



# SEVEN DEADLY SINS

## SEVEN DEADLY SINS: WRATH

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Jonah 4:1-11

Doxa Church is taking a look at the seven deadly sins commonly brushed off and rarely considered for our own lives. Each sin presents a unique sickness in our hearts that can only be remedied by Jesus and a battle only winnable through the spirit's empowerment. Join us for this eight week series on these deadly sins and their antidotes found in Christ. Visit [doxa-church.com](http://doxa-church.com) for service times or more info on how we make disciples in the everyday stuff of life.

Reading out of the book of Jonah, chapter four verses one through 11, but it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry and he prayed to the Lord and said, Oh Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country. That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish for I knew that you were a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and relenting from disaster. Therefore now, oh Lord, please take my life from me. For it is better for me to die than to live. And the Lord said, Do you do well? To be angry, Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself. There he sat under it in the shade till he should see what would become of the city. Now the Lord God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah that it might be shade over his head to save him from his discomfort.

So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant, but when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant so that it withered when the sun rose. God appointed a scorching east wind and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, It is better for me to die than to live. But God said to Jonah, Do you do well to be angry for the plant? And he said, Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die. And the Lord said, You pity the plant for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night and should not. I pity Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left. And also much cattle? This is the word of the Lord. You can be seated.

Good morning Doxa. How are we? Uh, you might be sitting there right now thinking to yourself, why was the scripture reading today from the book of Jonah? I thought we were in the seven deadly Sin series and uh, for you Jonah, maybe a Sunday school lesson that you remember from

growing up in the church. Uh, but it's actually an incredibly helpful text for us to walk through together and for us to talk about as we talk about the deadly sin of wrath. This is, uh, part three in our Deadly Sins series. Uh, two weeks ago we talked about greed. Last week we talked about envy. And this week we'll look at the sin of wrath or anger. We'll talk about how God's anger and wrath works and then also how Jonah's anger and wrath actually strained his relationship between he and God and almost killed him.

So if you wanna talk about anger from the Bible, Jonah is a good place as any to drop in. I think we have a lot to learn here in this text. Let me give you some context for the book of Jonah. Okay? I'm gonna give you the entirety of the book of Jonah in 60 seconds. You ready? Somebody time me. You guys out there? Yeah. Okay, love it. Nineveh was a massive city, absolutely massive. It's a capital city. It took three days to travel from one side to the other on foot and it was absolutely jam packed full of sin, opportunities for all kinds of sin and known for its sin. Think Las Vegas meets Detroit meets Tijuana meets Burning Man. Okay, this is a dark, dark place. I'm sorry if anybody here is from Detroit, uh, God says to Jonah, I want you to go there and I want you to tell them to repent. Jonah says, No thank you. Buys a boat ticket and goes the opposite direction. God sends a storm. The guys on the boat figure out the storm is Jonah's fault. Jonah says, Go ahead and throw me overboard. The people on the boat all become believers. Jonah gets swallowed by a big fish, Jonah, prays for mercy in the belly of the fish, the fish spits him out on the beach guess near Nineveh, right? Jonah is then grumbling hikes a day into the city and preaches the worst sermon you've ever heard in your entire life. Word spreads the entire city repents. Even the king who the day before was enjoying being the king of burning man. And then God sees the turnaround and says, You know what? Nineveh can stay. And Jonah is furious, absolutely furious, so mad that multiple times he says this phrase, Please, I would rather die. I'd rather be dead than watch this.

So open up your Bibles or your Bible apps to Jonah four, we're gonna look at this first verse together, chapter four, verse one says, But it displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry. So why is Jonah mad? Well, because he hated Nineveh and the Ninevites, again, Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, a massive, uh, powerhouse of an empire at the time. They were the mortal enemy of Israel, the bane of the ancient world because they were phenomenally powerful, but they were also phenomenally ruthless. We're talking war crimes, genocide and we're, uh, crushing entire countries, making whole people groups disappear. I want us to kind of think about over the course of human history, what are the kinds of nations that have done these sort of things? This was Nineveh. So why is Jonah mad? Well, because Ninevite grandparents were the type that would've murdered his grandparents in the street.

