

Mortification of Sin: Anger

Colossians 3:8-9a

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Joshua Koura

Camden Valley Baptist Church

www.cvbaptist.org.au

Let's turn to Colossians chapter 3 this morning. Colossians chapter 3, and we'll look together from verses 1 through to verse number 11. We'll read through that this morning. Colossians chapter number 3, verses 1 through to verse number 11.

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth, for you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man who is renewed in the knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. Amen."

So, we've been looking at the mortification of sin, and we considered verses 5 through to verse number 7 last week. And we looked at the fact that mortification of sin is the putting to death of the principle of remaining sin or its expressions that come through in our life of remaining sin in the life. And we looked at the different ways in which the Bible teaches us how we can deal with sin by putting it to death. And we looked at the quote of John Owen that essentially summarized our entire lesson last week, and that was this: "Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you."

And we looked at the importance of engaging in warfare in the world in which we live. That although we have been made new, there is still a battle that rages within the soul of each believer. And in fact, it is the mark that we belong to Christ, that there is actually a warfare against righteousness and unrighteousness within our being. But the battle has not yet ended in

Paul's epistle, and so we're going to continue in the battle also.

And Paul continues to talk about our warfare against sin, and he does that in the words "put off," not in the words "put to death," but in the words "now put off." Now, the meaning is essentially the same in that it's still calling for warfare against sin, that we have to deal with it and rid ourselves of it. But the imagery is different. One is taking a knife, as it were, and slaying sin. The other one is, as it were, taking off a garment. And this is what the word "to put off" means: to take off as a garment.

And Paul, in this exposition, as it were, of teaching us of how it is that we fight against sin, he doesn't want us also to focus on the aspect of killing and focus on that aspect alone, but to also notice that part of our warfare involves a removal of or a putting off of, the ridding ourselves of the works of the flesh. And this word appears twice. It appears in verse 8 and it appears in verse 9. Verse 8 says, "But now you yourselves are to put off all these," and then it goes on to explain what we are to put off. But in verse number 9, it says, "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds."

And immediately we think to ourselves, is there a contradiction? What is Paul referring to here? Have we put off, or do we put off? In verse 9, he says, "You have put off the old man with his deeds." But in verse 8, he says to us, "Put off all these," which are the deeds of the old man. And so the question immediately arises, what is Paul referring to here? Is he stumbling over his own words? No, this is the word of God, not the word of Paul, as we looked at on Tuesday night.

What Paul is doing here is he's teaching us a very important theological truth. And the truth is this, and it comes right throughout this section of the epistle: The Christian life is not doing something to become something, but it's because we have become something that we ought to live in a certain way. And so what he's saying is this: You, in principle, in your conversion, have parted with the old man, have parted with his deeds in repentance and in regeneration and in faith, and you are now a new man in Christ Jesus. Therefore, in practice, do what you have committed to do in principle, or what has happened to you in principle in relationship to your relationship with Jesus Christ.

And this is backed up in every part of this section. Verses 1 to 4 immediately say to us, "We are a new man," without using those words. It says that "you died." Verse 5 then says, "Put to death." Hang on, if we died, why are we putting to death? Well, same idea: because God has done something in you, He has put you to death and raised you to life, therefore you put to death the deeds of the body. And then he goes on in verse 5 to say, "Do

that." But he doesn't say that apart from teaching us of the new man.

And then in verse 8, we get another list of sins regarding anger, not just the sins of lust but now the sins of anger. But he doesn't just tell us to put off anger, he tells us before that in verse number 7, he says, "This is the way you once walked. This is the way you once lived." Once again, an allusion to the old man and the new man. He's saying, "No, no, no. You used to live that way or be this way. You used to be that person. You're no longer that person anymore. Therefore, put off."

And in the same token, he says in verse number 9, he says, "Do not lie to one another." But it doesn't end there. He says, "Seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds." And couched in the exhortations to live a life of holiness, couched within the exhortations to mortify sin, couched within the exhortations of putting off the old man, is this fundamental truth that we have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

And Paul wants us to realize that spiritual victory and overcoming the flesh in this world is impossible apart from first of all being a new man in Christ Jesus by salvation. And secondly, even now, once you are a new man, to realize that you are a new man and to reckon yourselves indeed to be dead unto sin, as he says in Romans 6, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And we must never forget this. This repetition is there for our learning. It is there for the assurance of our faith. As we go through life, it's not necessarily about the strategies alone. The strategies and the applications only have their power in the reality of a new life. They only have their efficacy in the fact that you have been raised with Christ. So your conversion is paramount to your spiritual victory. And not only your conversion, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, the recognition and the understanding and the conviction that I am a new man in Christ is fundamental to your spiritual victory and your walk in overcoming sin and your walk with God.

