

# SIDEXSIDE

People in Need of Change **Helping**



People in Need of Change

# RECAP . . .

- **The Vertical Strategy**

- **Contacting Christ**

- From unclean to clean; from disconnectedness to connectedness; from not belonging to belonging
    - Our identity in the Story changes

- **Despising Shame**

- Association with Honor
    - The camp outside the camp

- **The Peter Problem**

- We need a high view of being *with* Jesus
    - Until the shame of Christ is great for us, our shame will continue to be great in us



# THE HORIZONTAL STRATEGY: BEING KNOWN

- **The Horizontal Strategy**
  - Vulnerability: Being known through exposure
  - Empathy: the ability to understand and/or share the feelings of another
    - Sharing shame with wise, mature believers
- The Importance of Community
- Because shame dismantles connection, overcoming shame requires pressing into a close network of transparent, vulnerable relationships—this doesn't mean that everyone must know everything
- This “integration” *literally* affects the brain, which also begins to reintegrate its operations in thought and action.



# CLOSING THOUGHTS ON DESPISING SHAME

- We must work through shame—it is impossible to numb the pain of shame without also numbing happiness and joy.
- Pursue horizontal and vertical strategies simultaneously.
- Remember that pride/fear of man is lurking in the background—don't overlook its importance or power in the healing process.



# ANGER, BITTERNESS AND IRRITABILITY

- **What is Anger?**
  - The Difficulty of Definition
  - An Emotion of Againstness: I am *against* X. I *strongly oppose* X.
    - Active displeasure towards something that's important enough to care about
  - Bitterness and irritability are less volatile relatives of anger but have the same core DNA.
  - Anger itself is not sinful. In the face of sin and injustice anger is appropriate and even expected. This is righteous anger—we *should* be against and oppose such things. This is also called *indignation* (Ps. 4:4; Mk. 10:14; Eph. 4:26)
    - Where there is no evil, there is no anger



# HOW DOES ANGER EMERGE?

- Three Elements of Anger
  - I *identify* some perceived wrong
  - I take a *stance of disapproval* and feel displeasure
  - I *desire to act* to right the perceived wrong (even if I don't actually act)



# HOW DOES ANGER GO WRONG?

- Anger is sinful whenever we respond to perceived wrongs in God-mode—"my Kingdom come, my will be done—hallowed be my name."
  - Our mind operates in judicial mode
    - Perceived wrongs must be identified and punishing reactions determined
  - Our actions operate in military mode
    - It's about winning and losing, enemies and allies, attacking and defending. (Gal. 5:15)
  - Our motives pretend sovereign authority
    - Our words and actions are in the name of justice and truth—sin against us or our kingdom comes with discipline to help people know how live rightly before us. (Rom. 12:19)

*In anger "we reach for the crown, and plot for the throne." – Sproul*



# WHAT ABOUT BITTERNESS & IRRITABILITY?

- While less volatile, bitterness, irritability, brooding and harbored resentment all share DNA with anger—nothing about being introverted or quiet-natured exempts one from these struggles.
  - **How Do I Identify Bitterness Over a (Perceived?) Offense?**
    - Do you hope the best for the person who offended you? Do you hope they prosper and that the Lord blesses the work of their hands?
    - Do you find yourself frequently returning to this offense in your mind and marinating in it? Does this become particularly acute when you see this person?
    - Do you tend to summarize this person in your head as, “the person who did X?”
    - Do you continue to bring the offense up in conversation with the offender or others as a “reminder” long after the offense?
    - Do you feel a strong aversion to restoring the relationship to what it was (or better) before the offense?





# ADDRESSING ANGER: THE MOMENT

- Anger: the “moral emotion”—anger always shows what we care about and what deeply matters to us. Our anger always broadcasts our value judgments.
- **Addressing Anger (Rage) in the Moment**
  - The heat of anger is not the time for helping anyone—and likely not the time to reason with anyone, either. Pause and return to the conversation later when at all possible—this goes for when we are angry, too.
  - Counting to 10, taking deep breathes or walking away do not truly address the core problem of anger at all—as path-shaping efforts, they only prevent anger from turning into wrath (Prov. 12:18; 15:18). They are, however, frequently very wise measures.



# ADDRESSING ANGER: THE PATTERN – 8 A'S

- Help People *Acknowledge* Their Anger (Job 13:23; Prov. 28:13; Lam. 3:40)
  - People are quick to acknowledge that they “get angry,” but very slow to acknowledge that they struggle with being an angry or bitter *person*.
- Help People *Ascertain* Their Style
  - Does this person yell and scream? Icy silence? Low grade bitterness? Cynical/biting comments or jokes? What does their expression of anger look like?
  - Are there patterns in this person's anger? When they drink? When they're tired? When they're stressed?



# ADDRESSING ANGER: THE PATTERN – 8 A'S

- Help People *Assess* the Source of the Their Anger
  - Hurt?
  - Perceived injustice?
  - Fear?
  - Frustration?
- Help People *Appraise* Their Thinking
  - Who am I? Who is God? What has been promised to me in this life? Where is my thinking distorted? What are the consequences?
- Help People *Access* Their Heart
  - Why does X make me so angry? What does that show me about my deepest desires and what I value?



# ADDRESSING ANGER: THE PATTERN – 8 A'S

- Help People *Abandon* Their Demands
  - How am I encroaching on the role of God in my anger? What laws have I created in my Kingdom whose violation necessitates my wrath?
- Help People *Apply* the Gospel
  - Have I repented of my anger? How does the forgiveness I've been shown in Christ affect my actions and thoughts—do I have *attitudinal* forgiveness? How does an eternal hope affect my thinking?
- Help People *Apologize* to the Victims of Their Anger
  - Helping someone address their anger is incomplete without encouraging them to confess and repent to those against whom they have sinned in anger. This confession and repentance before others should regularly accompany their actions done in sinful anger.

