

A Few More Verses on Anger
Ephesians 4:31-32
Pastor Jeremy Cagle, August 23, 2020

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to another Sunday morning service here at Grace Fellowship Chilliwack. It is good to see you here today in the Lord today. If you are a member of our church or if you're new to us, we want to say welcome to you, and invite you to turn in your Bibles to a book that talks about that this morning. It talks about some exciting things and new things. And that is the book of Ephesians. That's the book we're in this morning; we're in the book of Ephesians. And if you would, please open your Bibles there and turn to chapter four which I would like to read to you before we get started. We're in Ephesians chapter four. And let me start the reading in verse 17. Paul writes, and he says this,

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that You walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which is in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE OF YOU WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. BE ANGRY, AND YET DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labour, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

We just sang about that, didn't we? We just sang about the forgiveness of the Lord; and here we read at the end of our text here. Just to say some words about this, we have been in the book of Ephesians for some time now; we've been in it for about a year, which means that as a church, this is the longest we've ever spent in one series. This is the longest we've ever spent in one book

of the Bible, and we're doing that because we believe every word of it. And we're going slowly through this book because we believe that everything in here was inspired by God. In theological terms, we hold to the plenary inspiration of Scripture, or the full inspiration of it, the absolute and complete inspiration of it, because we believe that God breathed out every word. So, that's how we study it as a church; that's how we go through it. We go through every single word. If God gave you a gift, you would take time to open it, wouldn't you? You would be very careful to see what's in the box. We're doing that with the book of Ephesians. We're being very careful to see what God has revealed in this particular portion of Scripture.

And as we're doing that this morning, we come to the end of chapter four. We're a year into the book and this morning we find ourselves at the end of the fourth chapter, and it's on the subject of sin. As you read this, you can just tell by looking at it, it's on the subject of our disobedience to God because this is what a Christian does. This is how he lives. He puts away his sin. He doesn't give into it like the world does; he gets rid of it. He doesn't love it and nurse it and cherish it like the lost people do around him. Instead, he kills it, and he puts it to death. Puritans used to talk about the mortification of sin. That means the ongoing killing of it. You kill a person, you kill them one time; you kill sin, you kill it every single day and that's what we do as believers.

And if you look in verse 20, Paul says it this way. In verse 20, he writes,

But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self,

Paul says that when you became a Christian, when you were saved, this is what you did. You laid aside the old self, which means you laid aside the old sin nature. You put it off, and you put on the new one that has been made in the likeness of God. And you do it by *renewing your mind*. That little phrase is inserted in the middle of this to say, "This is how you do this. This is how you put on the new man: you renew your mind." The word for "renew" here it's a helpful word. It's *ananeóō*, which is a compound word from *ana*, again, and *neóō*, to think. It means to think again, to think a new thought; it means to change your mind, because that's what you do as a believer. That's how you grow in the faith. You change the way you look at sin. The world gives in to sin. You don't do that. The world says, "It's okay. God will still love you." Everybody's tolerant and you can do whatever you want. You don't think that way anymore. You kill your sin, and this is where you do it. You do it in your mind. That's the battlefield. It's right between your ears.

You know, it always amazes me when I come to church and I ask people after the service, "What did you learn this week? What's the Lord been teaching you?" Because a lot of people say, "I

don't know.” A lot of people say, “I have no idea.” It’s as if they've been asleep all week, spiritually, as if they are in a fog; and that amazes me because Paul says you can't do that. As a Christian, you can't live in a fog. You’ve got to wake up. You’ve got to be thinking.

It also amazes me when I to ask people “What did you do this week? or what have you been up to?” And they say you know the week was so full of phone calls and emails and text messages. It was so full of meetings that they can't remember. They don't remember the week. They didn't have time to think; and that's not good either. Because Paul says you need to have time to think; you need to have time to fill your mind with thoughts of God. however you do it.

To say it another way and to make it real simple to explain what Paul is saying here. There's only one thing you need to work on as a Christian, only one thing and that's your mind. That's it. That's all you have to do. You don't have to work on your bank account and make more money. You don't have to work on your career and get ahead in the world and climb the corporate ladder. You don't have to work on your body or your health or your personal fitness, that's a real big deal in BC right now; everybody wants to be in shape. You don't have to fool with that – you have to work on your mind. You have to renew it every day. And to do that verse 25 says it this way. Here's what you do. Paul says,

Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE OF YOU WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. BE ANGRY, AND YET DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. He who steals must steal no longer.