So, Paul says, do not lie because you are a new man and all these things. What is Paul saying by this? What he is simply saying is this: Do not wear the clothes that don't fit you. God has made you a new man, and therefore your old wardrobe is not for you anymore. He has given you a new wardrobe, which we will look at in the following weeks to put on some things. But what he is simply saying is, God has so changed you as a person in salvation, He has so renewed you, He has so restored the marred image that was because of sin, that now the things that you used to do, not only is He saying you shouldn't do them, but He is saying they are not fitting for you to do them anymore.

It is like you going to the old wardrobe when you were back in your teenage years and trying to put on those jeans or put on that top. I remember I had a basketball jersey that I kept until I got married. My wife helped me put off the hoarding, and I had this basketball jersey. I used to play for a basketball team in Melbourne called the Spirit Magic, and I just had that jersey. And I grew out of it. It was through under 16's I used to play, and then I went into the open age and we changed the team. But I used to play under 16's, and when I was married or nearing marriage, my wife came over. I was in Melbourne, she came from Sydney, and we looked at that jersey. And I thought, I love that jersey, it reminds me. I thought I will try and put it on, and I could not wear that for the life of me. I had grown a lot since then.

But it is like that. I had changed, I had grown. There has been a difference in me, so now what was once mine no longer fits. And what the Bible teaches us is this: God is not saying to us, change yourself and then find the clothes that fit you. You have to understand this. Our spiritual victory is we are already most of the way there in regards to the fact of our position. We are there already in our position. He is saying, I have so changed you that in fact those clothes don't fit you anymore, so don't even bother wearing them. Here are the clothes you are meant to be wearing.

And so this is what God has done for us in Christ Jesus, which is so essential as we look at this. And the reason why I emphasize this is because if we don't understand in our theology that we are a new man and the old man is crucified with Him, what ends up happening in our mind is we think that we are made up of two people, as it were, like we are a spiritual schizophrenic. That we have this old man and this new man, and there is equal strength, and it is just this, "Whoa, I don't know, like who am I going to choose today?" And this guy is so overpowering and all these kind of things. That is not what the Bible presents to us.

God gave a decisive blow to the old man in our redemption on the cross. And yes, the remnants of the old man remain. Yes, the principle of indwelling sin remains. But we are a new man. So we don't say, "I am both an old man and a new man." No, we affirm the truth that I am a new man. We can say to the old remnants of remaining sin that those clothes don't fit me anymore. I am not the man that I used to be in Adam. I am a new man in Christ Jesus. And the Bible, the New Testament, is all about that. It is not telling us that we are old men that have a new principle. It is telling us that we are new men in Christ Jesus, and that yes, there is the indwelling principle of sin, but his power has been broken. It changes the whole battle, changes the whole battlefield for the believer.

And as one man said, when a tide of passion or a surge of anger is felt, it must be dealt with as the alien intruder it really is and turned out of the

house as having no right to be there at all, let alone to be giving orders. And the problem is, if we think that we are old men, new men, what ends up happening is we think that sin has a place in us. It is part of the old man. It has a place in us. He is saying we should treat sin like an intruder. "What are you doing here? You don't belong here in my life. In fact, you have no right to be here at all. I am not the old man. I am the new man in Christ Jesus." And that's the way we should approach our warfare and our spiritual battle.

And so we have to treat sin as an alien intruder. We have to make sure we don't give it the rights. It doesn't have the rights to be there. It doesn't have the right to give us orders. And so now, as we approach this putting off passage in verse number 8, we are approaching the sins of anger. Last week, we looked at the sins of lust. This week, we are looking at the sins of anger. And look with me in verse number 8 as we consider this list together. It says, "But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth."

Now, I will say this, as I said with the last list, that not all the things mentioned in here are restricted to anger. They are not restricted to anger, which means what I am simply saying is, although I am going to approach it that way and help us to see how anger is really a catalyst to all these things, when he talks about filthy language, it's not just the filthy language that comes out when you are angry. He is talking about all filthy language, and that's important to recognize. But for the sake of our sermon this morning, I want us to focus on the application and as it relates to anger and see the correlation between them.

