

Overcoming Anger - Proverbs 19

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[0 : 00] Go with me to Proverbs 19.11. Now, I am sure what I'm about to talk about no one in this room except me has a problem with. But I want to talk to you about anger and how we can overcome anger from a Bible point of view.

And, you know, there's all kinds of anger. There's a guy who blows his stack and yells and does crazy stuff. And then there's the other person who is quiet and seething until they blow up and shoot somebody and so on.

So we just want to look at the Bible. We're just going to let the Bible do the talking. And I hope that you enjoy it. So in Proverbs 19.11, Proverbs 19.11, the Bible says, That word discretion in your Bible is insight or understanding.

If a man understands, he'd hold back on his anger. If he knew what he was doing, he'd hold back on his anger. And if he knew what he's doing, he'd get honor and glory because instead of getting mad when he got done wrong, he would look at the verse, pass over it, and forgive like we have been forgiven.

Take your Bible now. We'll be mostly in Proverbs, but you're going to be a little bit around the Bible. But let's look at some consequences of anger straight out of the book of wisdom.

[1 : 38] Consequences of anger. Proverbs 14.17. Are you guys going to be able to put that on the screen? Do you think? Proverbs 14.17 says, He that is soon angry deals foolishly, and a man of wicked devices is hated.

It causes you to make bad decisions, and you regret your actions. Look at that. He that is soon angry deals foolishly.

I don't know how many times. That's a good road rage verse there. Amen. He cut you off. You got angry. You cut him off. That was dumb.

Foolish. And so we want to control it. It makes us make bad decisions. Verse 18. I made a bad decision one time because I was angry.

I made a lot of them, but I distinctly remember one when I think about foolish decisions. I had a Corvair. I didn't say Corvette. I said Corvair. And that's a very different kind of car.

[2 : 44] And it wasn't running very well. And I hadn't been married long. And it was a car I bought. We were dating. Or even before I met her, it cost me \$300 and \$100 to insure it.

And it wasn't running. And I'd come home basically pushing the car home. It was extremely hot. And I was sweaty. And I was sitting in the living room.

And my father-in-law had just put \$100 worth of repairs in the car. New tires, new battery, and several other things. The guy knocked on the door. And he said, hey, would you sell that Corvair? And I was so mad.

I said, yeah, give me \$50 and you can have it. So he did. That was foolish. And my father-in-law didn't appreciate it one bit. Look at Proverbs 15, 18.

A wrathful man stirs up strife. You know, a guy that's angry, he just stirs up trouble. And he that's slow to anger, he stops trouble.

[3 : 45] He appeases it. So this angry man is causing fights and fusses wherever he goes. And those fights and fusses cause him to get embarrassed.

Proverbs 25, 8. Look at that verse, if you would. Proverbs 25, 8 says, Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou no know what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame.

So, you know, go out, you're mad, you're angry. You go out, you start something you can't finish. You get embarrassed in the end of it. A preacher friend that was in heaven told me the story of how when he was young, he had this real bad attitude because he was short.

And he had a little man complex. And so he used to get a little tipsy on Friday night, Saturday night. And he'd go and he'd find people in their fancy sport cars.

He didn't have one because he's poor. He said, we'd open the door and grab them, just pull them out and beat them up. This is Brother Paul Forsythe. He was poor, he was saved. He was a pastor at that time.

[4 : 50] And so he said, one night they reached in and pulled this guy out. He said, we pulled and he kept coming. He said, he looked like a normal sized guy. But about 6'8 got out of that car. And 4 was over. I got whipped.

And so you start something you can't handle. You end up embarrassed. So here's the wise man. I just want us to lay a groundwork for what happens.

Proverbs 29, 20. Look at that. So when you get, anger is causing us more trouble than we think it is. Most Christians justify their anger.

We justify our anger. We say, well, you don't understand. We make up stuff. Proverbs 29, 20 says, See how I saw a man hasty in his words.

There's more hope of a fool than him. So this guy, I just see him being foolish and running his mouth and getting in trouble.

[5 : 49] And Solomon tells his son, son, you can't help that guy. That guy's beyond help. He runs his mouth too much. In verse 22, which may give a little context, says, An angry man stirs up strife.

And a furious man abounds in transgression. So if you have an anger problem, you cause trouble, but you get involved in a lot of stuff that God's not pleased with.

That's transgression or sin. And I'll give you a couple of verses. You look them up if you can find them. But what happens? What happens is it causes bitterness.

So we get angry. A lot of times we're angry because we're bitter. We feel like somebody did us wrong. We've been holding it in. And we start causing trouble for all those around us.

In Hebrews 12, 15, it said, Looking diligently, lest any man, fellow of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and many be defiled.