In other words, this is how you renew your mind. You put off your sin, He just lists the sins out here. Verse 25 says you need to lay it aside like a garment or an old pair of clothes, and the idea with that image is that your sin is with you. Your sin is inside of you. You don't have to look for it. It's already there. You don't have to go find it. You just need to take it off and remove it. To say this Paul gives you 11 sins in this passage you need to remove. Eleven sins that stretch from Verse 25 all the way into chapter five. The ones we read here, he mentions lying and anger and stealing. Those are some of the sins that he brings up. He mentions unwholesome words and grieving the Holy Spirit. And what he does in verse 31, this is interesting. If you want to look in verse 31, he repeats a sin that he just mentioned. And if you look and he says in verse 31,

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

And that's interesting because he just mentioned anger in verse 26. He's already talked about it. But apparently this was such a problem in the first century that he has to bring it up again. Anger was such an issue to the church and Ephesus that Paul has to mention it twice because nothing is

more dangerous than this. Nothing is more harmful than the sin of anger. It destroys homes. It destroys families. It destroys marriages and friendships and careers. I mean, how many lives have been ruined simply because of this particular sin? How many lives have been ruined because someone blew up on somebody else.? Or to say it this way, how many Christians will never lust? They'll never lie. They'll never steal, but they won't hesitate to blow up. They won't hesitate to be bitter towards someone in their heart. This is a very, very dangerous common sin in the church today. That's why Paul mentions it again. Of all the sins here Paul could think of, this is one he had to bring up twice. Of all the ones in the list, anger was one he had to mention again.

I remember the time I met a man in seminary, who was very smart. He was a godly man and he had a lot going for him. He had a wonderful family, great wife, great kids, but he didn't make it in the ministry. He didn't last because he had an anger problem. He was the kind of guy you would look at as you're graduating and say, "Man, that guy is going to do great things." But as he started in the ministry and started in serving the church, he couldn't control his temper. And every time there was a problem in the church, he would snap. He would pop off on people, and as a result, they fired him. They had to let him go.

Paul says you don't want to be that way today. You don't want to act like that. You don't want to have so many things going for you and fail in this department because it will ruin your life. And that's what we want to talk about this morning.

The Puritan, Philip Henry, he said, "It's the duty of all Christians to put off the sin of anger. We need to repent of it because a man cannot wrestle with God and his neighbor at the same time because he will lose. You can't fight a battle on two fronts. No, you need to make things right with God first, and then you can make things right with your neighbor." You need to settle things in your heart with God, and then you can settle it with everyone else. And that's what we're going to talk about.

So, if you're taking notes this morning, in Ephesians 4:31-32, we're going to look at two ways to deal with the sin of anger. That's our outline for this morning. That's what we're talking about. In Ephesians 4, we're going to look at two ways to deal with the sin of anger. And we're doing this because that's what this is. That's what the problem is, this is a sin. Anger is evil.

There is such a thing as righteous anger or there is such a thing as righteous indignation, where you get angry at the things that anger God, but let's be honest, we almost never do that, do we? We almost never do that. We don't get angry because God's name is being slandered or abused, we get angry because our name is being slandered and abused. We get angry because someone cut us off in traffic, or they made us wait too long at the line at Save-On. Our anger is selfish, and because of that, we've got to get rid of it. We have to repent of it.

This morning we're going to talk about that with two ways to deal with the sin of anger, and the first way is this. You need to understand where anger begins. That's the first way to deal with the sin of anger. You need to understand where anger begins, which means that you need to understand what causes this sin. You need to understand what makes it so bad; and this is humbling because the thing that makes anger so bad is you. It's not your environment. It's not your circumstances, not your messed-up schedule or whatever is bothering you. It's you. Because two people can go through the same set of circumstances and one person gets angry and the other one doesn't, so what's the problem? The problem is what's on the inside. And if you look in verse 29, this is what Paul tells us.