So in verse number 8, he mentions the sins anger, wrath, and malice, and then he mentions the sins blasphemy, filthy language, and lying in verse number 9. Now, the first half of these sins, anger, wrath, and malice, are sins of the spirit. These are sins of the heart from within. And the sins, the second half of the sins, are the blasphemy, the filthy language, and the lying, are really, in one sense, the manifestation of malice in the heart, anger in the heart, wrath in the heart. And so there is a correlation there, there is a connection there, although it's not limited to it.

Now, anger and wrath have similar meanings. Some have suggested that anger is like the furnace, the settledness of anger, and wrath is the outburst of anger. But it's hard to be sure about that because the scripture uses them quite often for one another. They use it simultaneously. However, the word malice means an ill will or a kind of desire to harm people. This is the idea of malice and having malice in your heart. And the blasphemy is, yes, slandering is the word for blasphemy, but blasphemy kind of gives us the idea that it's toward God. That's the English translation that

gives us the idea towards God. But the word is slander, which yes can be applied as blasphemy toward God, but it also can refer to our slandering of men. And the idea is to speak evil of, to speak ill of.

And filthy language is the use of all language that is dishonorable to God but also refers to the abusive words, the harsh words, and abusive words that come out of our mouth. And lying, we don't need much explanation as to what that is, but often when a man or a woman is angry, they lie. And what I mean by that is they exaggerate. They slanderously report things that are not true to support their case because they're so fuming with rage. They say things like, "You always do that." Always? Liar. We've all done that. I'm just saying this is how it is, even with anger as it relates to sins of speech.

So it's important to recognize the connection between there and exaggeration and misrepresentation is also found in anger. But what Paul is saying, in one sense, is similar to what Jesus is saying. He says, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks." And so with anger, with malice, with wrath within the heart of man, it is only a matter of time before that projects into filthy language, harsh words, and all these things that are mentioned here: blasphemy and slandering. And so it's important to recognize that.

But as we consider anger, we have to answer this important question: Is all anger sinful? You see, the answer to that in Scripture is no, not all anger is sinful. The Bible teaches us very clearly that in the life of Jesus Christ, when He saw His Father's house being turned into a den of thieves, He was angered in such a way that He drove out the money changers and those that were selling and turning His Father's house, which was a house of prayer, into a den of thieves. In fact, the Scripture says this: "The zeal of thine house has eaten me up." And Jesus was saying that He was so burning in His heart, as it were, with zeal for God's glory and for the purity of His own house, that it led Him to act in a way that many would look on and say He was angry. And yes, He was righteously indignant at what they had done to the Father's house.

But beyond that, even in our passage today, we see that God is a wrathful God. In verse number six, it says, "Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience." And it teaches us that God is a God of wrath, and that wrath means that God will punish sin, that those who do not submit to God's law, that do not submit to God's rule, will be judged by God on the final day. You see, on the final day, the Bible tells us when Jesus returns, "the wrath of the Lamb is come, and who shall be able to stand?" The Bible teaches us that God is a God of wrath, God is a God of anger, and His anger is a righteous anger. He has set laws that have been

violated, and He has the right to respond in bringing judgment upon those who violate His Word. That's why the unbelieving and the abominable and all liars shall have their part in the lake of fire. That's why whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

So, Jesus displays anger, God the Father displays anger, and Christ even in His coming. But not only that, the Bible also tells us that believers are to have a sense in which they experience anger. And the Bible says in Ephesians 4:26, "Be ye angry, and sin not," and don't let your sun go down upon your wrath. What the Bible teaches us is that there are times when believers can be angry and not sinning, that they feel in their hearts certain zeal, certain passions of displeasure towards things that God hates. And the reason why I say this is because the thing that we want to veer away from, especially I don't want you to get the wrong idea by the end of this sermon, is that God wants us to leave this place as a bunch of passive people that don't have opinions and aren't concerned about God's Word and God's glory and the violation of His laws in the society, in our homes, in our own lives.

In 2 Corinthians 7, the Apostle Paul says when you repented, one of the marks that you were truly repentant, he said, "Yea, what indignation!" You had this vengeance against sin, you had this vengeance against unrighteousness, and you felt angered about the way that you once lived. Look, anger displays one thing: it displays care, it displays concern. The problem is, are we concerned for our own rights, our own good, and our own glory, or are we concerned for the rights, the good, and the glory of God?

