

Anger

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Let's talk about this, we haven't talked about this in a long time. Road rage. In fact, we've never talked about this, right? But somebody needs to talk about this, right? Road rage, it's an issue. If you live in the Atlanta area and you're watching online, you get this, if you're living outside the city of Atlanta, be very careful when you drive into the city of Atlanta, because of this, right, road rage. And I would ask real quick, anybody here been a victim of road rage? Anybody, anybody fell victim? Yeah, actually more of you than you know. The reason you didn't raise your hand is you don't know what it is, okay. But road rage doesn't mean some angry person gets out of their car and marches back to your car in traffic and beats on your windshield.

That is road rage, but it's broader than that. Road rage is really, I'll just give you the definition, since we're talking about it. Aggressive or angry behavior exhibited by a driver. Bet you knew that. But here's the broad definition, so more of you have been a victim, hopefully not perpetrator, but a victim of, or maybe a perpetrator, I didn't ask you to raise your hands, maybe we should go back. Anyway, behaviors include rude and offensive gestures. So most of us have been, you know, have seen, okay. Verbal insults, physical threats, or dangerous driving methods targeted toward another driver or pedestrian in an effort to intimidate or release frustration. And the thing that's so horrible about road rage is that it's focused on absolute strangers. People who are experiencing road rage, they're mad at someone, they don't even know who it is. They don't even know if it's male or female half the time because your windows are so tinted, right? This is what makes it so strange.

Now here's something else you don't know about road rage. According to one study, this is gonna disturb some of you, but don't leave early, people who customize their cars with stickers and other adornments are more prone to road rage, did you know that? If you've got bobbleheads in the back window of your car and stickers and all that stuff, you are more prone to road rage. Now, I know what some of you are thinking, you're thinking, yeah, those Republicans, they have all those stickers, I knew it. Those Democrats, they just fill their cars with stickers, I knew it. So this study goes on to say only the number of bumper stickers, not their content, predicted road rage. See, no coexist this, you know, I don't know, so. Now, a percentage of you, a percentage of us have experienced or been on the giving side of some sort of road rage, but probably only a small percentage. But all of us have some sort of rage on the inside of us, all of us have some level of anger. We don't like the word anger because that doesn't sound very sophisticated, we're a very sophisticated people.

So we say, no, no, no, no, I don't have rage, and I don't have anger, um, I just have frustration. I'm not angry, I'm just, I'm frustrated. Frustration sounds so much nicer. Frustration is, you know what? There's something wrong out there and I'm just responding in here, but it's not me, I'm not the source, I'm just responding to something out there and whatever it is out there, it just frustrates me but I'm not angry, I'm just frustrated. But I learned, and I'll tell you how in just a minute, I learned that frustration is actually anger, I learned this from a counselor, but not just a counselor, I learned this from my counselor years ago. His name was Steve and he kept telling me I'm angry, I'm like, "I'm not angry". And I tried not to do the angry thing like, I'm not angry! 'Cause if you do that, you just lost, they don't even have to respond. They're like, oh really? I'll write that down, Andy's not angry, loudly.

So I'm like, "Steve, I'm not angry, I'm just frustrated". And he would say, "Well Andy, what's the difference"? Yeah, and so while you're trying to figure out the difference between anger and frustration, I want to go ahead and catch you up on what we're talking about in this series, and then we will come back to that in just a minute. We're in the middle of a series, actually, part four of a six-part series, it's called You're Not the Boss of Me. And we're talking specifically, this is kind of a how-to series, how to say no to the emotions that compete for control, because all of us have emotions

that compete for control of our mouth, and they compete for control of our moods. And Jesus said that the stuff that comes out of us or exudes from us, that oftentimes offends other people and puts us at odds with God because it puts us at odds with other people, it actually comes out of us, and the reason that it comes out of us is because it was in there to begin with.

