

### Pre-Announcement-

Hey all, the end of the third quarter is just past and we are always committed to giving an update on finances on a quarterly basis. We did well through August with just shy of 100% of budget and expenses and budget marching together pretty close. August and September have been tough months, though. Giving has dropped by about \$100K per month. Attendance is up, so we are not sure on all of the reasons why. So, if you were wondering – does CCC need my giving, the answer is always yes and especially at this time. If you are a CCC regular, and have never started your giving journey, you can do so in the black boxes in the back or on the App- CCCOmaha.info.

### Video of gym

Is it possible to live without anger? Critical to being unoffendable. Now, we planned this series about a year ago with the thought that we live in a super offended culture. Let me shoot four factors that have driven this in the last decade.

- 1) Social Media -allow us to comment on stuff without being face to face with a person. We say things there we would never say to a human being.
- 2) 24 hour news – divided by party or philosophy, dedicated to the proposition that everyone who disagrees is an idiot – and persuading us of the same
- 3) A divided political climate – where parties feel self-justified in grabbing for power and threatened if the other team is gaining ground
- 4) A climate in academia that actively teaches students to be offended with new terms like ‘microaggressions’ and ‘safe zones’ that overly sensitize a whole generation to being offendable

This is true for rich and poor, black and white, conservative and liberal. And we considered waiting for election season to pitch this message, but decided that we all need about a year of practicing before things get too hot. You with me?

### Anger

Now a huge subplot of being unoffendable is ANGER. If you are an angry person or anger is boiling beneath the surface, then being offendable will be second nature to you. Proverbs says:

**Proverbs 14:16-17 – A wise man fears the LORD and shuns evil, but a fool is hotheaded and reckless. A quick tempered man does foolish things and a crafty man is hated.**

I was praying through these messages a few weeks ago and thought “it is going to be pretty hard for me to think of... personal examples of being angry. Cuz ya know, I have a pretty long wick and generally, people don’t see me get angry. Ask my staff, my wife, my kids....

And then I started paying attention. – Me 4x in four weeks. I even lost my cool with 80 year olds! Twice! In one day!

The incompetence of “Customer Service.” And a fender bender – that was my fault!

If you look at the Bible – Even old testament books like Leviticus or Exodus and ask what words are associated with anger, you will find Genesis -Burn, blazing, Leviticus - fierce, boiling, rage, Full vent, Psalms - hostility, balled up fist, scarred, wrath and sin. It is not a pretty picture.

“In your anger do not sin”<sup>[a]</sup>: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,<sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold.

Ephesians 4:26, 31

Now Paul, the author of Ephesians is really clear about anger. He does not position anger AS the sin. In fact Anger is an emotion that is non-moral. It is biological and placed in us for a a purpose, But points out that anger and sin go hand in hand. Like Cookies n Milk, Phineas and Ferb, like Copy n paste.

You just don’t’ get anger followed by kind words, self control or righteousness!

Proverbs 30:33 – For as churning the milk produces butter and as twisting the nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces strife

Pretty graphic. And totally true. There is a direct correlation between anger and strife. That is why Paul says:

<sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. –

Paul says “GET RID OF IT!” The anger, the rage, the brawling, slander, bitterness and every form of malice.... It’s like he has had middle school kids “Ummm I’ll get rid of rage, but do I have to get rid of malice?” No, like everything. If chariots moved faster in Paul’s day, he would even put road rage on the list.

- When we moved from Chicago, we moved from the land of road rage. Things are different in Omaha. In Omaha, a traffic jam makes you three minutes late. In Chicago, three hours late. In Omaha, a red light means stop. In Chicago, it means “three more cars”. In Chicago, you merge where the lanes merge. In Omaha, you merge as far as possible ahead of the merge when you see the merge coming. So, when we arrived in Omaha, I was like sweet... I can just blow by this traffic and zipper like a zipper. And I discovered a hand signal... that is universal in Chicago and Omaha, the signal for “go ahead, I don’t mind.”

Is anybody mad at me yet? Cuz I am “that guy” – the Chicago driver in Nebraska. The idiot .Adn the crazy thing is you feel justified in your anger. Are you a road rager? 66% of traffic fatalities are caused by aggressive driving. Often due to road rage.

But w

the way I was driving was perfectly acceptable and everybody else is angry! Can I make a horrible confession today? I am so self righteous. Really. Just thinking that ‘anger is no longer an issue for me.’ I am totally self deceived. And this is just the way of the human heart. We have the proclivity to blow up others flaws without knowing their intentions. At the same time we minimize our flaws and take into account our good intentions. It makes us self-righteous.

We think our anger is justified because “that guy” cut me off. “That guy” in customer service should just solve the problem. “That guy” should know better. “That guy” was being irrational. “That guy” is an idiot.

Am I the only one here or are there other human beings in the room?

Crazy how we justify our anger. We say to ourselves “Jesus got angry. He flipped over tables a couple of times! He said “ whoever abuses children – it is better for them to have a millstone put around their neck and be thrown into the sea. Think he was angry about child abuse?” God was angry with Israel. Jesus is righteous and God is righteous. Therefore, My anger is righteous.

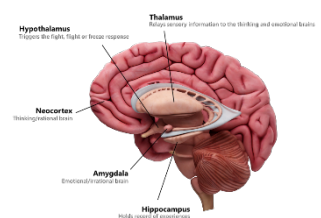
Problem: You are not Jesus. Your “Righteous” anger is not like God’s. Can I tell you how you are not like Jesus? Do we need to have this talk?

- You are not righteous. Nobody is righteous. Not only are we all stained by sin, but our perspective on our own anger and righteousness is skewed by isn as well. We self justify, explain away and always think we are right and they are an idiot. And the other guy thinks the same about you. Jesus is perfect – no sin, no stain, no self justification.
- Jesus wasn’t angry about personal stuff. Like getting cut off in traffic, or someone’s politics, or moronic customer service. Jesus anger was about taking up the space in the temple set aside to reach gentiles for personal profit. It was toward child abusers and abuse of the poor. Is that you?
- We don’t have a good perspective on our own righteousness. Especially when we are angry! Guys, when you are comparing to Jesus – who is perfectly righteous, all the time... to me who is imperfectly righteous some of the time and has a tendency to self-justify... and knows that Anger and sin go hand in hand... **Proverbs 29:22 – An angry man stirs up dissention and a hot tempered one commits many sins**

For many people, anger is a cover up. Strangely, it is the “more acceptable emotion.” Often, people get angry when they feel powerless. When they are not in control. Somebody gossips about you tarnishing your chances for promotion at work. A politician drives up inflation costing you more at the pump and the grocery store. When you have a toddler, they teach you that you cannot control your own children. Instead of feeling powerless, we get angry and cause damage to people all around us – powering up to feel like we are in control or cause people to fear crossing us. And we accelerate the damage.

### Anger as a physiological response – so, what happens when a person gets angry?

- **Amygdala hijack** – Term by Daniel Goleman in “Emotional Intelligence”
  - Goal: Respond to threats and protect us from danger – a lion is chasing you or a bad guy is at the door.
  - AKA Fight/Flight response
  - Logic is overridden by emotion. Action before reason... bad idea.



And in your body, your pupils dilate, your heart races, your body dumps cortisol into your bloodstream which makes you think faster, adrenaline makes you run faster or punch harder – at least for a few seconds. Your immune system and digestive system shut down and your bowels remove any excess weight from the body so you can run faster.

- Now, when you are angry, these things happen over and over again. You get fight or flight way too much. And it degrades your body. In his book, Brant refers to another book called “Why Zebras don’t get Ulcers.” And he points out that fight or flight in the animal kingdom only happens when there is a REAL threat. Antelopes don’t make up reasons to be angry or anxious.

### Long term effects on the Body – Can we do a diagram of the body with these things and an arrow to the body part? Emerging?

- Anxiety
- Headaches – Angry people have a 50% higher likelihood of stroke
- Heart Disease – Heart attacks are 5X more likely within 2 ours of an anger episode
- Chronic pain
- Digestive issues
- Zits
- Not only this, but Angry people also have higher rates of
  - Smoking, emotional eating, drinking,
  - Heard you are 5x more likely to be injured on job when angry

### Stopping the Amygdala Hijack – when you can identify it is coming. Before you hit peak rage and the Amygdala is in full swing...