Now, how can we know if our anger is righteous or unrighteous? I think before moving on to that, just quickly, just to say this: I think it's important to realize that as we see millions of babies dying in our society, Christians should not be the ones that are just like, "Well, what do we do about it?" They should be the ones that feel angered about the fact that children are dying in abortion. There should be a sense of, "This is not right; there's a displeasure about these things." It's the same in our home; it's not like when children disobey their parents and when people do wrong and children do wrong that we should just say, "Oh, don't worry about it; they're just kids, who cares?" There should be a sense where it's like, "No, that's wrong; you shouldn't be doing that." There should be a sense of authority, a sense of displeasure that the child is aware of, so that they know that there is a law, there is a rule, and the violation of those rules involves some sort of punishment that comes. Obviously, this is done in love, obviously, this is done in mercy, but it's important to realize that even in the church, we don't want to be a bunch of passive people that aren't concerned about error and heresy and falsehood, but there should be a sense where we're zealous for God's house.

But how do I know if my anger is righteous or unrighteous? Well, the Bible tells us quickly how to do this, but I'll just mention it. Firstly, we have to determine the cause: Is it God's kingdom or my kingdom that I'm concerned about? Secondly, you have to monitor the control: Am I overtaken by this anger? Is my mind cut off from reality? Because when you blow your top off, you don't even know what's going on around you. But is there control? Is there a cap? Is the mind still engaged? And also, you have to consider your expressions: Is my anger leading to a sinful reaction? Is it leading to a harmful reaction, harsh words, ill thinking? And that's what we have to remind ourselves as we look at this.

But the Bible teaches us here in this passage that we ought to be a people that put off anger. And we're going to deal with unrighteous anger and putting off unrighteous anger, but I want to illustrate the importance of dealing with anger. Because anger is like a plant, and it has its roots, and it has its trunk, and it has its branches, it has its leaves, and it has its fruits. Most people in dealing with anger seek to just attack the fruit of it and say, "I'm going to just stop swearing or stop raging or stop using harsh words," and I think that will sort it. Or run to the corner and count to ten, and everything will be fine. But the Bible goes deeper than that; it goes much, much deeper than that. In fact, God tells us and deals with the root of our anger. You see, you can cut the fruit off a tree, you can even mar its branches, but you won't kill it by doing that. The way you kill the tree every time is by uprooting it. It's a perfect way of doing it. And so when it comes to issues of anger, we must think the same.

You see, the harsh words and the red faces and the foul language are the fruit that hangs off the branches of your anger. But what is the root of your anger that holds up the branches and its fruit? That's what we want to strike at. That's what we want to aim for, and then we can also deal with other things. So the question we have to ask ourselves is, why do people get angry? Why do people express themselves in anger? Go to James 4; it was read for us this morning. And James actually answers this question for us.

James 4:1-2, the Word of God says, "Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war, yet you do not have because you do not ask." And James, in these two verses, asks the question, "Where does all this fighting, this warring, this rage, this chaos that's going on in my life, in my home, in my community, in the church, in my workplace, on the road when I'm driving, where does all this rage and anger come from? Where do these fights come from?" He says, "You know what? It's a war that is going on in you." And this is the war that he explains: "You have a desire for pleasure

that's unfulfilled, and your desire for pleasure that's unfulfilled is driving you insane."

Look what he says in verse 1: "Where do they come from? Don't they come from your desire for pleasure that war in your members?" And then he says here, "You lust and you don't have. You murder and covet," there's a word, "covet," "you cannot obtain. You fight and war, yet you do not have." Three times he's saying you don't have what you desire to have. Where do the wars come from? Where do the fights come from? It comes from your desires. You have a set of desires, you have a set of expectations that are unfulfilled, and the unfulfilling of those desires and those expectations that we have within our hearts drive us to fight for them, to war after them, and to get our way. And this is what the Bible teaches us; James really gets to the heart of it. He says the problem with your fighting is you have a lust problem. You have a desire problem. It's right there in your desires that is the root of this anger. It's the root of this expression. You desire something that you do not have, and therefore you lash out. You fight, you war, you kill. Verse number 11 and 12 talks about this a little more. He says, "Do not speak evil of one another." There's the concept of slandering brethren. "He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?"

And what he's saying here is that there is this evil speaking that comes from our mouth where we are judging and slandering and putting down. And what he's saying is when we do that, we are not subject to God's law. We are setting ourselves above God's law and taking the place of a lawgiver. But he's saying, hang on, there's only one Lawgiver, and it's God, it's not you. And He's the one that is able to save and to destroy. So who are you to destroy your brother? Who are you to lash out in slander and attack and vengefulness? This is the argument that he's making here.