[6 : 53] I was raised in an angry home. For real. I was raised in a very angry home. When my dad died, one of my cousins made the comment.

He said, You know, your dad was a cruel man. And my mother could whip me on Monday for something I legitimately did. But if I went through the living room on Tuesday, she'd whip me again for the same thing.

And, I mean, she would break stuff and then beat me for me causing her to break it. And it was just not exactly the most fun thing. When I got married, I had that in me, man.

It was like, I've got to get this under control. Betty and I hadn't been married too awful long. We were in our second church. I guess maybe three years into our marriage was in the second church that I would work in.

And we'd left church in Rome, Georgia, moved to Birmingham, Alabama area. And I was so excited about the ministry. And she was all alone in our upstairs apartment.

[7 : 51] And she was sick. And I came home. And the house hadn't been taken care of. There was no AC in the room. It was a garage apartment up above a garage.

It wasn't nice at all. Wonderful place this church had put us. And I said, baby, what in the world? Have you done anything all day long? Boy, she let me know what she thought of me.

And I told her, I said, you can shut your mouth. I ain't put up with this. I've been out working all day long. And I come home with this. And then she told me what she thought of me some more. So I turned and headed for the door.

And she picked up a whistle. I was a youth director. It was a metal whistle. She hit me in the back of the head with it. I mean, she beamed me right there. I came back across that room. And I was ready to hurt her.

Only time. I took off my belt. I raised my belt. I grew up with that. And I dropped my belt and walked out. And I knew. See there? That junk in you is going to come out, you will hurt somebody.

[8 : 52] And none of y'all ever have had any problems like this. None of you have had an anger problem. None of you have had issues like that. But I think it comes because we store bitterness. I think it comes because we build up unforgiveness in our heart.

We build up unforgiveness. In 2 Corinthians 2, in verse 10, it says, To whom you forgive anything, I forgive. Also, for I forgave any to whom I forgave it for your sakes.

Forgave I it in the person of Christ. Be careful, verse 11, lest Satan get an advantage. He knows how to push our buttons. He knows we have these anger issues.

I used to punch anything you got near me. I mean, it was just a violent response. You yelled at my presence, I'd punch. Might not punch you, might not punch your car.

I might knock a wall. I might bust my hand or whatever. And here's what he said. You know, basically, forgive. You are forgiven. Don't hold on to bitterness.

[9 : 58] Don't hold on to anger. You act pretty good at church. But maybe at home, you don't act so good. See, nobody who knew my parents ever dreamed that they were anything more than ideal people.

They were perfect until the doors closed. Until the doors closed. They could spring up. And it can defile.

In Proverbs 22, 24, and 25, if you'll get there with me. This is a verse we all ought to learn. It says, Make no friendships with an angry man.

And with a furious man, thou shalt not go. Make no friendships with an angry man. Why not?

Solomon, verse 25, because you'll learn his ways. Not only that, you'll get a snare to your soul. You'll get trapped.

[10 : 59] The devil's got you in a trap. In James, chapter 3, verses 14 and 15. You don't have to look this up. In 16, but it says, If you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, lie not against the truth.

The wisdom that descends, this wisdom descends not from above. It's earthly, sensual, devilish. Envying and strife, for where envying and strife is, there's confusion and every evil work.

I really think bitterness and anger, unforgiveness and anger are directly linked together. That's why we as the forgiven learn to forgive.

Ecclesiastes 7, 9, Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools. Anger rests in the bosom of fools.

Thinking about self too much. Just real quick, I want to run you down. How does the devil do the work? What is it that makes us angry? I don't know if this is right completely.

[12 : 11] I mean, the part I get out of the Bible is, but what I got to say around it might not all be so good. But here's what I think. You know what I think takes us down that road? Is Ephesians 4, 11.

And maybe you could look that up. Ephesians 4, 11. It's like six things in a row. Six, the number of men. And it goes down a pretty bad chain.

It says, Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away with all malice.

Bitterness. Feeling resentment because someone's done you wrong. Or you think they have. See, bitterness. Somebody did me wrong.

My mother did me wrong. My daddy did me wrong. My brother did me wrong. My neighbor did me wrong. My boss did me wrong. And we pull that in and hold that in our hearts. And it seethes inside of us.

[13 : 07] It cooks inside of us. If you look at the verse, it says, It says, It's got so much that it slowly starts working its way out.

And then we start evil speaking. I hate you. I wish you'd never been born. You're stupid. We've now verbalized our anger.

And then we turn to malice. We want to hurt someone. I don't know if that's a good look at that or not. But it seems to work pretty good. Bitterness in our heart and how far it can take us.

So biblically, what did God tell us to do? In Ephesians 4.26, he said, Let be angry and sinned.