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Just to walk you through this text here, as you read this, you can see verse 31 starts off with a command. It starts off with an order. In other words, this is not a suggestion, this is not a request. You don't have an option for this. If you're a Christian, then this is what you have to do. You have to let all bitterness and wrath and anger be put away from you. This isn't just for the patient Christians; this is for all of us. This isn't just for those with a gentle nature, this is for those with a stubborn nature as well. Paul says, "Let" here, "Let all bitterness" because this is something you can't do alone. This is something you can't do by yourself, so if you struggle with anger, to be encouraged by this, this is something the Lord will help you with.

But to describe this, Paul gives us six words that refer to the sin of anger here, if you look at the passage here, six words to explain the same problem because apparently, this was such a big issue. He had to stretch the boundaries of language to describe it. And just to help you see these.

Bitterness here, "Let all bitterness," that refers to deep rooted anger or anger that stays with you for a long time. We've all tasted something and said, That's bitter. It tastes sour. This is the kind of anger that sours your disposition. Not just your taste buds but your soul.

And wrath refers to the same thing here. Wrath is the kind of anger that also stays with you a long time. It's simmers beneath the surface is the idea, kind of boils down in there because it holds a grudge carries a resentment. It says, "I'll hate you forever for what you did."

And the word "anger" the third word here, this is the flip side of that. It's the opposite because it's the Greek word *orgē* from which we get the word orgy. It refers to unbridled anger or

uncontrolled passion, the kind of explodes. The kind that that blows up like a volcano and punches a wall or let's out an obscenity.

And the other words in here, “clamour and slander,” this is what comes as a result of that. This is what comes as a result of being angry. You tear down people. Clamour means you run your mouth against them. Slander means you say evil things behind their back. These are people that will never yell, they'll never punch a wall, but they will gossip all day long. You know what I'm talking about? They won't attack you to your face, but they will run you down to the ground behind your back. And Paul says, it's just as wrong. It's just as evil no matter which way you look at it.

Anger on the inside, anger on the outside, anger behind your back, anger in your face, whatever the anger is. The point is it's all wrong. You can't justify any of it. I've known wives that have watched their husbands punch a wall and point fingers and judge him while the same time they've been bitter the whole time. I've seen husbands do the same. Paul says all of this is sinful in God's eyes, and you need to avoid it.

And to round this off, he says this, “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.” And the word malice here it's *kakia* in Greek. It just means bad things, evil things. And the idea is Paul is saying, “You know, if I haven't summed it up before, let me just throw this in there.” All evil things that relate to anger because this is where anger comes from. This is where it begins. It begins with evil. It begins with an evil heart. That's the problem with it. That's the danger with this. You get angry with someone when you have an evil heart. You know, the world will tell you that it comes from your environment, so just change your environment. But I'll tell you, in 2000 years of human history since this book was written, that has never worked. You can take an angry person and put them in a peaceful environment and they'll still be angry about it. They want to blame this person or that person.

I remember when I was an elementary PE teacher, it's very common when you're on the playground with elementary kids, they're going to come to you and they're going to tell you. You'll say, “Hey, Madison, come here. Why did you hit Johnny?” “Because he was mean to me.” “Okay, now, Madison. Now you're in trouble too.” Right? “It's your fault you hit him. You should have come to me before you hit him.”

Adults act the same way, don't they? It begins in the heart. You guys know what this is like. You've experienced this before. You come home after a long day at work, you come home after a long day at the office and you're hungry, and you're tired, and your head hurts because you've been handling conflict all day long. It's just been one problem after another. And what do you see when you come home? What do you see when you walk through the door? You see problems,

right? You see more conflict. Clothes are all over the floor. Furniture is turned upside down. It looks like a bomb went off in the living room, so what do you do? You get angry, don't you? You start to yell, and you get mad. Why? Because you have an evil heart. Because you have an evil soul. Your soul is so evil that you will yell at your own family. Your heart is so wicked, that you will yell at the ones you love because they're not accommodating you. They're in your way, and so You're going to make them pay

Or let's say, you're a wife. Let's say you're a stay at home mom, and you've been in the house all day long. You've been with the kids, you've been with all this conflict, so that all you want to do at the end of the day is to have a grown-up conversation. All you want to do at the end of the day is talk to another adult; and your husband comes home that way. He comes home, tired and hungry and grouchy, and he doesn't want to talk. So, what do you do? You get angry. You get mad at him and start to yell. Why? Because you have an evil heart as well. You're going to let him have it.