And the things that come out of us, according to Jesus, actually he uses the word heart, it comes from our heart, in other words it comes from us. And I'm tempted to say, "No, it doesn't come from me, it comes from out there, it comes from them, and I'm just responding," and Jesus says, "That's because you don't know yourself very well". Here's what Jesus said, and I just go with what Jesus said, again, you predict your own death and resurrection, pull it off, let's go with whatever you say. He says this, but the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, there it is, and these defile them. Defile means these things put them at odds with God and others, and they put you at odds with God because they put you at odds with others that God loves. He goes on and He says this, For out of the heart, or out of you, whatever word you want to use, out of the heart come evil thoughts. And evil thoughts are the first step toward evil deeds, right?

You know, emotions that swell up on the inside of you and suddenly ideas come to mind, and next thing you know you're saying things or doing things, He says stuff like murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander, malice, the Gospel of Mark gives us some other words that Jesus used, He said all of these come out of us because they are in us. So in this series, we are learning to monitor our hearts, because from your heart comes the issues of life, as Solomon said. From our heart come the things that are both good and both bad, and all of us are good at monitoring our behavior, that's how you got here today, that's how you got married, you got a date, got a second date with the same person, you got a job, you're able to keep your job, you got a second interview, we're pretty good at monitoring our behavior.

But Jesus is encouraging us and drawing us into a way of life where we monitor our heart, we monitor what's in there and we monitor what we allow down in there. Because when our emotions in many cases take control, things oftentimes get out of control, whether it's guilt, we talked about that, or envy, we talked about that, or insecurity, or fear, we're gonna talk about fear next week, and today we're talking about anger. And here's what I know about you, this isn't a religious thing, this is just a human thing. Nobody, and you're a nobody, not really, like you're part of the nobody in this equation, everybody, somebody, everybody. Nobody wants anger to be the boss of them, right? I mean, you don't want anger to be your boss. You've never thought of it in those terms, we'll talk about it in just a minute. Nobody wants anger to be the boss of them, and nobody who loves you wants anger to be the boss of you and you don't want anger to be the boss of anybody that you love or you have to work with.

We've seen what happens when that happens. We've been on the other side of anger or frustration or rage, and when we talk about anger we're not just talking about extroverted anger, you know, people who lose their temper. You may never raise your voice, you may be more like me. You don't lose your temper, but you're still scary because your moodiness, your silence is deafening, your silence is intimidating, your silence is controlling, and you pride yourself because you don't ever extrovert your anger, but you introvert your anger and it has the same effect on the people closest to you.

So whether you shove it down or whether you shut people down, anger is a bad boss. Unless, there is an exception to this, unless it's what I call, and maybe there's a better phrase for this, what I call crusader anger. This is a good anger. Crusader anger is when somebody gets angry at an injustice in the world or evil in the world or a disease in the world, and they finally get so frustrated and so angry they step out and they say, "You know what? Somebody needs to do something about this".

So they go to work, and as a result of crusader anger, some incredible things have happened in the world. Child labor laws, women's suffrage, the civil rights movement, we could go on and on and on. All over the world throughout history there have been men and women who finally got so fed up with something that needed to change, they had kind of this crusader anger and it drove them to bring about change. But, and this is where we pivot back to most of us, crusader anger reflects concern over what other people aren't getting that they deserve. The frustration and the anger that drives us crazy and messes up our relationships and causes us to look in the mirror at times and think, "Why did I say that, why do I think that, why do I behave that way"? is the anger that comes from what happens when I'm not getting what I'm sure I deserve, when you're not getting what you're sure you deserve. So there's a parallel, there's a similarity. One is constructive, one as you already know is extraordinarily destructive.

Now, James, the brother of Jesus, which is such a fascinating thought, anyway, we won't go into that, but James, the brother of Jesus, who lived in the first century, obviously, emerged after Jesus' resurrection as the leader in the local church, in fact, he was the pastor, he might be called, or the leader of the church in Jerusalem in the first century, imagine that. He was martyred in the year 62, and his martyrdom is not recorded in the Bible, it's not recorded in the Book of Acts that tells us what happened after the Gospels, and the reason the martyrdom of James is not recorded in the Book of Acts is because when James was martyred, the Book of Acts had already been written, it was already out, and so the Book of Acts was written before James was martyred, which means the Book of Acts was written before 62, which means, I know you don't care but I do, before Acts, this is important though, before Acts was written, Luke was written, everybody agrees that who whoever wrote Luke wrote Acts, so it shoves the writing of Acts back and it shoves the writing of Luke back into the time when there were eyewitnesses of the Resurrection.