Let not the sun go down on your wrath. And then he makes a comment. Don't give place to the devil. That's an interesting thing.

[14 : 34] He hooked them together. I didn't hook them together. He hooked them together. You see, we refuse to forgive. We hold on to our anger.

The sun goes down on our anger. We meditate on it in the bed. We dream about it in the night. We wake up with ashes in our mouth. Satan has a place, a stronghold in our hearts and our minds.

He has a way to throw those fiery darts at us. The Ephesians 6.16 said that we should lift the shield of faith and fend off the fiery darts of the wicked.

It doesn't take long until a person becomes captive to the accusations and unforgiveness. All of a sudden, I can't forgive.

All I hear in my head is all that stuff. And if unforgiveness is burning in my heart, I'm doing exactly what the devil wants me to do.

[15 : 39] I'm doing exactly what the devil wants me to do. We could go on here. I've got 10 minutes I'd like to try to finish, but listen to this. Jesus wanted us to forgive.

And his forgiveness was ridiculous forgiveness, kind of like he has towards us. You know, he said 70 times 7. One of the guys looks at him and says, well, Lord, you really want us to forgive. How about 7 times?

He said, no, I'll tell you. Make it 70 times 7. You know, it's not like you can, you know, when I was a kid, I heard a preacher preach, and he said, turn the other cheek, but then slap a snot out of him.

Let him have one lick. Get him in the first one. But you cream him. And Jesus said, no, no, no, do that. He said, you forgive him 70 times 7. And you can't go. That's 469.

What's 7 times? 490, right? That's 489, bless God. I've been counting. You can't count if you can forgive. So it's really kind of a ridiculous thing.

[16 : 37] He said, just forget it and move on. And what we've done is we've lost a battle in our heart and our minds, which we were told in Philippians 4, 8, to think on these things.

And then it said what things are true and honest and just and good report. That's what's supposed to consume my thinking. And anger doesn't breed well in that environment.

Anger doesn't breed well when I think right thoughts. Anger doesn't do it. So you see how the devil's working? You see how the devil's working? He's already told me in Proverbs, He's basically let me know I'm an idiot if I let anger run my life.

But we're angry. We're angry because of our gender, or we're angry because of our race, or we're angry because of our social level, we're angry because of our political party, whatever we're making up.

And the devil's just slowly taking a place. The Bible says in Proverbs 18, 19, A brother offended is harder to be won than a city.

[17 : 48] And their contentions are like the bars of a castle. It's like you hurt me and I ain't never forgiven. I'm offended and I can't get this out of my head.

As a believer, where's your focus? I'll tell you where anger's focus is because I dealt with it. I'm not saying I still don't deal with it. I promise you, I ain't nothing like I used to be.

But I'll tell you where it is. I get angry when I think about me. I don't get too angry when I think about Jesus. I don't get too angry when I focus on others.

I get angry when I focus on me. Pride, he tells us, is about us. We have a right to be hurt. We have a right to be offended.

It is all about us. That's why we get bitter. And that's why we get angry. Because it's about us.

[18 : 45] He reminds you of all the hurts and calls you to look through your lens or his lens. The devil's all time saying, you remember what she said? You remember what he did?

You remember what happened? Let's get the whole story correct. And there was a commercial when I was a kid. I don't remember if it was Ever Ready Battery.

But Chip Conrad, I think was his name. And he used to come out with a battery on his shoulder. And he would say he had a chip on his shoulder. And it was, knock it off.

And, you know, it's like I'm just itching for a fight. It's kind of like the Western, you know. When you watch a TV Western, you insult me, we all have to go to a fight.

You say I'm dumb. You call me a liar. I'll kill you. If we're not careful, that's where we go. So, how do we get victory? How do we get victory?

[19 : 45] Number one, we must consider it to be a sin. I think that kind of goes against what we want to do. I think if we have an anger issue, we're not admitting we do.

Because our anger is not sinful anger. It's good anger. And that's probably what my parents thought. And that's probably what I thought.

And that's probably what some others think. But Proverbs 14, 29 says, He that's slow to wrath, he's got great understanding. He's thinking about it.

But he that's of hasty spirit exalts folly. How about this one? I know it's a sin, and I've got to put it off. I have to get it out of my life.

Now, sometimes when I'm dealing with people, it's like they want to act like, I got saved, God's supposed to take care of that. Well, that's just not biblical. In Colossians chapter 3 and verse 7, the Bible says, In the which you also walked sometime, when you lived in them, but now you also put off.

[20 : 55] Put off. As a born-again believer, I'm supposed to constantly be examining what I'm wearing and putting off. And then I'm supposed to examine what truth is, and I'm supposed to put on.