I think sometimes Jonah gets painted as this like rebellious, lazy prophet that just tried to run away from God because he didn't wanna do what God told him to do and we don't fully understand. He had good reason to want to put as many miles between him and Nineveh as he possibly could. Mercy was not the ending that he wanted. And the Bible says that the mercy of God displeased Jonah. You see, Jonah had wrath and it was vindictive and hateful. And the truth is what he wanted was to play God. He wanted to make final judgment and watch Nineveh burn to the ground. And the truth is, if we're honest, I think that there's some of that in us. So let me pray for us as we head into this.

Jesus recognize that we need you. I thank you for the people of Doxa. I thank you for this series. We want to be attentive to the ways that sin works, to the places that it hides and to the specific

and particular ways that you heal, you restore, and that you are ultimately the antidote that we need and require every single day to help us see these things. Clearly, we pray these things for your glory. Amen.

All right, I'm gonna give you a map for where we're going today. Essentially we're getting after four questions. Question number one, what is wrath? Question number two? Who has it? Question number three, what do we need to know about wrath? And question number four, what is the antidote? So this first question, what is wrath right out of the gates? We've got a little work to do on the idea of wrath because unlike most of the other deadly sins, the Bible says that God has wrath.

So let's stop for a second. Seven deadly sins and God has one of them. Now we know it's the redeemed version, right? Because God is without sin. First John three:five, you know that he appeared to take away sins and there was no sin in him. So we're defining wrath this morning like this. Wrath is vengeful anger or indignant punishment for an offense. And this word indignant is important because in the definition of indignant, it says fueling or showing anger or annoyance at what is perceived as unfair treatment. That word perceived is gonna come back over and over again. So I want us to remember that. So again, wrath is vengeful anger or indignant punishment for an offense. Now the perfect form of wrath and there is such a thing, is when someone with complete understanding delivers just punishment for crimes committed. So if wrath requires complete understanding, there's only one person who's fit for that and it's not us, it's reserved for the only one who has complete understanding.

And who is that? Jesus. That's correct. The sin of wrath is when we have misplaced or uninformed anger toward a person, a circumstance or even God himself, an attempt to play God. So wrath and anger are similar but they are not the same. And wrath is not ours for the taking. There's no good version of us having wrath because it requires something that only God has and it's only pure and a good thing when it's coming from God. Anger on the other hand, there's a version of that that is actually good Anger can be justified at times. Do we know this? We know Jesus got angry, right? I think we're comfortable and okay with the times when he got angry. Maybe you were raised to think that all anger is sin or your family honestly avoided those feelings altogether. Or you only ever knew the destructive and self-centered version of anger.

But I want us to pause and recognize that there is a redeemed version of anger and we wanna pay attention to that. We'll come back to it later. So Jonah, he's angry, he's full of wrath because he thinks that God is making a mistake as he shows mercy. It's worth noting that Jonah prayed for them to be shown no mercy, but then also prayed for mercy in the fish for himself when he directly disobeyed God. I think maybe that's us. Sometimes Jonah had wrath because his anger was misplaced and uninformed. And that's just like us, like Jonah. Our anger is often misplaced, angry when we shouldn't be. And other times we're not angry when something is happening that Jesus has anger for. So let's talk about now question number two. Who has it? Who has anger and wrath? Well, most if not all of us.

And you might say, Well how can you say that people cut me off. I just wave and say God bless you. I don't have an anger problem. Right? But there are really two sides to this anger coin and I wanna talk about both sides throughout our time together. Side one, we're gonna call the "anger carried" crowd. It's those of us that at times let anger consume us. For us, anger is something that we've carried. The anger and punishment we dole out sometimes gets really big. We have a hair

trigger those around us know when and how to tread lightly. At times it may be explosive or loud. And anger in your life is able to feast because life is full of opportunities to feed it. The other side of the coin--we talked about anger carried--is the "anger buried" crowd. And for us, anger is something that we've buried down.

You know our punishment, our anger may from the outside appear very small, but inside we are wound so, so tight because we have mastered the art of carrying deep frustration in our chest while wearing a smile on our face. Our anger is quiet and seething and anger in your life is actually suffering from famine because you have starved it every time it begins to rise up. It never has a chance to show itself in healthy ways. It's suppressed and suffocated. So two sides to anger, anger carried, anger buried. And I would bet that most of us here, I'm not saying every day, but from time to time we find ourselves one of these two camps, maybe even both. So here's some of the clinical signs. You have an unhealthy relationship with anger in your life. And I'll be honest, some of these things are probably not things you would immediately think of.

Uh, psychologists and counselors work with people who are in treatment for anger. There's consistent things that show up over and over and over again for the anger carried people, uh, gossiping about others, those who enjoy retelling the failures of others. I think that's a big one for us. In a competitive workplace environment like the east side, swearing a lot, being a perfectionist, turning most of your conversations into debates and assuming that others are against you, these are all traits of our anger carried people.

Anger buried people. You allow others to hurt you or your children with their anger. You are afraid to express your anger. You find sneaky ways of getting back at people instead of expressing your anger directly. That's a big one. And your way of expressing anger leaves you feeling helpless and powerless. So if any of this sounds familiar for you, maybe again on occasion it's likely that there's some work Jesus wants to do in you today as we talk about this.

I think most of you already know the anger carried side matters because nobody likes being around someone who explodes over nothing. But the anger buried side matters too. I think it matters because some of us need to desperately access our anger so that we can actually be free of resentment we've carried for years. Some of us need to access our anger because until it's known, we ourselves are not fully known. And church, if you're not fully known, it's really hard to receive love from others or even from God. And lastly, I think we need to access our anger because we're gonna be able to show up in life and actually receive these things from others. So that's us. What about him? What about God? Does God actually have anger and wrath? Well the Bible teaches that regardless of whether you call yourself a Christian or not, you may be here this morning and just say, I'm investigating Jesus.

And we love that. Thank you for being with us this morning. You need to know, we believe that all of us are made in the image of God and that that God has emotions. I know particularly, particularly for the reform camp, we like to think of God as a very calculated and thoughtful and logical ruler over all things. But God has lots of emotion and he doesn't sin. He does not sin. So can you have a loving God that doesn't have anger or wrath? And my answer and our official answer at Doxa is no, because God's wrath is what Tim Keller calls his settled opposition to evil. To the degree that we love something, we are capable of feeling anger over its harm or mistreatment. And to be honest, that's something that we actually want in God. Not that it's up to us to decide.

Please like let me be clear, God is who he is regardless of how we feel about it. But aren't you ultimately glad that God opposes evil? This is a good thing. This excerpt is taken from a Tim Keller sermon from 1992 addressing this very question. He says, There are a lot of people who struggle mightily with this whole whole idea. They say, If God is a God of love, then he can't send people to hell. If God is a God of judgment, he can't possibly be a god of love. We cannot reconcile the two things. And yet the Bible insists that not only is God a God of both love and wrath, not only do those two things not conflict with each other, they actually establish each other. One without the other is meaningless.

So God cannot be good and create life and then ignore the damage done to the very life that he has created. You see, love and wrath work together. Love drives his wrath in many ways. And wrath is at least in part his love carried out. In fact, if you're never angry about anything, I would suggest that you don't truly love anything. And the opposite of love isn't anger. It's actually hate, which usually leads to indifference. And that is the ultimate expression of hate. Doxa, God is never indifferent. God is never indifferent. He's not indifferent to your suffering. He is not indifferent to whatever hard thing you are walking through right now. God is never indifferent. His love won't allow it. And anger in its original and purest design is actually a part of his love in motion. Now interestingly, some want to disagree or try to disprove what Bible believing Christians have held onto and agreed on for generations either because of what culture says about God's wrath or because of what their own preferences say.

And I will be first in line to say, uh, nobody loves thinking about it, right? Nobody loves that. It's weird if you love thinking about it. But the irony is that in light of their perceived and that word matters, perceived injustice, they perceive that if God is a God of wrath, that that is unjust. What do they do? They have a wrath for the people who feel that way. They have wrath for the people who disagree with them. Do you guys see the the uh, the irony here because to them and their inadequate and broken sense of justice, God's wrath feels unjust. So they would say that fighting for justice in for example, a social cause is what love looks like. But then turn around and say, if there's a God who sees all the injustice in the world, he can't have wrath. And that argument just falls apart for me.