So one of things that you may have heard in graduate school or college many, many years ago was that the eyewitnesses of the Resurrection didn't write the Gospels, they were written many, many, many years later. There is no evidence for that and there's lots of evidence to the contrary. So James lived in Jerusalem, brother of Jesus, martyred, imagine this, he was killed because he believed his brother was his Lord. That's amazing, and he writes this letter to Christians, primarily to Jewish Christians, and it is full of wisdom. In fact, he had a nickname, he was James the Just. He was such a just person, James the Just, and in this letter that's called the Book of James that you can find in your New Testament, in this book, James gives us a principle and of all the principles, the life-changing principles in the world, I think there are two that are just so extraordinary that if people can get their minds and hearts around these two ideas, it changes everything, especially relationally. And James gives us one of these principles.

So I want to walk you through what James says, it's gonna be a little bit offensive, maybe, it's gonna make you kinda push back a little bit and say, "I don't know if it's that simple". But I'm telling you, if you, whatever age you're in, wherever you are in relationships, if you will embrace this principle that James gives us, it will do more to keep anger from ever becoming the boss of you than anything else you can do, and that's a promise. Here's what James says. He asked two questions, the first one is this. He says who, he's just writing, this is a letter, so he's writing this, so somebody's reading this in churches and Judea and maybe that area of the world. Who is wise and understanding among you? And he's not asking anybody to raise their hand, and I'll explain why in a minute. Who is wise and understanding? Wisdom means who has insight? Wise people understand that life is connected. Wise people understand the past impacts the future and the present impacts the future, that's what's going on now is gonna show up later, that life is connected.

So James says, okay, do you think you're wise? Do you think you're insightful? Do you know how to keep things in perspective? He says if so, I want to challenge you. Let me see your wisdom and let me see your understanding by the deeds you do and the humility that comes

from wisdom. Because wise people, this is so important, wise people are always humble, because arrogance doesn't make any sense. Arrogance is irrational. Arrogance flies in the face of everything we know about how the world works and how people are. He says so if you're wise, I want to see your wisdom and how you live your life, and it's gonna be exported through your humility, because wisdom always leads to humility.

Every once in a while, and you've had this experience, I'll run into somebody or meet somebody or hear somebody on the news, and they just are so arrogant. I mean, they're just like, and whenever I see arrogant men or women, sometimes it's just a big personality, but sometimes it goes beyond just a big personality, and I want to ask them, and I would never do this because this would be arrogant and I don't want to be arrogant. But I want to walk up to them and say, "Excuse me, do you think you're never gonna die? Do you think that somehow, you're an exception to all the rules, 'cause the way you're talking, the way you're living, and what you're expecting of others, you seem like somehow you're an exception to all the rules. You do realize you're going to die? You do realize that you have control over virtually nothing that had anything to do with making you who you are and has anything to do with controlling your future? I mean, you do realize that you are a victim or you are having to live your life in sync with things that you have no control over, like everybody else? In other words, you're louder than everybody else but you're not that special".

This is because wisdom understands, I mean, you've met people like this, and maybe you are a people like that, and you're like, "I already don't like you". Okay, so. Just be patient. Wisdom understands, that's what wisdom is, wisdom is understanding how the world works, how things are, that's why the wiser you are, the more humble you're gonna be, because humility makes more sense but humility is, in fact, humility is so powerful, but humility is not natural. Natural, well, James tells us, he says but, he says here's the opposite of all that, but if you harbor, that is you allow it to dock, if you allow envy to dock, if you allow selfish ambition to dock, you know, the harbor in your hearts, if you allow things that really fly in the face of reality and fly in the face of the way that the world really works, envy, envy is, you know, it's not fair.

