

# Sunday

## Week 12. Freedom From Anger

When anger erupts in us, it is a warning bell that there is unredeemed conflict with another human being. Thus, it is a diagnostic tool for sniffing out trouble in the neighborhood. Diagnostically it is virtually 100% correct, and you can trust it every time.

"There is but one way to browbeat this world,  
Dumb-founder doubt, and repay scorn  
in kind, --  
To go on trusting, namely till faith move  
Mountains.

Robert Browning

When we are angry, if we were able to be objective about it, we would know that we're on to something big, really big. That something big is a thought to which we are attached, a thought with pseudo-moral authority and dynamite potential that carries conviction of being "in the right."

Consider the case of Jonah. When God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry?" Jonah shot back, "I do well to be angry, angry enough to die." (Jonah 4:9)

The diagnosis of anger, however, is incomplete, there are unresolved diagnostic questions:

- Is the wrong outside?
- Is the wrong inside?

The other person is outside, the one to whom the anger is directed:

- Our spouse
- Our child
- Our God

Somebody somewhere did something that irked us and we are angry. This is what Jonah did. He got irked. He quarreled with God, blaming Him for his trouble.

Yet, when we carry the diagnostic process further, and track the anger carefully, we almost always discover that there are clues within of the erroneous thought to which we are attached:

- Wrong information
- Wrong interpretation
- Inadequate understanding

- Lack of forgiveness
- Underdeveloped heart
- Assumptions which have not been subjected to the inquiry of the Holy Spirit

Thus, the big thing about anger is to reframe its emotional power and see it as an opportunity to move to higher ground spiritually. Our quarrel with whoever is believed to be the cause of our anger can be turned around as we forgive them. And, since the mindset of forgiveness can only come from God, through forgiving another person we move closer to God. That's revolutionary for your health.

*25 So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. 26 Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not make room for the devil. 28 Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. 29 Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, <sup>E22</sup> as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. 31 Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, 32 and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.*

*Ephesians 4:26-27*

# Monday

## Week 12 – Day 1

### Morning Prayer

**Theme: Ask God for healing in our families**

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### Evening Prayer

**Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit**

#### **The Holy Spirit As A Source of Love**

Love is our strongest human need. Often we confuse the rush of hormones and the romantic symbol of Hollywood as love and end up making someone else's behavior responsible for our happiness.

What about you? Do you know yourself? Do you know the difference between your authentic needs and the things your ego demands to mask your fears and insecurities?

Think about it. Could you expect another person to get inside your head with sufficient discernment to anticipate your various unspoken needs all the time? And then, when it doesn't happen, can you legitimately say (resentfully) – "If you really love me you will . . ."

It happens.

It takes a lot of soul-searching to discover what is true for you, what your assumptions about love are, or whether you've subjected the topic of love to the inquiry of the Holy Spirit.

Looking outside your self to others for love is putting the cart before the horse.

Until you discover love within yourself, you can't authentically share it with anyone else.

### **Wrapping Up**

It's time.

# Tuesday

## Week 12 – Day 2

### Morning Prayer

Theme: Ask God for healing of our work communities

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### Evening Prayer

Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit

### The Holy Spirit As A Source of Love

Love. We think about it. We speak about it. We sing about it. We dance with it in mind. These are some of the conceptual ways that give rise to the clichés with which we refer to love. You could say that these concepts of love are those of the world.

So, what would it mean if you considered love as a practice that should correspond to what it means to be created in the image and likeness of God?

There are, of course, logical implications to the question:

- Each of us is created in and of love
- God loves us
- God is love in us
- Each of us is the very activity of love
- You have all the love you need to love everyone and everything

So, talk to the Holy Spirit.

Ask for the strength to love authentically. Ask for help in sweeping away any anger that is within you.

### Wrapping Up

It's time.

# Wednesday

## Week 12 – Day 3

### Morning Prayer

Theme: Ask God for healing of our living communities

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### Evening Prayer

Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit

### The Holy Spirit As The Source of Love

Being loving instead of angry is, of course, a choice. But this choice takes openheartedness and courage. Anger is a powerful emotion that attaches to our thinking. When you make a conscious choice to be loving, you will begin reorganizing your thinking and your actions in ways that are consistent with your decision to change.

Consider this. What will the decision to be loving require of your thinking when your children or your parents or your partner get on your last nerve?

How will you behave when faced with a big disappointment? What about the time when an unkind word slips out? Will you be able to say within yourself to the person who hurt you most – “I love you.” “I forgive you and I bless you?”

Patience, kindness, gentleness – these are among the greatest virtues that authenticate love. Sometimes they are treated as though they are signs of weakness. Not so. Their expression requires character. To turn around and love someone today who made you angry in the past – that takes great strength.

So, do this. List the name of someone who makes you angry. Then, make a list of his or her good qualities. Everyone has good qualities. Say a prayer of gratitude for those good qualities.

For the next week, twice a day, repeat the prayer. This is helpful in reducing misunderstanding and hostility through softening your heart. Thereby you will treat and respond to that person positively and with generosity of spirit.

### Wrapping Up

It's time.

