

SIDEXSIDE

People in Need of Change **Helping**



People in Need of Change

RECAP . . .

- How Does Anger Go Wrong?
 - Our mind operates in judicial mode
 - Our actions operate in military mode
 - Our motives pretend sovereign authority
- How Do I Identify Bitterness?



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 are often wise ways to prevent the negative effects of anger; but they 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).



ADDRESSING ANGER AS A PATTERN—8 A'S OF COMING ALONGSIDE ANGRY PEOPLE

- 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*.
 - Patterns of anger aren't fixed in singular conversations.
- Help People *Ascertain* Their Style (Eph. 4:31)
 - Wrath: Anger that punishes
 - Rage: Anger that erupts
 - Bitterness: Anger that hides and festers
 - Irritability: Anger that itches
 - Passive-Aggression: Anger that smirks
- Are there patterns in this person's anger? When they drink? When they're tired? When they're stressed?



8 A'S CONT...

- Help People *Assess* the Trigger of the Their Anger (2 Sam. 12:5-6; Lk. 6:11; Eccl 7:9)
 - Hurt?
 - Perceived injustice?
 - Fear?
 - Frustration?
- Help People *Appraise* Their Thinking (Job 38; Jas. 1:19-20)
 - Who am I? Who is God? What has been promised to me in this life? Where is my thinking distorted? What are the consequences?
 - Angry with God?
 - Anger at God = “Againstness”/Opposition toward God
 - Anger vs. Grief and Disappointment



8 A'S CONT...

- Help People *Access* Their Heart (Jas. 4:1; Matt. 12:33-35; Jn. 2:14-15)
 - Why does X produce so much anger in me?
 - What does that show me about my deepest desires and what I value? How does this anger broadcast my value judgments?
- Help People *Abandon* Their Demands (Rom. 9:20)
 - 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?



8 A'S CONT...

- Help People *Apply* the Gospel (Matt 18:23-34; Acts 7:60; Ps. 144:4)
 - Have I repented to God for my anger? How does the forgiveness I've been shown in Christ affect my actions and thoughts?
 - People's capacity for forgiveness will not exceed their perception of the magnitude of their forgiven sin. For those who struggle mightily with forgiveness, that perception is often low.
 - Often this is because their evaluation of the seriousness of their sin is based on comparison to the sins of other people, not relationship with a holy God.
- Help People *Apologize* to the Victims of Their Anger (Jas. 5:16; Matt. 5:23-24)
 - 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.



CLOSING THOUGHTS . . .

- Understanding anger fundamentally as “againstness” or a disposition of opposition will go a long way in helping you examine yourself and others.
- Anger broadcasts value judgments.
- Anger is something everyone “experiences” but is few people’s “problem.” Identifying as someone who struggles mightily with anger often carries along with it, shame.
- Bitterness and irritability share the same root as anger—againstness. Often many people who are bitter have no idea they are bitter—they are instead “sad,” “indefinitely frustrated,” or subtly condescending.
- Consistent repentance is key in transformation, no matter how “small” the sinful anger.