Well, life's not fair. I mean, fairness ended in the Garden of Eden, nothing's been fair since, right? How many of you can dunk a basketball? Right, exactly, so it's not fair, okay. But we tell our kids that all the time, but he said if you allow things to get lodged in your heart, that's the point of this series, if you get things lodged in your heart that are really out of sync with reality, the way the world works, then it's just going to go bad for you, and what's in you is going to come out of you. If you let all that stuff live down in there unaddressed, it's gonna be a problem, and he says look, and don't boast, his wording's a little funky here. And don't boast about it or deny the truth.

So but if you harbor bitter envy, you kinda keep it on the inside, and selfish ambition, it's all about you because people who lack wisdom lack humility and they make the world all about themselves. Making the world all about you is not wise. Making the world all about you doesn't even make any sense. He says but if you're stuck there, if you allow that stuff to harbor in your heart and it becomes the filter through which you live, through which you talk, through which you parent, through which you do marriage, he said you're just denying the truth and wise people don't deny the truth. Wise people live in light of the truth, and so James is saying to his audience, look, don't get stuck and don't get satisfied and don't pretend to be fine. God has called you to something better.

And then he tells us kinda what we already know. He says because wherever you find this stuff lodged in a heart, wherever you find somebody deceived into thinking they're more than they really are and they lack wisdom and humility, for where you find this, he says, for where you find this envy and selfish ambition, there you find, here it is, there you find disorder and every evil practice. And again, this is kind of his fanciful way, not fanciful, but his sorta complicated wordy way of saying what Jesus said, that when things get lodged inside of us, they're eventually coming out of us, and where you have arrogance and a lack of

understanding of how the world works and the way things really are and how dependent you are on the people around you and circumstances you had no control over, when you lose sight of that and arrogance get lodged in your heart, eventually there's going to be disorder and every evil practice, because people who allow these things to get lodged in their heart are able to justify just about anything. What's on the inside of you is coming for you. What's on the inside of you is coming for the people around you.

So, at this point, James is writing all this down and it's like he pauses and thinks okay, I got to get to the point. So he sort of laid the groundwork for where he's going, how many among you are wise and have understanding? How many of you understand the power of humility? How many of you understand that you can't get stuff, you know, he's kind of laid the groundwork and now he goes for his point. And now he tells us how to keep anger from lodging in our heart and how to keep anger from becoming the boss of us, but he launches into this part of the discussion with another question, and here's the question. He says so having said all that, think about this. What causes fights, I've said if you have wisdom, you'll have humility and humility leads to more wisdom and understanding about how the world works, and if you allow bitter envy and selfish ambition to lodge in your heart, then there's gonna be disorder and fights, and if you don't believe me, then think about this: where does that hostility, where do fights come from? What causes fights? What causes conflict? What causes fights, he goes on, and quarrels among you?

Now this is a really interesting question. What causes it? He's asking the question, what's the root cause? When some of you see this question, when some of us see this question, we say, "Well James, you're asking the question incorrectly". It's not what, it's who. It's who causes fights and who causes quarrels and I know the answer to that, it's my mom, she will not mind her own business. I am an adult, I have my own family, and my mom's just gotta tell me how to parent, what to do, when to get up, and it doesn't look right, and every time she walks in my house I feel judged, and I'm like, I know what causes quarrels, it's not a what, it's a who. It's my dad, it's my brother-in-law, every time he comes over he's gotta talk about my yard and how to do my yard, I'm like I don't even care, it's not your yard. It's not a what, it's a who. It's my ninth-grade son, he knows everything, he knows everything, and the problem is he might really know everything and everything I do is wrong and he wins all the arguments, and I feel like how did my ninth-grade son get in control of our family? It's my boss, it's the manager at work that she just, I don't know, there's something about her that just grates on me. The problem is not a what, the problem is a who. And James is like that's why we're talking about this, because you're wrong. It's a what. It's not a who. And as long as you think it's a who, you will never get to the root of the real what.

So he says where do fights and quarrels, where does it come from, what's the source? And I want to look out there in the world and say, "I'm just frustrated because I'm responding to something out there". He says come on, who is wise and understanding among you? Don't they really come from your desires that battle inside of you? To which we say no, they don't. You need to meet my boss, then you would understand the source of my quarrels. You need to meet my wife, I don't know, there's just something going on. You need to meet my husband, he used to be such a gentleman. And James is going now come on, come on, who is wise, who is humble, who is understanding among you?

Let's face an important fact that could possibly change everything for you. The source of the fighting and the struggles and the quarrels among you, the source is something going on inside of you. They don't come from his or her inability to see the world the way that you see it, even though that's the way we often see it. I think that the reason we struggle is because you won't see things my way and if I could just get you to see things my way, which of course is the right way, if I could just get you to see things my way, then we wouldn't fight and quarrel. And James says no, you don't understand the root, and as long as you think the source is out there, you're never gonna deal with it and you're actually gonna feed something ugly and dangerous in here.

Now, let me pause and say this. This principle, this thing he's teaching us, I'm telling you it is life-changing, that's not hyperbole. It is relationship-changing, it is relationship-healing. In any relationship, in any relationship, if both parties can embrace what James is teaching us and telling us, it changes everything, so let me read the verse again. Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? And the answer is yes, they do, every single time. Because the reason we fight and the reason we quarrel and the reason we're angry is because there's something we want that we aren't getting. There's something we want that we aren't getting. I want respect from him and I'm not getting respect. I just want you to clean up your room because that shows you that you respect me and I'm not getting what I want. I just want you to come home on time because we talked about this 10 times, and you promised and you won't come home on time.

I just want you to give me a fair shot, I just want credit for my ideas, I'm upset and I'm frustrated and anybody that hears my story says you're right, but the root of it is not out there, the root of it is in here because I'm not getting what I want. Which I know how you respond, you respond the same way I do, but wait a minute, but I earned it! Right, you earned it, and you want to get what you earned, right? Yeah, and you're not getting what you earned, right, so you're not getting what you want. Oh, well yeah. But they promised, I mean, come on, they promised and they didn't keep their promise. Right so, you want them to keep their promise? Yeah, so you're not getting what you want? Yeah, okay, but it wasn't even just, what they did, anybody who heard my story, what they did wasn't fair. I know, and you want what's fair, don't you? Yes, I want what's fair. You're not getting what's fair, are you? No, you're not getting what you want.

Now I'm just telling you, if you can pause in the moment when the frustration or anger or rage or whatever word you want to use starts rising, and you can pause in the moment and recognize you know what the problem is? The problem is, part of the problem is me. Now see, parents, this should be so intuitive for us, right? If you're a parent and you have two little kids, or at any point had two little kids, 'cause you're driving, you remember, you got one hand on wheel and one hand on the backseat, are two rows and you're going stop it, be quiet, and your kids are back here negotiating, going he, she, he, she, and you're going it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter, I don't need to be the judge, I'm just the jury, you're both guilty, so be quiet and quit touching her and get on the, why. Because as the parent you know the problem isn't really the presenting problem, the problem is there's two kids in the backseat and they both want something and neither one of them are getting what they want.

And it's like our Heavenly Father's going, there's a reason I ask you to call me Heavenly Father, 'cause you're still like children. And at the source, at the root of every single argument and quarrel you've ever had, at the source, the root, the source is not out there, it starts right here. You want something and you're not getting it, and I'm telling you the moment you begin to embrace this as a lifestyle, the temperature goes down and anger will no longer be the boss of you. It won't control, as we're gonna see, your moods or your mouth.

Now James goes on, 'cause he knows he's gotta say this two or three more times 'cause it's too easy to miss. He says you desire but you do not have, so you kill. And we're like okay, that's gotta be hyperbole. Well, it is but it isn't. His point is this, and this is what should cause all of us to stop and at least consider whether or not this is true. His point is this, he's saying look, if you don't recognize, if you don't recognize that the source and the root is in here, not out there, you will carry the potential to do things, you'll carry the potential to take things to an unhealthy, destructive extreme. As long as you think it's him, don't miss this, as long as you think it's him and since you can't control him, you will feel like you have an excuse not to control you. As long as I think it's her and it's 100% her, then since I can't control her, I give up all reasoning when it comes to controlling me because she deserves it, he deserves it, they deserve it, whatever it is.

And James says look, I'm telling you, the very thing that leads to murder, it is inside of you. Because what causes murder? Somebody wants something they can't get any other way or they want something they can't get and it drives them or murder, somehow it justifies a response, and they blame the other person and James says hey, heads up, all of you wise people, all of you people that are wise and have understanding, that's inside of you, that's inside of you. To think for a moment that you don't have it in you to do something unhealthy to another person in order to get what you want, don't deceive yourself. Be humble enough to recognize, oh my goodness, that resides in me. Then he wraps up like this, he says come on, you're envious, you're envious, and you can't obtain, you want it and you can't get there, you want a break, you're not getting a break, everybody got theirs, you haven't gotten yours yet, everybody got in, you didn't get in yet, everybody drives one, you don't drive one yet, everybody else's kids, everybody else, everybody else.

He says you want it and you can't get, so you fight and you quarrel. You can't get from him what you want, you can't get from her what you want, you can't get the approval, the acceptance, I mean, just fill in the blank, we've all got that stuff. But his point is come on, the source is not out there, the source is in here. We aren't getting our way. We aren't getting what we want. We're like the kids in the backseat, and our Heavenly Father's going hey! Stop it, I don't wanna hear the hey, no, no, no, no, no, we're not gonna talk about the details until you can get on your side of the car, your side of your van, your side of the vehicle, and think for a minute, wait a minute, what's causing this? It's not her.

See again, if I shake you up, what comes out is what's in there, and you can't say, "Well, if you'd stop shaking me, this wouldn't be in here". No, what comes out is what's in there, and what does conflict do? Conflict just shakes us up and what comes out? Oh my goodness, I just want my way, I want what I deserve, I want what was promised. And of course, just to make sure you don't hear me saying something I'm not, of course there are circumstances that should upset you, and of course being treated unfairly should upset you, and of course not having a promise kept should upset you, but in the midst, in the middle of the conversation as it dawns on you, mature, wise people of understanding pause and say, "You know what? Part of the problem is, not the whole problem, but part of the problem, my part of the problem, the source of the problem is I'm not getting what I want". And I'm telling you, when you can own your slice of the argument pie, when you can own your slice of the argument pie, the temperature comes down and anger and rage and frustration will no longer be the boss of you.

Now, I've taught this passage many times. I think I should teach it every six months, because it's easy but it's easy to forget. And so every time I teach this, I recommend that you do something that's a little bit odd, but every time I suggest this, I get responses where people who did this and they say it was kinda weird but it was kinda funny, and now it's become part of the rhythm of our life. So if you're a married couple, if you're in a serious relationship, if you have a roommate and you and the roommate are kinda back and forth and both of you hear this talk, I'm telling you, any two people who embrace this idea, this changes everything.

So I suggest, I mean, I do this with Sandra, we just kinda laugh about it. I suggest that you actually say this out loud in the middle of the conflict, even if you're the only person who understands the principle but if both of you understand it, I'm telling you, it's amazing what happens. You just, you know, you're having a conflict, you're having an argument, try it at work, even with people who don't know about this, and you say, you know what? You know what part of the problem is, don't you? Do you know what part of the problem is? I'm not getting what I want. There's no comeback to that. That's like... Wait, what? Yeah, you know what part of the problem is? I'm not getting what I want. Right. And, um, I guess I'm not getting what I, wow. So I'll tell you what, let's send each other to each other's room, I'm gonna send myself to my room, and you send yourself to your room. And I'm gonna sit in my room, until finally I kinda own my slice of the pie, and once I own my slice of the pie, then

I'm gonna come back out and we're gonna talk.