# Thursday

## Week 12 – Day 4

### Morning Prayer

Theme: Ask God for healing of our nation

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### Evening Prayer

Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit

### The Holy Spirit As The Source of Love

There's no fun in holding grudges. The longer you hold on to anger, the more it hardens your heart. Bitterness limits you, reduces your energy and your happiness. When you give up feelings of resentment, you gain Inner Peace. Loving is essential to your own spiritual health.

When you make the choice to love without condition, you feel closer to the people in your world and there is less stress and tension in your life. Thereby you are living on Higher Ground.

Love is a magnet. Love attracts the best of everything. It attracts the most positive relationships, because people are drawn to your non-judging attitude. They feel comfortable with you, with being in your space.

Discovering the nature and power of love will spell the end of anger, of resentment, of bitterness. This must become your life's work, your purpose. Thus, you will grow in your understanding of what Jesus was talking about – of loving your neighbor as yourself.

So, don't wait for love. You are love. And, loving gives you wings. So, fly.

### Wrapping Up

It's time.

# Friday

## Week 12 – Day 5

### Morning Prayer

**Theme: Ask God for healing of the world**

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### Evening Prayer

**Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit**

#### **The Holy Spirit As The Source of Love**

Loving is letting go. When we love we don't need to judge, to editorialize, to control. Thus, we let go of our demands on others and ask what we may do for them.

When we live lovingly, we encourage our partners to be themselves, to grow, and to develop in their own time and in their own unique way.

Self-realization without regard to the needs of your partner is the way of the world. Genuine intimacy based on shared beliefs brings forth the greatest opportunities for self-discovery and personal growth.

To increase your happiness and the quality of your relationships and to discover what you need to change, you must be honest in examining your behavior, your emotions, and your feelings.

Are you giving what you want to receive?  
Are you selling yourself short in this crucial area?

The answers lie within.

You need only listen to the still small voice to discover the answers. Then, begin making positive changes, moment by moment.

The spiritual purpose of a partnership is to break down the walls of Resistance between us, through sharing and accepting one another. It's a great adventure, this finding oneness with God through a journey of self-revelation – together – soul to soul. Any other way is unthinkable.

### Wrapping Up

It's time.

# Saturday Eating Realities

Week 12

Read [Smart Moves](#) 23-47

# Saturday's Message

## Week 12

### "Retreat To Power"

#### Luke 5:12-16

When I was a boy growing up in the little town of Catawba, North Carolina, our pastor at Catawba Baptist Church for ten (10) years was Rev. A.R. Waters. The parsonage was across number ten (10) highway from our house. The Waters children were some of my best friends. We frequently visited each other and spent a great deal of time together. I have many precious memories of the relationships developed with Mr. Waters and his family. I remember watching as Mr. Waters would pick up his Bible in one hand and a small stool in the other hand and quietly make his way into the woods behind the parsonage. Several hours later he would return to the house, not looking tired or troubled but appearing refreshed and strengthened. As I got a little older, it became obvious to me that Mr. Waters was out there in the woods alone praying and studying God's Word. Mr. Waters was "retreating to power."

Mr. Waters had a great example for his experiences of retreating to power. The Gospel records make it clear that Jesus Christ, during the course of His earthly ministry, had a number of experiences when He retreated to power. Many times Jesus would slip away from the crowds and pray. One such experience is described in Luke 5:16 which says: "Jesus withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed."

A study of the retreats in the life of Jesus reveals several truths.

1. When did Jesus retreat? He often retreated when He had major decisions to make. Our Lord's temptation experience as recorded in Matthew 4:1-11 is one example of this truth. After His baptism experience, Jesus' Messiahship had been confirmed by God, the Father, who said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now the question facing Jesus was what kind of Messiah does God want me to be? The people of that day had several different concepts of the Messiah which are reflected in the temptations which Jesus faced out there in the wilderness. As He retreated, Jesus rejected them all and decided that God wanted Him to be a spiritual Messiah. In making this decision, Jesus got away from the crowds and got alone with God.

2. What did the retreats mean to Jesus? A list of benefits could no doubt be made but at least two (2) truths are clear.
  1. Jesus received the knowledge to know God's will. That was certainly a truth revealed in the temptation experience already discussed. Jesus worked through those temptations by the devil and obtained the knowledge to know God's will. He left that wilderness knowing that God wanted Him to be a spiritual Messiah.
  2. During those retreats, Jesus was blessed with the courage and the power to do God's will. In His soul-searching Garden of Gethsemane experience as recorded in Matthew 26:36-46 Jesus found the courage to do the will of God and go on to face the agonizing death on the cross. After His earnest praying there in the garden, Jesus came to His sleeping disciples and said: "Rise, let us be going . . ." and then made His way to the cross utilizing the courage which God gave Him.

In all of this, there is a tremendous challenge for all the people of God in our day. We need to retreat to power. Like Jesus, our great example, we need:

The knowledge to know God's will;

The courage to do God's will;

The divine power to do God's work even as Jesus did.

In today's world, there is so much spiritual work to be done. In our preparation to do that great work, let the people of God "retreat to power." Amen – May It Be So

Reverend Phillip R. Morrow Sr.