- Logic – If you can swing it at the time, try logic. When you feel the swells coming on, the irritation before the hijack, ask yourself a question. “Will this matter in five years? Five months? Five days?” If the answer is no, it isn’t worth an angry moment.
- Wait... It is amazing was ten deep breaths will do for your emotional trajectory. Don’t say the words, don’t make the response, don’t fly off the handle... just breathe. Then make the real decision. Say “I can feel myself getting angry. Can I take a break?” and then just walk away. The literature on anger shows that 20 minutes is about the time it takes for your body to flush out the adrenaline and cortisol. Then you can come back and speak rationally and gently. Proverbs 15:1 – A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
- Prayer – In that 20 minutes, pray. Ask God to give you wisdom and peace. Ask God to help you to respond with kindness. If you cant think of anything, try thanking God for the good things in your life. Ever notice how it is impossible to be BOTH grateful and angry at the same time?
  - In our first year of marriage, Kelle and I were having an argument. I was feeling myself getting angry. “What are these strange things that this woman is saying to me? I am confused and headed toward popping!” I put this principle into practice and removed myself to the bedroom for 20 minutes to pray. It definitely helped – of Course kelle is saying “great... now he’ll never speak to me again and we are Christians and we can’t be divorced, so we’ll live in misery forever.” But I did come out of the room, we talked it out with cooler heads and I don’t even remember the argument. But I remember hugging Kelle in the kitchen and being grateful I didn’t say something I’d regret.

- **Identify triggers** – Once your argument is done, think about what is it that made me angry? What are the triggers that are at work inside of me? Do they have anything to do with THIS moment or are they actually protecting me from an abuser in my past, or my PTSD from war, or family of origin? Once you identify your triggers, you can see your anger coming further down the lane and use the logic before your Amygdala takes over.

James 1:19– **My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry**

**Quiz: Do I have an anger problem?** – Are you among the 20% for whom anger is more than just a passing emotion

**Do you find yourself getting angry more than others around you?**

**Does your anger lead to shouting or yelling?**

**Do you use foul language or call people names in your anger?**

**Had your anger ever led to physical aggression or violence?**

**Do you have a consistent sense of low-grade anger?**

**Have friends or family expressed concern about your anger/aggression?**

**Is your anger negatively affecting your relationships or quality of life?**

If you said yes to any two of these, you probably are in the second category of explosive anger. You need to change your life. You may need a book or counseling, but this is a real problem for you and it is going to wreck your life, your marriage, your job, your body and your kids if you don't change.

**Proverbs 29:11 – A fool give full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps it under control**

And friends, I want you to know that if anger is a tough struggle for you, we have three resources I want to highlight that might help.

- Our Marriage Matters class meets Sundays at 9. It is a winsome group where all ages are welcome and everybody is working on having a triumphant marriage. You can just show up at 9 or go to our Marriage Assessment on CComaha.info to take a marriage test and find out all of the details of this class.
- If your anger issues are on high alert and out of control, there may be a spiritual issue behind your anger. We think that the spiritual battle and demonic powers are real and they love angry outbursts and sin. On November 2-4, we are having a conference that features Rob Reimer, a deliverance specialist, who will help unpack the spiritual realm of Soul Care and demonic influence and offer deliverance for those who need it.
- CityCare counseling is available to help people work through trauma, PTSD, and family of origin issues that may contribute to deep seeded anger. We'd encourage you to dip into that for help.

**Righteous Anger vs. Our anger**

- We love our self-righteousness – we cling to anger – story about **Justice and garbage p. 83** – WE love the idea that even when we are boiling, burning, raging and yelling that somehow IT is good and we are good as well.
- But God has a totally different way to live. He has a dream for us that is so far from self-justifying self-righteousness that it just looks like an alien force. Well, that's because it is an alien force. It is the Holy Spirit of God that lives inside of you and makes you different.
- But the fruit of the spirit is love, Joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. Does that look like anger?
  - God's plan is that you live a life of gratitude – have you ever noticed that Gratitude and Anger cannot coexist?
  - God just wants you to hand over the garbage....

### **Music Time!**

#### **Good News**

I want to end the message not with condemnation or finger pointing, but with some pieces of Good news that frame up this whole conversation.

- Good news 1 – If you are an angry person, God loves you. He wants you to draw close to him and hear his voice speak truth to your soul
- Good news 2 – If you have sinned in your anger, Jesus died for that sin. And the million other sins you have committed. There is now **NO CONDEMNATION** for those who are in Jesus. If you trust in Jesus death and resurrection, you approach the throne of God with confidence, knowing that the righteousness of Jesus is transferred to your account and God welcomes you.
- Good news 3 – God gifts you the Holy Spirit to live his life through you and give you supernatural power to say yes to patience, goodness, kindness, self control. And he gives you the body to help you be in community, get counseling or get deliverance to take you to a new level.

Friends, lets stand and ask God to make us a people who are unoffendable and stand out like a sore thumb in a culture that loves to be offended.