So, you know, I want us to actually practice this. Now, the first time, we're just gonna read it, and then the second time we're gonna do it with some attitude, okay? 'Cause I'm telling you, and I'll give you illustrations in just a minute, this is a very powerful habit. Even if you just do it under your breath, what this does is this is basically your way of saying anger, uh-uh-uh, okay. This may be unfair, this may be unjust, they broke a promise, they broke a vow, but you know what, anger? You're not the boss of me. I gotta get through this, I gotta make a wise decision, I am a person of wisdom and understanding, I am not arrogant and I'm not letting any ships pull up to my harbor that are full of envy and bitterness, okay? So I'm gonna own my slice of the pie.

So, ready, we're gonna just say this out loud. Let's just read it, everybody, even if you're watching at home by yourself, just play along, ready? You know what part of the problem is, don't you? That was so bad. Okay, come on. This is hard for some of you. In fact, if you're sitting like this right now, I'd at least, come on. Give me a little body language support here, okay? Here we go: You know what part of the problem is, don't you? I'm not getting what I want. Yeah. Imagine saying that in the middle of a conflict. And let me tell you what. This is true, it is part of the problem, I'm not saying it's the whole problem, but in many cases it's a bigger part than we want to know about or own.

So one more time, with a little more attitude this time. Ready? Here we go: You know what part. Of the problem is, don't you? I'm not getting what I want. Just try that. James says I tell you what, if you do that, you're wise. You know how the world works. You do that, you own that? You're a person who's humble because you understand how the world works. You're someone with insight, you're someone with knowledge of self, self-knowledge. That means you have emotional IQ, you have EQ, that is so powerful and goes beyond the average because you're able to stop in the middle and say okay, part of the problem is.

So I want to ask you a question, this isn't a James question, this is just a me question. What is your relationship with anger? I know it's an odd question, what is your relationship with anger? Do you let it boss you around? Do you allow it to get in control of your mouth or your mood? As I said earlier, I'm an introvert, so when I get angry, I go in and my moods are paralyzing. I mean, I've just had to learn, okay, but what is your relationship with anger? And are you ready to put an end to that?

Or let me ask it a different way, if I were to ask your husband, or your wife, or your best friend, your roommate, your boyfriend, your girlfriend, your best friend, hey, what is her, talking about you, what is her, talking about you, what is his relationship with anger? What would they say? And do you allow it to be the boss of you? Do you allow it to be the boss of you in one particular relationship because there's just somebody who just gets to you? Do you allow it to be the boss of you with certain kinds of people because those certain kinds of people, they just get to you? Is it the boss of you in one particular environment?

Maybe just at home, everybody at work just thinks you're the finest, kindest, most amazing person, and folks at home are walking around on eggshells. Are you ready to put an end to that? To do that, you'll have to humble yourself. This calls for humility, humility is the most logical thing we can ever do. Humility makes sense, arrogance makes no sense, pride makes no sense, arrogance and pride never lead anywhere good. Humility says you know what? It's not all my fault, but you know what, I'm gonna own my part of it, and I'm gonna own my part of it to where anger no longer controls my mouth or my mood. Part of the problem, part of the problem is you're not getting your way.

So, and only you know how this works. When you feel it rising up, before this day is over for some of you, you're gonna get to practice this. It just starts rising up. It's traffic, I mean, it's traffic, it starts rising up, you're at a restaurant, and it's just not what you ordered or it's

something more serious, you get home and he didn't or she did or the kids, or you get to work tomorrow, it's gonna start rising up on the inside of you. That's when you say uh-uh-uh-uh, anger, uh-uh, anger, you're not the boss of me. I'm on to you, you want me to think it's him, you want me to think it's her, you want me to think it's them, but anger, I am on to you, it's me. I want something and I'm not getting it, and anger, I'm owning my slice of the pie and you will not control my mouth and you will not control my mood.

And besides, and I've said this every week, if you're a Christian, or if you're a Jesus follower, I like the phrase Jesus follower, if you're a Jesus follower, you already have a boss of you, right? Jesus, that's why we use the word Lord, boss. You already have a boss of you who, by the way, didn't get everything He wanted either. In fact, you have a boss who said no to Himself so He could give you what you needed most. You have a boss, you have a Lord who said no to Himself so that He could give you precisely what you needed most. The Apostle Paul captured this in beautiful language, and I'll close with this. He said this, talking about Jesus, again, you're a Jesus follower, and He said follow me, he said who, Jesus, talking about Jesus, being in the very nature God, so what does God get? Well, God should get whatever He wants. What does God deserve? Whatever God deserves. What should come God's way? Everything that should just go God's way. Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage.

So, on multiple occasions, Jesus doesn't get what He wants, Jesus doesn't get what He deserves, and he never powered up. He never walked in and said, "Okay, I'm Jesus. Okay, have you not been paying attention? I'm Jesus, so you sit down and you shut up, and I want the corner table, and I know they got here first but ask them to move, I'm Jesus, come on"!

Paul said He never did that. Instead, He humbled Himself, look at this next phrase, rather, He made Himself nothing, He chose nothing over something on behalf of the world and on behalf of you. By taking the very nature of a servant, and then Paul, in this same passage, says now Christians, now Jesus followers, here's what this looks like to follow Jesus, here's what it looks like to take this idea and to live it out in the real world, and here's what he says. In your relationships with one another, in your relationships with one another, in your relationship with your father, your mother, the roommate, the boyfriend, the girlfriend, that cousin, that brother-in-law, in your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus, who humbled Himself and how far did He go? How low did He go? Who humbled Himself by dying and not dying just any death, Paul says, but death on a cross.

It's okay not to get everything you want. It's okay not to get everything you deserve. In fact, it is better not to get everything you want and everything you deserve if that's what it takes to keep anger from being the boss of you. You see, one of the reasons following Jesus will make your life better, and one of the reasons that following Jesus makes us better at life is that Jesus will always nudge us away from self-centeredness and arrogance to other-centeredness and humility. Jesus will always nudge you away from self-centeredness and arrogance toward other-centeredness and humility, and listen, when you move toward other-centeredness and humility, your life gets bigger and your life gets better, and you will be free to live a life where anger is not the boss of you.

Now as we've done in every one of these messages, I want to give you a list of questions to talk about over lunch or maybe in your small group, and maybe if you're doing this as a curriculum later, to come back to these, so if you get your phone out, I want you to take a picture of this, if you don't mind. And if you follow any of our churches on social media, all of our social media will have these pictures or these posts all week long, so you can do a screenshot.

And the questions are simply this: to describe with somebody your relationship with anger, this is a dangerous question to do in family, but you should just try it. And do you shout out or shut down?

Are you like me, you go in, or are you kinda expressive? What are your triggers and who are your triggers? What are those environments? Because for some of you, anger is only the boss of you in one relationship, anger is only the boss of you in one environment. And are you ready to acknowledge that part of the problem is you're not getting what you want? And I want to just say one thing to married couples, and then we're done, okay, married couples?

Let me tell you what's gonna happen, because you both heard this message. You know, 12 hours, within 12 hours, within one hour, within 30, I don't know. You're gonna be in the car, you're gonna be somewhere, and it's gonna start, and you're both gonna remember this message, and one of you is gonna go first. The most mature person, the most humble person, this is cheating, the most Christ-like person in your relationship will go first. Can I say something to men? There's only one reason we don't go first. It's pride. And you've lived long enough to know that if pride pulls up and harbors in your heart, nothing good comes from it.

So married couples, when it starts, you just be the first to say, "Hey, before we say anything else, you know what part of the problem is here? I'm not getting what I want". Can you imagine what would happen in any relationship when we own our slice, when we own our slice of the anger, frustration, rage pie? Anger will no longer be the boss of you and anger may no longer be a factor in your most valued relationships. Let me pray for us and we'll go.

Father, thank you for James, thank you for preserving these words for 2000 years. Now give us the wisdom to know what to do with what we just heard. Give us the courage to do it. Revolutionize our relationships, and I pray that none of us will spend another day allowing anger to be the boss of us, and I pray all of this in Jesus' name, amen.