He said, put off. All of these. Anger. Wrath. Malice. Blasphemy. Filthy communication. I'm supposed to, I really am literally supposed to work at it.

Now, salvation's by grace. But grace works out. Grace works out, and I got to work it out to get it out.

I think the first thing is we think it's sin, because the Bible says it is. And the second thing is we decide that we put it off. The third thing is that we respect the Holy Spirit of God. We respect the Holy Spirit of God.

The Bible says, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Ephesians 4.30. I don't know what you think about this, but see, I believe you can grieve Him.

[21 : 58] I believe there have been many times in my life when I was getting ready to say or do something, and I knew, no voices, no audibles, but my heart said, uh-uh, uh-uh, uh-uh, uh-uh.

I felt it. I felt wrong, and I still did it. And I did wrong. And it's saying, don't grieve the Spirit. Now, we don't have time, but you know, you grieve Him enough, you quench Him.

You resist Him enough, He quits talking. Then we're to resist the devil. In James 4, in verse 7, this is probably my favorite verse for anybody to do right and do the thing they ought to before God.

It starts off with, what's God want me to do? I'll just do it. It doesn't say here, if you feel like it, that verse that's behind my head says, you just submit.

So I'm going to punch your ugly face. And the Holy Spirit says, that ain't what we do. Now, you don't hear any voices, but I don't believe if you tell me He doesn't ever say that to you.

[23 : 09] And the second He says it, I got to go, resist, quench, grieve, or obey. It's a sweet thing that God would talk to us like it.

And maybe you don't believe He is, but I could just prove it to you from the Bible. The Bible even makes the comment that the Holy Ghost smote David and his heart smote him.

That's the old word for it. Hit him, punched him. What in the world does that mean? I think you know. I think you know. So we submit, but then what do we do? We resist the devil.

I say, I'm just going to do what God wants me to do. And the devil's going to keep running his big mouth and telling me to punch you. And I just get madder and madder. If I do calm down, I don't really submit to God.

I just kind of hold it in. And then the second is going to come blowing out and I can't stop it. Well, that could if I'd resist the devil. Next thing is, I think we should do the opposite of what we want to do.

[24 : 09] Let me show you what I mean by that. Ephesians 4.32. Right in that same context where you're going to be angry and sin not, he said this, I don't want you to be angry. I don't want the sun to go down in your wrath.

Here's what I want you to do. Be kind. Now, I don't want to be kind to you. I don't like you. You offended me. You bumped me. You cut me off in traffic.

And bless God, I ain't letting you in. Fact is, I hope you're dead before the day's over. No, I don't really mean that. Just for that split second though. I mean, the way we're driving, we're doing 60 miles an hour and pulling stupid stuff.

Come on. None of y'all do that. That's why lots of us don't want the church bumper sticker on our car. Don't want to be identified.

Amen. Be kind. Be tenderhearted. forgiving one another. Next, get your thoughts under control.

[25 : 11] Get your thoughts under control. Do you know that I'm supposed to bring every thought in and ask Jesus if it's okay for me to think it? Did you know that?

I'm supposed to reach over and say, come here, thought. Here's Jesus. Y'all talk. And if he says, it's okay for me to think you, I'll think you. You say, where does it say that? How about this verse? 2 Corinthians 10, 5, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Now, if I said, I want to kill him. And so I said, just imagine it working it out in your head. Here's Jesus in your heart. And you say, here's a thought, Jesus, y'all meet and talk.

You know, I'd be over real quick, wouldn't it? Fact is, here's what I want to do. I want to tell Jesus if he wants to go to the kitchen real quick and fix a sandwich. I'll take care of business while he's gone.

That's how I like to think. I like to compartmentalize. But I'm to bring every thought into his obedience. Last thing, I'm to forgive.

[26 : 16] Like he forgave me. Colossians 3, 13. Forgiving one another even as Christ forgave you. I just want to remind you of this. You know how he forgave us.

No matter what we've done. You know what he said in Romans 5, 20? He said, where sin did abound, grace did much more abound.

So he looks at me and he says, Austin, you can't mess up too much, buddy, because I got more grace than you got mess ups. But I look at you and I say, one more mess up and I'm taking you out.

Amen. Because I don't forgive. You know, this is the third time. I'm joking at my house that I told my wife. I said, one more major health incident and I die.

Strike three. I said, kidney, COVID, next. That's kind of the way I like to run things. You hurt me once. Shame on you.

[27 : 14] You hurt me twice, shame on me because I ain't letting you pull it on me again. We need to be careful. Anger destroys us and everyone around us.

And anger will even teach our children to grow up and be angry too. We're not careful. Father, thank you for the chance to serve you. I pray you bless and I give you praise for all in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen.