

Why the Enemy Wants You in Unforgiveness

Strife. Oh, what an ugly word. The truth is, strife is just the beginning of a chain that is holding so many believers in bondage. Someone comes along and offends you, and the flesh's way of handling that offense is to invite anger into your heart. Being angry is normal, but it's what you do with that anger that starts the buildup of the devil's five link chain.

Anger, if not canceled out, turns into wrath, and wrath eventually becomes unforgiveness. What's the difference between anger and wrath? To be angry with someone means you have surpassed disappointment to reach the highest peak of your human emotions. You are strongly displeased with that person or that person's ways or mindset, to the point that what could have been a minor incident has now taken a turn into a major and memorable accident. Now, you've got a devil-sized dent in your heart because that person's offense impacted you so deeply that it's burned its way into your heart. And now, you're no longer dealing with a situation that you'll forget about before the close of the day. You're dealing with a situation that is going to shape your day, and if you don't forgive your trespasser quickly, that situation will begin to shape your life.

First and foremost, let's talk about the chain of offense. Pride has five main soldiers in her army, and they are: Offense, Anger, Strife, Wrath, and Unforgiveness. Each soldier opens the door for the next soldier if the war waged in a person's heart isn't stopped. Once someone offends you, you have to determine how you feel about the offense, and that offense will determine how you feel about the offender. When your anger is directed at the person, and not the spirit behind (or in) that person, your anger is not justified.

Ephesians 6:12: *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

How is it not justified? Because justifiable anger is called righteous indignation, and whenever righteous indignation is invoked, it identifies its real enemy, as opposed to seeing the person the enemy is using. Additionally, righteous indignation means that you have the right to be angry about the offense, but you do not have the right to be angry with the person, seeing, as it is, you are not God.

Next on our list is Strife. To be in strife means to be moved by the anger in you. The bible tells us to be angry, but do not sin. It is to harbor wickedness in your heart towards your offender. This means that you've already begun planting the seeds of murder in your heart, and you're moved (by your anger) to imagine (or desire) revenge against the person you feel has wrongfully used or betrayed you. Strife is similar to a man looking at a woman and lusting after her. The bible tells us that any man who does so has committed adultery in his heart. Now, we know he didn't touch the woman, but if he allowed himself to lust after her, he is guilty of adultery. Strife works the same way. Strife is the onset of a heart condition. It occurs when something has sat on your heart longer than it should have, and now, that

issue has begun to find its way into your heart.

Next up is Wrath. Wrath means fierce anger. A person who's entered wrath is a person whose strife has kindled a firestorm of thoughts in their imaginations, and as a result, they've become consumed with their desire to exact their revenge. Mankind has no right to touch wrath, as wrath belongs (rightfully) to God, since His wrath is justifiable (provoked by *righteous* justice). Our wrath, on the other hand, is oftentimes provoked by pride and a sense of entitlement. A person with wrath in his or her heart is a person who's already murdered the offender in his/her heart. This is a person who's no longer just angry. This is a person who's no longer just thinking about what someone did and wishing they'd get their "come uppings", but a person in wrath is an individual who's decided to take matters into his or her own hands. Wrath and hatred are boyfriend and girlfriend, but unforgiveness and hatred are husband and wife.

Finally, there's Unforgiveness. Unforgiveness means that you feel that your offender owes you because of something the offender did or said. This means that you carry a debt in your heart, and unbeknownst to you, that debt in your heart is parked in the dent in your heart. You go about each and every day thinking your offender owes you an apology, or whatever you feel they've stolen from you or kept you from. A person walking in unforgiveness is fertile ground for the enemy to implant hatred in. That's because the human soul was not designed to hold unforgiveness. As a matter of fact, the human heart can't handle wrath for too long, and that's why the bible tells us to basically forgive our trespassers before the close of the day.

Ephesians 4:26-28: *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

One thing you'll notice about Ephesians 4:26-28 is that it tells us to not give place to the devil. How can we give place to the devil? Through wrath. Wrath is not designed for the human heart or psyche, and therefore, wrath, if not canceled out immediately, acts as a tent in our hearts, and the enemy can reside in these tents.

Additionally, you'll notice that the aforementioned scripture goes on to say, "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needs." What's the relevance of this statement? We become angry with someone when we feel they've taken something from us. Maybe they took too much of our time, maybe they stole something from us, or maybe we believe they stole someone from us, so we become angry with them. Anger turns into wrath, and when it is not cast down, it serves as an open door to the enemy, thus, giving him (the infamous thief) the opportunity to cause us to rob ourselves. That's why God said to let him that stole, steal no more. The devil can't rightfully take anything from us. He has to get us to hand over our rights and our stuff because he can't legally take it.

The devil cannot possess a believer, so his method of controlling believers is to get them to open their hearts to him, because he can reside in a heart, but he cannot reside in a spirit that's now inhabited by the Holy Spirit. The heart is the steering wheel of the soul, and that's why it's so important to Satan to gain access to our hearts. The heart will drive you throughout the day. It will communicate with your mind, and basically tell your mind what you ought to do that day. If your mind agrees, it will then communicate this to your limbs through an act we call will. For example, pay attention to how you think and feel when someone greatly offends you. You'll notice that you'll talk about the offense you believe that person has committed against you, and the offense itself, along with what you perceive to be their motives, will haunt you for the rest of that day. That's why we oftentimes avoid talking to our friends once they've been offended. After we've gotten a whiff of their attitudes that day, and we've listened to them go on and on about what someone did or said to them, we look for ways to excuse ourselves from their presence (understandably). It's obvious that they're sitting in a bad place, and we don't want them to drag us there with them. After all, our friends have seen us be offended before, and we let those offenses go easily, but it's when we're deeply offended that we give a day to the devil in our attempts to ponder what his child (or neighbor) has done to us.

Why does the devil want us offended? Again, so that we can open our hearts to him, and even though he cannot possess us (believers), he can depress and oppress us through our acts of disobedience. Since he can't possess us and bring about our destruction, he likes to mess with our minds so that we'll self-destruct. He understands what the average believer has yet to realize, and that is: Anger is tied to pride, and pride, if allowed to grow up, will eventually bring us down. Full-blown pride leads to destruction.

Proverbs 16:18 (NIV): *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

As human beings, why do we give people the power to move us with our own emotions? Because our flesh is always at war with the HOLY SPIRIT. Anger is like a cup, but strife is the handle on that cup that allows the enemy to pick us up and begin to devour us. That's why it's very important that we forgive our trespassers immediately. Additionally, by forgiving someone who's wrongfully used you, stolen from you, betrayed you or offended you, you aren't saying that person is no longer guilty of a crime against you. You are simply turning that debt over to the Lord, and He becomes the Debt Collector. This means the debt is no longer owed to you since God will return to you what was stolen if you simply ask Him.

James 4:2 (NIV): *You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.*

Anytime something belongs to you, you have the *right* to that thing, whether it's money, material possessions, ideas, or so on. Because that thing belongs to you, you have the legal right on earth through Christ Jesus to call it back to you, but all too often, we get so focused on the thieves that the enemy tips toes right by us unscathed. You can call what's owed back to you, or you can simply ask the Lord to return it to you, and He will, if you believe Him. That's why the Lord told us that if man tried to take our tunics to give them our cloaks as well. He wasn't rewarding the evil-doers, He was simply saying that He would visit their sins instead of us. Judgment belongs to Him, and when we get out of

His way, He can prove Himself to be a just God. That way, HE can judge them and glorify His name by returning what was stolen to you, along with interest if you ask for it. (You have the legal right to add interest to whatever belongs to you). Nevertheless, the enemy has convinced so many of us to be angry with people, as if we could truly punish them for their wrongdoings.

Understand this: Everyone has a mindset, and a mindset is nothing more than what people have set their hearts and minds to. When someone comes upon you with a wrongful mindset, it simply indicates that they're in a different place than you are, and you cannot walk together with them (at that time) because the two of you do not agree. How can two walk together except they be agreed? Therefore, when a person's mindset offends you, the correct way to think is to understand that they need revelation knowledge...*or maybe you need revelation knowledge*. If they're the ones who haven't received revelation, they have to go to the Lord to grow in the Lord. He will send them where He wants them to be fed. And because they're not as old as you are in Him, they will repeatedly offend you if you continue to associate with them. Think of it this way. If you were in college, and you met an interesting nine-year old little boy while on your way to school, do you really think the two of you could successfully be best friends or even friends? No, you could not because his mindset would offend you. The only thing you could do is mentor him, but ONLY if you got his parents' permission to mentor him. You can't just start attempting to bring someone's child into your world, because that's called kidnapping, and it's illegal...even in the realm of the spirit. (That's why leaders who try to shepherd people who aren't called to sit under them oftentimes find themselves practicing the witchcraft of rebellion). You have to have the permission of that child's parent to mentor them. The same thing goes for us in the Body of Christ. All too often, we run across people who aren't where we are spiritually, and instead of recognizing that we cannot associate ourselves with them (in that season), we attempt to "school" them without the Father's permission, and this brings about strife. **YOU CANNOT TEACH A STUDENT THAT THE LORD HAS NOT PLACED UNDER YOUR CARE!** Why not? Because in your attempts to educate them and impart *your* thinking patterns to them, you may end up feeding them knowledge that offends the truth. What does this mean? You may have a wrongful way of thinking, and because you think you're older than the person you're attempting to educate (pride), you'll start trying to feed milk to meat eating believers, not understanding that the milk you are holding in your heart was for you! Babies always want to share their milk, but meat eaters understand that meat has to be chewed up and its consistency changed before it can be placed in the mouth of a baby because babies have no teeth. Additionally, some food is too rich for babies, so even if they were able to swallow it, they're regurgitate it because they're digestive systems aren't advanced enough to hold that meat. This means we have to stop being offended with people because of their mindsets and recognize our positions or dispositions in their lives, and vice versa. Anytime you give someone the wrong position in your life or in your heart, opposition will follow. Opposition is the opposing of your position or the position you've given someone in your life. Opposition usually follows disobedience, and disobedience usually trails fear and selfish ambition.

So, the next time someone offends you, shake it off and forgive them quickly. Don't give place to the devil, and don't let him steal anything else from you. Instead, turn the person in to the Lord, and turn the situation over the Lord, and then, distance yourself from that person if God tells you to. *That is, of course, if that person isn't your spouse, child, or ministry leader.* Don't ponder what someone has done or said, and if you do, be sure to kick it out of your heart before you turn in for the night. Let anger know that it's not sleeping with you, because you're a man or woman after God's own heart.

Additionally, be mindful of the people you open your life up to because some people aren't anointed or approved to walk with you, and that's why they try to force their mindsets on you. If you open your heart to them, they'll have a clear shot at your mind, and once they've proven to you that they were not supposed to be in your circle, you may find yourself needing days, weeks, months, or years to get past what they've said or done, and it's just not worth it. Don't lose a blessing because of what somebody did or said. Understand that every man and woman can only go the stretch of their own knowledge. This means that our minds are only free if our mindsets (what we've set our hearts and minds to) are Godly, but if our mindsets are ungodly, the sins that we participate in have become the leashes that hold our minds back from revelation knowledge. Your mind and your mindset are not one in the same. Make sure you keep your mind stayed on God, so you'll have your mind set to the things of God. It is then and only then that you can see an offense for what it really is: The devil's application to move into your heart. **You need to tell the devil, "Sorry, Satan. Your application has been DENIED!"**

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