It falls apart because I believe that God is aware and God sees us and that God cares about the ways in which we have harmed each other. Here's what I'm saying. People unknowingly exemplify the wrath of God when they wrathfully object to perceived injustice from him. And why do they do that? Because we're made in the image of God, the imago dei. God does wrath. He does it holy. He does it perfect. He does it with precision and wisdom. But we still feel that in us because we are a distorted reflection of an emotional God. And somebody messes with or jacks with something you love, you generally feel anger. And if we're not careful that anger turns to wrath. And some of our struggle in thinking about wrath for God is that we are limited to thinking about it from human terms. God is not like us, church. When we speak of God being like a shepherd or like a father, we do not mean he's exactly like the shepherds and the fathers that we have known in this life. Similarly, when we say that God is a God of wrath, we cannot mean that his wrath looks like ours. Why? Because our wrath is temperamental. Our wrath is uncontrolled. It usually leads to regret it's pride and ego driven. Most of the time

God does not have a hot temper. He has a settled opposition to evil. So let's move on to our next question. What do we need to know about wrath? And I'll just say right up front, I'm borrowing heavily from Tim Keller's work on this. I'm gonna add another category for us to stay consistent

with the ways in which we've talked about the seven deadly sins. Number one, anger has dangerous power that can disintegrate relationships, your body and physical property. On the relationship side. Uh, Jay Groves, he's done excellent work on the topic of the gospel and our emotions and particularly around anger. He's a director of CCEF's school of biblical counseling. And he says this, I think it's uh, very, very painfully true. Those who live in a regular state of anger feel morally superior and punish those who disagree driving people away until the angry person stands alone at the center of a relational circle of scorched earth. Anger is dangerous to relationships, anger is dangerous to the body. If you regularly deal with anger, you can suffer from hypertension, digestive issues, high blood pressure, stress, headaches, weight gain, it knocks your immune system down. Your lung capacity is diminished. I didn't know that You're at higher stroke risk and it interrupts your sleep. Anger is dangerous for the body. Nobody is safe when anger goes sideways. And just to zoom out a little bit, think about this, the very moment that God became vulnerable, We took our wrath and our anger and we killed him. Anger has dangerous power.

Number two on things we need to know about anger. Anger has basic goodness. We've talked about this a bit for God, but holy Christian living means being slow to anger, not never feeling anger. Ephesians five, Paul says, Be angry but sin not. Interestingly in the story of Jonah, God doesn't actually correct or rebuke Jonah for his anger. He asks some questions, but He doesn't ultimately condemn it.

So then why does it go wrong? Why does anger go wrong? Augustine says that anger goes wrong because of disordered loves. And this is a really, really crucial concept. I think if you're somebody in this room, right, who feels like from time to time, anger is a really, really tough thing, I want you to pay attention to this. He says anger goes wrong because of disordered loves. This is why sometimes we are a hundred times more upset about something that's inconvenience than we are about an actual justice issue. If we rage over inconvenience, I'm telling you it's probably not the spirit. That's probably the flesh on this question of why anger goes wrong. Jay Groves again says that anger goes wrong because it wants results fast and offers the intoxicating experience of playing God.

This is why anger goes wrong. Lastly, where does anger hide? Uh, I'll give you three places I believe it hides. It hides in our incomplete perspective. We just like Jonah, assume that we have the full picture. We assume that because our emotions are so intense that we probably understand the full story. We have enough perspective to justify our wrath. Anger that looks justified to us might just be misplaced. And because of our nature, we often don't see clearly or see the full story, in which case we might feel differently. Number two, anger hides in our disappointment. And this is Jonah, right? You heard it in the very beginning of today's scripture reading. He says, I knew you were gracious God, a merciful slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. This is so funny that he's complaining about God's kindness. Are we catching this?

I knew it. I knew you were awesome and merciful. Therefore now Lord, please take my life from me. For it is better for me to die than to live things were not going the way Jonah wanted. He wanted them to pay. And I'll be honest in the historical context, I have more compassion for Jonah today than I did a month ago. It seems justified. But why does Jonah care? What does he care about the most here? Is it God's justice? Is it ultimately what he's after? It's interesting. In the original Hebrew, he uses I, me and my nine times in this short little passage. What was Jonah concerned about? Yeah, Jonah was concerned about Jonah. And we can get into a place that

honestly looks really, really similar. So, uh, anger and wrath hide in our incomplete perspective. It hides in our disappointment. Lastly, it hides in our wounds. And this one is a tricky one. Anger is often a cover for sadness and wounding. Anger is often a cover for sadness and wounding. Some of you you've got these huge wounds in your story, massive, massive damage relationally, and you've never faced or dealt with any of it. And anger continues to spill out of you even when things that aren't even that big of a deal. And if you show me the angriest person you know in your life, I will show you somebody that is deeply wounded.

So then what is the antidote for sinful anger? This is where it hides. Let's talk about the antidote. I believe the antidote to sinful anger is Jesus. But I wanna give it one degree more practicality for us so that we can really grasp this. I believe we seek healing of wounds and we repent of sin so that we can offer mercy. Or to put it another way, we seek healing of wounds by Jesus and we repent of sin to Jesus so that we can offer mercy through Jesus. Start with this first part. We seek healing of wounds. Uh, there is this trend that I have seen in the last year or so where folks, uh, in Christian circles and even a couple of pastors that I think you probably would all know if I said their names. They have pushed back and publicly mocked, uh, millennials and Gen Z and these generations that are spending the time to look back over their family story to understand how they basically have ended up in patterns of sin.

Now, I will be the first to say that we are responsible. Every man, woman, and child in this room is personally responsible for the sin that they participate in. We don't, we don't get to blame anybody else, but let me say this, the best way to 100% guarantee that you will repeat the stupidity and the sins of the generation before you is to pretend as though your upbringing did not teach you anything about emotions that is foolish and dangerous. I give these critics as much grace as I can muster. I think they're trying to prevent an entire generation from blaming mommy and daddy for their sins. I can get behind that. But if you were angry today and your dad was angry and your dad's dad was angry and your dad's dad was angry, it's possible that as a result of the fall, there's been some kind of exchange or transfer along the way.

And whether by nature or nurture, we have found ourselves with a particular set of challenges, a particular need for the Savior to heal and to burn away the things in us that do not look like him. And here's the hardest thing I'll say today. It's not that God's wrath and love are inseparable, it's not even that if you give full vent to your anger consistently, you can destroy your life in every meaningful way. The hardest thing I will say to you today is that for most of us praying, a prayer does not remove the deep wounds that we carry, that give birth to our anger. For most of us, I've seen it happen. For most of us, that is not our experience. The antidote is Jesus. But if you want to experience the healing of wounds, you're gonna have to do some work, some emotional work, some relational work.

You're likely gonna need somebody who can facilitate that healing from Jesus. Some of us that looks like counseling or biblical therapy or support group, whatever it takes to chase it down. And it might require that you actually look back over your shoulder and consider the ways and the environment in which you grew up, the ways that you were raised, the things you saw modeled for you. And if you do that, you will likely also probably discover that you've done some damage along the way yourself. And that's why we go to this next part. We repent of sin. Now I wanna be clear, we're repenting of the sinful and harmful stuff that we've done in the name of anger or wrath, not necessarily anger itself.

You ever go grocery shopping with your kids? You ever look down in the cart and say, Man, I have no memory of putting triple chocolate pirate puffs in there. Where did these 17 ring pops come from? Anyone? Parents, I think some of us had some holy anger in us because we were sinned against in significant ways. And from the time we picked up anger to the time that we checked out, we picked up pettiness, vindictiveness, self-righteousness, wrath, all of that jumped in the cart as well. And so one of the hardest part about repenting of anger is we're gonna have to sort through the parts that are there and they're justified and holy. And then there's parts that we added in there that are not of the Lord. So we have to muster the courage to ask those closest to us if they feel like our anger is holy or harmful, maybe our intensity keeps them from feeling safe.

To be honest, and I'll tell you this, if you're the kind of person who struggles with anger, admitting this weakness is an act of vulnerability. And most of us started off down the anger trail in the first place because we use it to protect ourselves. But here's the thing, you're gonna need that vulnerability. You're gonna need it. There's not a way forward without it. Lastly, repentance is not just regretting our sin or even naming it, but actually choosing to live differently. So if Augustine is right and anger goes wrong because of disordered loves, then repentance is probably going to mean reordering your loves. Otherwise, the cycle repeats and small things become big things become huge things. I love Keller's language for this. He says roots become shoots, become trees, become forests.

He pleads with us to work on our spiritual and emotional health because roots become shoots, become trees become forests. Now at Doxa, this is most likely going to start and take place in a DNA type environment where you take the time to unpack this stuff beginning with making list with of what you're uh upset about, and then beginning this process of inviting Jesus and your inner circle to both listen and give you feedback around your anger that you have buried or carried. And I'm telling you, you're gonna need that inner circle anger like most sin cannot be dealt with on your own. I'm telling you right now, if you want to truly be free of it, if you want to walk in the freedom of the Lord, it's not likely gonna happen by yourself. In fact, I won't even say not likely, it's not going to happen by yourself because anger hides, others can see it. We can't. It's gonna take confession and regular repentance and people to celebrate with you when you have wins. It's a big part of how we walk alongside each other.

So healing, repentance, this last part so that we can offer mercy, if you were the kind of person that has buried anger inside and you're constantly thinking about how others have failed you, if you are the kind of person where anger shows up really, really quickly in your life, a big part of the way forward is understanding Christ's mercy for you. Christ is not angry at you. Christ is not angry at you for the ways you have failed. Christ is not angry at you for the ways you have lived. Christ is not angry at you because there's anything you can add to his substitution for you in your place on the cross to pay for your sins in full. He did not pay 99% of the tab. He paid a hundred percent. And here's the truth in the upside down nature of the kingdom, there's actually incredible power in mercy, incredible power in mercy. Most of us who struggle with anger, we know the power that comes from raging. We know how to get big and feel that sense of power. But in Christ we learn a different form and it's the power that comes from mercy.

So these things repenting, healing, these things are hard work. I'm not trying to stand up here and tell you that it's easy, but if you're willing to show up, you can begin to learn what mercy looks like, what it sounds like, and even find it inside of yourself because that's where Christ is and



he's merciful. What does healthy anger look like? We've talked here at length about all the ways that anger can go sideways. You're saying that there's this redeemed version, so what does that even look like? Most of us have not seen this, so I wanna take a moment to unpack this. Number one, it's usually for the benefit of someone else because that looks like Christ. So healthy anger usually looks like it's benefiting somebody else. Number two, it's assertive, but it's not aggressive. Christine Hammond is a certified family trauma professional and she describes this healthy form of anger as assertive anger.

People with assertive anger styles openly express themselves while simultaneously respecting those around them. So examples include things like when you're frustrated, you express it without blaming others. You don't make threatening or intimidating remarks. You're honest about the feelings of anger without being forceful or passive. Right? Buried, carried, accepts responsibility for mistakes and seeks to resolve conflict mutually. That's what healthy anger looks like. Lastly, healthy anger is almost always slower than we want. And I feel this in my chest. This has been a struggle for me for years. Speed kills your flinch is almost never the Holy Spirit. Think about that. The way that you feel a second and a half after the offense is rarely the Holy Spirit. So both sides of the coin both buried and carried. We desperately need the spirit to lead us to healthy anger. And I'll tell you, uh, from my experience, parenting will expose your relationship to anger.

Amen. Young families parenting will absolutely expose it. I'm gonna say right up front, I am not an expert on this. I can only pass along what I've seen in the scriptures and what I've seen in the lives of older men and women saints who have modeled this far better. I did not have this modeled well in my home. Parenting is the kitchen where this recipe plays out over and over and over again. As your kids get older, you'll see them do something or desire something that is harmful for them. And when you try and step into the gap, what happens? They turn on you, right? And your options are limited. Again, Keller says you can withdraw, give them access to their desires or the thing that's harmful, or you can rage and respond with harshness and you will win the argument, but you lose the relationship.

So there's gotta be a third way because withdrawing and raging don't feel like the right answer. I did this this last weekend with one of my kids. I raised my voice in a discussion about how they had given a 10% effort to something. Now everything I was saying was true. Everything I shared in that conversation was truth, but I wasn't saying it the way that Jesus does when he says true things. So I went back last night, I repented to them, tried my best to not make excuses, just that my tone of voice was harmful and I was sorry. So withdrawing isn't it, and raging, isn't it, but you can try what Keller calls a surgical strike. That's the right amount of energy pointed at the right target. Not withdrawing, not raging. It's this settled opposition to evil. It's a focused and firm conversation around the threat, but with empathy about what your kid is experiencing. And some of us grew up in homes where this never happened. So this is new territory for us. And believe me, you have all of my empathy and compassion around that cuz this is super tough. But some of us need to make a call or sit down with a child today and prayerfully do this.

So as we close, is there any good news for the angry? Well, I think I've got a couple of things to say. Number one, the church needs holy anger. Don't buy the lie that anger is all bad. The passion to see things be different is the heart of the father in many, many ways. But please remember that holy anger almost always means that you will be part of the solution. This is not an invitation to complain about things that you don't like. You move towards the hard thing.

Some of the people in this room have a really hard time controlling that raging fire in their chest, and the truth is that when they're redeemed, the exact same people are those ones that get into the gap in culture and society, and they take that passion to the places on the east side that do not look like the kingdom today.

The church needs this, the world needs this. Secondly, Jesus' sovereignty is comforting to the angry. This is good news if you struggle with this, I want you to hear this. Jesus' sovereignty is comforting to you. Whatever you think of the wrath of God, the sovereignty of God is absolutely a crucial part of the puzzle. Why? Because this sovereignty is comforting. Because so much of our anger is this furious, longing for people to see the things that are wrong and you are never alone in that. If you are accurately seeing a situation and it really is unjust and it really is wrong, God sees it too. And he has promised humanity that he will do something about it. And I, I know it's not our timing and I know that's hard to carry sometimes, but he will do something about it. He's been talking to us and making promises for thousands of years and he's batting a thousand.

He has never, ever, ever failed in his promises. He's going to do something about it. So I'll close with this. I mentioned earlier that sinful anger is something that many of us actually had modeled for us in the home you grew up in. Maybe anger happened when mom or dad didn't get their way. Anger was what happened when one little thing was outta place because our parents felt out of control and so they controlled every square inch of the house. Anger was what happened when they felt sad and they just did not have the tools to express it, but whatever it was, anger was not holy. I want you to hear me when I say this. Church, Jesus can rewrite your story. Jesus can rewrite your story. Our house in Woodinville was built in 1974 and in 1974, electricians as they were building houses, used what's known as aluminum wiring.

It was all the craze. They were saving costs and really excited about it. And some electrician showed another electrician, This is how you wire house and how you make it work. Well, here's the problem in time they learned that aluminum, unlike other metals, actually expands and contracts and expands and contracts and expands and contracts, and so that every place a piece of metal is touching another piece of metal for electrical current, you now get an air gap. And what does electricity do when there's an air gap? Travels across. It arcs, and that's how you get house fires. When we purchased our house, one of the very first thing we had to do was spend thousands of dollars to get every single electrical outlet, every single electrical connection, every light bulb all flipped over. Now, at some point, as I said, an electrician showed another electrician, this is how it works.

This is how we get it done. That was actually found later to be life threatening. Some of you grew up in a home where unhealthy anger was super useful. It made you feel safe, or maybe it was avoided at all costs. Somebody showed you this is how it works, But in time you found out that it was actually super dangerous and Jesus now wants to rewire your emotional house to its original design, to its intended holy purpose church. Jesus is the better Jonah. Jesus is not running from the hard thing with hard people in hard places. He's running towards them. Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and he walked out, beat up and bitter. Jesus was in the belly of the earth for three days and he walked out in power and authority. Jonah saw the people drowning in sin and he felt contempt and hatred.

Jesus saw the people drowning in sin and he felt compassion and mercy. Church, if you want to get out from underneath the thousand pound weight, frustration, irritation, go to Jesus. If you

want to see what it looks like to show mercy, even when you have the right to be livid, go to Jesus. If you want to tap into mercy and slow yourself down in all of the little life situations that send you over the edge, go to Jesus. Let's pray. Jesus, I just recognize that we need you. I need you. I need you at times to slow me down. I'm sure that that's true for many others in our church. Some of us need to trust you enough and have courage to actually express the things that we have been righteously angry about. This is hard work. We can't do it on our own. We certainly can't do it well. So help us, give us hope, give us encouragement. Let us see you as our prize, and ultimately help us to experience the kindness and mercy that you have shown us, so that we can extend it to others. We need that. We can't make it up. We can't manufacture it. We have to receive it from you. Help us Lord, for your glory and our good. Amen.