But what law is he referring to here? I believe he's referring to the law in James 2:8 where he says, "If you really fulfill the royal law according to Scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. You do well." He's saying when you set yourself up in anger and as a judge against your brother and slander them, you are not under the law of love. You are not submitting to the law of love. Rather, you are taking the place of a lawgiver, and you are slandering and punishing your brother or your sister in Christ or your neighbor.

So what is this idea that Paul's making? Well, Paul Tripp made a good point of this, and I want to bring this out a little bit for us this morning. When you have desires that you convince yourself are needs, you develop

expectations. And when you develop expectations and those expectations are unfulfilled, they lead you to disappointment, which then leads you to inflicting punishment upon the disobedient.

Do you get what's happened here? Here is a person that has desires, and it's okay to have desires, but those desires have taken a prominent place in their life that they've become certain expectations. And they expect people to do what they think and to believe what they say and to get in line with everything they communicate. And so when that person doesn't follow their lead or when that person doesn't follow their expectations, they get disappointed, the people that set the expectations. And they say, "Hang on a minute, you're not following my expectations, you're not living as I want." And then they turn to lawgiver, punish, punish, afflict, destroy with angry words, harsh words, bitter words that destroy their neighbor and not love their neighbor.

You see, angry people have a kingdom, and they have set themselves up as the ruler of their own kingdom. And they have made laws in their kingdom, and in the laws of their kingdom, they have set up their desires so high that if people don't fulfill their desires, which they make law as laws, they punish them with anger because they're not living up to their expectations. You see, this is a major problem. They've exalted their preferential or their own desires in the life of their church, in the life of their home, in the life of their husbands, with their wives, with their children. And they expect perfect obedience to their opinions, to their laws, to their expectations. And as soon as you do that, my friend, you are on an angry warpath; you're going to fall immediately.

Because when your husband comes into the bedroom, and you see you come into the bedroom, sorry, and you see his clothes on the floor next to the basket and not in the basket. If you have made those expectations laws, you are set for disappointment and you are set toward anger. Now I'm not saying don't communicate any expectations or desires that you have one for another. But don't make your desires laws. Don't make those things that you discuss with one another laws. As soon as you do that, you set yourself up as the lawgiver. And when that person doesn't submit to your laws, you become the lawgiver who passes out judgment and meets out judgment with angry words and harsh words. "I can't believe how many times have I told you to put your washing in the basket, right? Or how could you cook a meal like that? You know I don't like that meal." And it just goes on and on and on and on. "You know to call me when you leave that place. How could you forget such things, right?" And that's it. "Kids, you know I can't believe you did the wrong thing. What do you mean you can't believe they did the wrong thing? In sin did my mother conceive me. You brought them forth in sin, okay? Of course, they're going to do wrong

things."

Only if you could be like this person and those children, slander, harsh words, bitterness, angry, destroying them. As opposed to just saying, "You've done the wrong thing, but I'm not going to blow my top off. I'm more concerned that you have disobeyed God's law. And I'm zealous not for my kingdom, I'm zealous for God's kingdom. And so, in love, I'm going to punish you and uphold God's law. I'm going to show displeasure. I'm going to show disappointment. But it's not going to be an ungodly anger because I have not set myself up as king." You see the difference here? It's very important to recognize that. It's very important to lay hold of that in our relationship with anger.

Because what ends up happening is we will proceed to give abusive speech, and we'll make sure we get our way if people don't fulfill our desires. "What's wrong with these people? They can't drive. Get off the road!" Well, firstly, it's not your road. And secondly, who made you the traffic controller? You're subject to the same laws. Let the Lawgiver punish and destroy, not you by cutting them off and slamming the brakes and showing them who's king of the road. You see what's happened here? We've exalted ourselves to the position of pride, and we've set certain laws in our hearts and expectations in our minds. And we think everyone reads our minds and knows our expectations, by the way. And so all of a sudden, we fly off the handle because they're not met.

So what do we need to do? We need to get off the throne. We have to recognize that the kingdom is God's and not ours and that the wrath of God is coming. When Christ comes in His kingdom, all kingdoms to Him will bow. And if you have a kingdom of wrath when Jesus returns, the wrath of God will fall on you. This is what Paul is referring to here in this text. The wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience, and the sons of disobedience are those who practice ungodliness. And what he's simply saying is, get off the throne. Don't set yourself up as king of the throne. The wrath of God is coming. God will deal with sin. Rest assured.

