Put it off.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Father, we ask You for the grace of God, the mercy of God, the help from God, as we seek to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. We want to see You at work within us.

We want to feel Your presence, Your closeness, the power of the Word of God, the movings of the Spirit, the convictions of the Spirit. Father, I know that some have already been dealt with concerning different things in their lives, and Lord, I'm asking You for purity in this church, for purging, for purification. Make us better, more upright, more like Your Son.

Stamp that image. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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