And we could look at other examples of this. We can see other ways this plays out in our lives, but the point Paul is making here is that you can't do that anymore. As a Christian, you can't act that way because you're a new person now. You've laid that aside. You've put that off in Christ, and now you need to go on to something better. We're going to see this in verse 32, but God has not gotten angry with you. God has not gotten mad at you, or He's taken his anger and put it at the cross. He's put it on His Son, and He doesn't yell at you anymore; so, you can't do that with others. You have to forgive them. You need to treat them the same way.

I think we've all known people who have lived with an angry husband or an angry wife. We've all known children who had an angry parent or parents who had angry kids. And they will tell you, it's miserable. It's miserable. It's like living in a prison. So Paul says you have to repent of that now.

You know, before coming to Chilliwack, I served at a church in Indiana as an associate pastor for several years, where I did a lot of counseling. I talked to a lot of people in the office about their problems and things, and I'll never forget the time several people came into our church, to my office. They came to our church to tell us that they had just left their previous church because of a split. They had just left their previous church because of an altercation where they thought they were right and the other party was wrong, and they were angry about it. I mean they were they were visibly upset still. And I would sit there and talk with them, and they would weep at times about the situation; but the problem was, they never got over it. They never got over their anger, and it wasn't long before they were angry at us. It wasn't long before all the hostility they felt toward that church was redirected to our church, because that's what anger does. That's what sin does. It always spreads. It always grows. It always permeates itself until it takes over everything.

Listen, friends, if you have an anger problem at work, you will take it home. It will go home with you. And if you have an anger problem at home, you will bring it into the church, and therefore you have to be warned. And you have to repent of it now. You know if you notice in this passage, this is what this says. Paul starts off with bitterness. That's the first form of anger in the list. And he ends up with clamour, doesn't he? He starts off with wrath, and he goes to slander because this is what this sin does. This is what anger does, it spreads. And Paul says you need to be warned.

You know, this is such an important topic. It's such a powerful one that it's mentioned several places in the Bible. So, let me just read a couple of these to you just to give some perspective on this. Some other places that talk about the sin of anger.

One is Galatians 5:19 which says this, "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, and factions. And if you notice, as I read that to you, the list kind of does the same thing as this one does in Ephesians. You see the word "anger," you see outbursts of anger, and it goes right into disputes. It goes right into dissensions because that's what this sin does. It starts in your heart spreads from there.

James 1:19-20 says, "This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God." Now James tells you why you shouldn't be angry, because it does not achieve God's righteousness. It doesn't please Him. You should be slow to become angry. It should be hard to make you mad. James says some of us pop off at the flip of a switch. James says we can't be that way.

This is why 1 Timothy 2:8 says, "I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissensions." And now, Paul says, "I don't even want you to come to church, if you do this. I don't even want you to lift up holy hands and worship if you're angry because God hates it." He hates it. It is evil and you can't worship God that way. You know, sometimes I wonder how small our churches would be if we did this. I wonder how small they would be if we told the ushers to block the angry people at the door. If we gave them a little buzzer that you know, turned red or something when an angry person walked by. And that sounds kind of silly, but that's what this text says. God doesn't want angry people coming to church. He wants you to deal with it before you get here. He wants you to deal with it in your heart before you come because of the damage it could cause. And that leads to another way to deal with the sin of anger.

Another point to consider this morning, the first one is, you need to understand where anger begins. And this is the convicting part of this. This is the sobering part of a passage like this.

Anger begins in your heart. It's not about what happens outside of you. It's about what happens inside of you. I've known people from horrible places that were not angry, and I've known people from wonderful places that were angry. It's not about the outside, it comes from our sinful heart. We have to recognize that, but that brings us to the next point. To consider the next way to deal with the sin of anger, and that is to understand where anger ends. Second way to deal with the sin of anger is to understand where anger ends, it ends with you.

It's pretty simple in that if it begins with you, then it ends with you. If it starts in here, then that's where it stops; and that's the good news of this. That's the positive message. You can defeat this sin whatever your circumstance. If you look in verse 31, Paul says this, he says,

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you,
along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other,
just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

This is the end of Paul's list of sins here or rather, this is the end of chapter four. We'll see some more sins in the next chapter, but this is the end of this one. And if you notice, this is interesting. It ends on a note of hope, doesn't it? Can you tell as you read this passage, it ends on a note of victory? This is a positive thing here.

Oftentimes, we read a list of sins, and we just get down in the dumps. "I know. I know I can't do this. I can't." That's not how Paul writes this. This is a hopeful message because you can do this, and here's why you can do this. He says, "Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has forgiven you." Paul says you can do this. This is possible because of Christ.

And I'll get to that in just a moment, but before I do, let me say a few things about what he says at the start of the verse. This is the opposite of everything you read in verse 31. If you compare the two verses, verse 31 and 32, this is the flip side of that. In other words, Paul says you shouldn't be bitter, that is wrong, but instead, you should be kind to one another. If you've ever met a bitter person, you'll know they're not kind; they're sour, right? They're very hard. Paul says you replace bitterness with kindness, you need to soften up, he says. And he also says you shouldn't be ruffled, but instead you should have a tender heart. That's the next verse here. That means you should have a spirit of compassion towards others. And he says don't be angry, but instead forgive others. Why? Because God has forgiven you. Because God in Christ forgave you. In other words, this is what God did for you. This is how He treated you. He forgave you of *this* many sins, so you forgive your neighbor of *this* many. God pardoned *this* many offenses, *this* many crimes, *this* much flagrant wickedness, so you should pardon your husband or wife of *this* many. Your spouse has not sinned against you as much as you've sinned against God. It's not possible. So, forgiveness should be an easy thing; it should be simple.

And I might add that all the verbs in this passage, they're in the continuous tense. In other words, this is an ongoing thing. You need to do this over and over and over again. Kindness should be a regular thing for you. Tenderheartedness should be every day. You don't do it once and that's it. You don't do it on Sunday morning and then forget about it the rest of the week because that's not what God did for you. God wasn't kind to you once. He was kind to you over and over and over again, and that's how you should treat others. Lamentations 3:22-23 says, "The Lord's lovingkindness never ceases, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning." And why is that? Why are His mercies new every morning? Because you need them every morning. You sin every morning, every day when you wake up, and so every day God gives you mercy. Every day God gives you kindness, and so you can give it to others. You're only giving them what you've already been given. You're only passing on to others what's been passed on to you. That's why this is a simple thing.

John 1:16 says "For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace." And that phrase, "grace upon grace" could be translated "grace in exchange for grace." And the idea is that from the fullness of Christ, there is a never-ending supply of grace. It's inexhaustible. It just keeps coming and coming and coming. As soon as one grace leaves, another one takes its place. As soon as one grace disappears, another one comes in; and your grace needs to do that with others. Your compassion needs to do that because that's how God has treated you.

One commentator put it this way, and I found this a pretty powerful statement. He said, "The only way to forgive like this is to have a broken heart." The only way to do what Paul is telling you to do here is to realize how much God is forgiving you, how much He's pardoned you, and that needs to break you. The reason we don't forgive, the reason we're so angry is because we are so hard hearted. That has to stop. This is a solution to your anger. This is how it ends. You should be overwhelmed with His grace, overwhelmed with His mercy, overwhelmed with His kindness to the point that you can't help yourself. You just have to forgive others.

If you remember your Bible history for a moment, the gospel of John tells a story of the time the Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus who was caught in adultery. Remember that story? She was caught in sin. It's a very strange story because you don't catch one person in adultery. There are two people involved. They just brought the woman, so it was suspect from the beginning; something was wrong with the story. It was a true story, but something was wrong with the Pharisees. And they asked if they could stone her, remember that? They asked if they could kill this woman because that's what the law required. That's what it told us to do. "Jesus, can we kill her?" And you remember what Jesus said? He said, "He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone." What does that mean? What is He saying? He's saying, "He who has never sinned, let him judge her sin. He who has never failed, let him judge her failure." And they all walked away.

They left. What Jesus is saying is you need to stop throwing stones at her and start throwing stones at yourself. Stop pointing fingers at her and start pointing them at you.