So when your enemy hungers, feed him. When he thirsts, give him drink. What is God saying to us? He says to us in the passage in Romans 12, "Do not repay evil for evil. Do not be overcome by evil. Overcome evil with good." Why? Because He says this, "It is written, 'Vengeance is Mine,' says the Lord. 'I will repay.'" He says you're better off giving place to wrath. Give place to the wrath of God because He will repay. Don't take matters into your own hands. Jesus displayed this perfectly for us. It says, "When He was reviled, He reviled not again. When He was threatened, He suffered not. When He suffered, He threatened not." But it says, "But He committed Himself to Him who judges righteously."

Jesus understood that the eyes of My Father go to and fro throughout all the earth. And He sees every injustice, every evil, everything that happens to me, everything that happens in my home, everything that happens on the road, everything that happens in life, everything that happens in my community, everything that happens in the church. And He will repay. But we are not satisfied with that. So what we do is we set up our own kingdom and our own laws. And we do the whole punishment cycle in this life right now, in this hour. And we fall prey to sinful anger.

And so we need to be a people that get off the throne. We also need to be a people that align our will with God's will. That we are more concerned about the expectations of God than our own expectations. That we do things as unto the Lord, not unto men. We're not concerned whether people give us praise for the hard hours and work we've put into things. We also don't expect love in return for the love that we show. What did Jesus say? "If you love those that love you, what praise have you? Even the publicans and sinners do the same. Love your enemies." You see, the Christian's mind-set is aligning his expectations and his will to God's will. And also, what he's doing is he's concerned for His name and not his own name, for God's glory, not his own glory. And if we don't get a hold of this, what's going to end up happening is we're going to set up our little kingdom, and we're going to be warring every day of our lives against the people that we love most.

The Bible teaches that anger is such a destructive force. The Bible teaches that anger drives people away. The Bible says that the contentions of a wife send a husband into the wilderness or sends him to the rooftop to run from the tension. It's an unbearable tension. The Bible teaches that wrath is cruel. It's cruel, it's harmful, it's cruel. I mean, the person showing anger doesn't feel that much about it. They just go on and do it, and they're like, "Oh, yep, it'll all be good. It's fine." You just shot a thousand arrows into that person's heart. You've crushed them, you hurt them, you've slandered them, you've spoken evil against them. You've just showed cruelty to them. It's painful, it drives people away, it's cruel, it's abusive in that sense.

And also, anger is contagious. The Proverbs say very clearly that if you hang out with angry people, you'll be angry. And so, if you have an angry parent, it'll only be a matter of time before your children learn your ways. It says don't be around them because you'll learn their ways. And so, anger is this violent, destructive force that is passed on from generation to generation through learning of ways, that results in cruelty, harsh words, and violence in the home. And it drives people away. We don't want that for our homes, we don't need that for the church of God, you don't even need that for your own life.

What Paul is saying to you: get that garment off. When you wake up in the morning, don't put on anger. When you're confronted with a temptation, don't say, "I'll take that and chuck it on." Put it off, get rid of it. Say, "I'm not going to have an ounce of it in my life." Don't give place to it. It says, don't give place to the devil, don't give place to anger. When anger starts to arise in your hearts, check your heart, check your motive, and make sure you don't lash out and settle it. Realize that it's not about my way and my rules and my laws. I need to bow to God and God alone.

See yourself in this world as a steward, not as an owner. Your kids belong to God, your husband belongs to God, your wife belongs to God, the church belongs to God. Every relationship that you possess ultimately belongs to God, and you are stewards. Jesus is going to return and see how you are treating all the people that He's put under your care.

Don't dress yourself in such filthy rags. They're not fitting for Christians. As I said, they only bring harm, sorrow, and chaos to people's lives. Remember, it's the job of the Lawgiver to both save and to destroy. It is not our job nor our duty.

I'm going to read to you a hymn. It's a hymn that's helpful and relates to this. My wife came to me this morning and said, "Oh, this is a good hymn that she just discovered. And she said it may be fitting for today," so I thought I'd read it.

It says here, "Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways to keep His statutes still. Oh, that my God will grant me grace to know and do His will. Oh, send Thy Spirit down to write Thy law upon my heart. Nor let my tongue indulge deceit, nor act the liar's part. From vanity, Lord, turn my eyes, let no corrupt design, nor covetous desires arise within this soul of mine. Order my footsteps by Thy word, and make my heart sincere. Let sin have no dominion, Lord, but keep my conscience clear. Make me to walk in Thy commands, 'tis a delightful road. Nor let my head or heart or hands offend against my God."

Let's come before the Lord in prayer.