And as I read a passage like this one, I think we got to remember this today, friends, we have to take this to heart. There are far too many stones being thrown in the church today, amen? There are far too many fingers being pointed. Because our husbands come home, and they see that the house is a mess, and a bomb went off, and what do they do? They start pointing fingers, right? Or our wives stay home all day and they work themselves to death, and when the husbands come home, that's what they do. They throw a stone and before long, it's just fingers pointing everywhere. Stones flying everywhere and the house is just a battleground. It's a disaster and it's a miserable place to be. I've walked in some people's homes and I just want to duck behind the couch; it's not safe. That can't come into the church. It can't spill over into this place, but it does. I mean someone comes into the church looking rough. They look like they come from a tough background. What do we do? We throw a stone at them. They come in and say they've made some mistakes. They've messed up in life. We point a finger. Paul says you got to stop all that. You have to stop it. God didn't do that with you. Jesus Christ didn't do that with you, so you can't do that with others. You have to forgive them.

Some people point fingers all day long. They go around collecting hurts, so that every time you talk to them, they just want to tell you "So and so hurt me. So and so hurt me." It can't be that way. You have to forgive. Others, they want to remember an offense that took place 40 years ago. You got to let that go because God has done that with you.

C.S. Lewis said, "To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable in others because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you." He has forgiven you of the worst sins imaginable, sins of the heart, so you can forgive others.

That leads me to ask, do you get this today? Do you believe this? Do you believe God has forgiven the inexcusable in you? Do you believe He's forgiven you of the worst sins imaginable? I'm sure other people may have done some horrible things to you, but I bet your imagination has done worse. I ask you that because if you believe that, it should change you. If you understand that, it should make a difference because it should break your heart so you can forgive.

To ask this another way; to get to get personal for a moment. Are you an angry person?" If we were to ask your family, your friends, co-workers, would they say you get irritated a lot? Would they say that you throw a lot of stones? Is your life like a warzone? And more importantly, maybe to put it like this, do you see yourself in verse 31 of this passage and not in verse 32? Because if you do, there's a way to fix that. If you do, there's something you can do to solve it. You need to get in verse 32 as quickly as possible, amen? You need to get to the bottom of this

as soon as you can, and that is to run to the cross. That's to run to Jesus. He has an answer to your sin problem. He has an answer to your anger and it's only found in Him.

You know, in my research this week I read a story of the time a warlord in Europe, during the Middle Ages who was famous for his temper, he was known for his ruthlessness and brutality, so that wherever he went, everybody ran from him. They were all afraid of this angry man until he came to a village that was empty except for a single monk who stayed behind. The monk wouldn't leave. And when the warlord met him, he said, "Don't you know who I am? I'm the man who can kill you and never bat an eye?" To which the monk replied "Yes, but do you know who I am? I'm the man you can kill, and I will never bat an eye because I forgive you. Even before you do anything to me, even before you kill me, I pardon you in Jesus name."

Friends, can you say that this morning? Can you forgive people In Jesus name? That's what pleases God. That's what honors Him. And if you're struggling with that this morning, let me tell you how you can do it. You do it by running to the cross. Will you do that today? Let me pray for you now that you would.

Heavenly Father, this is a time here in a moment when we come to something that does remind us of the cross, and that is the Lord's Supper. It's so amazing to think that Your anger was satisfied once and for all in the death of Your Son. Such a suffering, such a sacrifice, such violence, all for our sins. There's not a believer in this room who sins were not punished on the cross. There's not a Christian on this planet who has ever lived or whoever will live, who has not been completely forgiven in Jesus. Lord, help us to understand what that means. Help us to live in light of this. God, passages like this one need to change us. As we see what our Savior has done, we need to do differently in our lives. Lord, help us to do that today?

I pray for my friends here in the church, for those who do believe, that they would be reminded that they're no longer in this first verse. They're in the second one. And help them to be kind and tender hearted.

I pray for those who are lost this morning, who read all of this and say, "I don't understand. I don't get it." I pray that You would convict them and remind them of their sin that's not been paid for. Now You're still angry with their sin. It's still hanging out there. May You draw them to Christ?

Would You be glorified this morning Lord, as We take this ordinance together. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen