Let Not The Sun Go Down...
On Your Anger

HANDBOOK

PRACTICAL, BIBLICAL-BASED TECHNIQUES FOR A PERSONAL JOURNEY OF RECOVERY

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PRACTICAL, BIBLE-BASED ANGER MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR DAILY LIVING

BY

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*Note: The case histories in this book are based on fictional characters that have been included to illustrate important lessons and themes. Any similarities with actual people or real-life situations are strictly coincidental and not intended by the authors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword 1
Acknowledgements 1
Authors' Recommendations 1

Introduction 1
Is This Book Right For Me? Can This Book Help Someone I Love? 5

Chapter 1: In the Beginning: Assessing Your Anger 7
Are You Just Talking or Are You Actually Walking? 7
Is My Anger Grieving the Holy Spirit? Is My Loved One's Anger Grieving the Holy Spirit? 9
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 11
Which Side of the Street Are You Walking On? 12
Why Pray When You Can Be Angry? 14
Pause for Prayer 15

Chapter 2: Developing My Personalized Action Plan 16
Don't Audit the Class: Being Doers of the Word and Not Hearers Only 16
Case History: Mr. Self-Righteous 18
God's Personalized Accountability Plan for My Life. 20
Pause for Prayer 22
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 23

Chapter 3: What the Bible Says About Anger 24
What Does the Bible Teach Us About Anger?– Part I 24
What Does the Bible Teach Us About Anger? – Part II 26
Pause for Prayer 29
What Is Anger? Why Did God Create It? 30
Pause for Prayer 35
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 36

Chapter 4: Analyzing the Angry Beast: A Step-By-Step Approach 37
The Miller-Patton Four-Factor Model of Anger 37
Distinguishing Between Feelings, thoughts and Behaviors 40
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 42
Pause for Prayer 43

Chapter 5: Dodging the Anger Bullet: How To Avoid Getting Angry in the First Place 44
Fire Prevention: Avoiding a Five-Alarm Angry Outburst 44
Preventing Anger and Resentment By Trusting God's Timing 48
Hedges of Protection: Setting Better Boundaries to Avoid Triggering Anger 49
Pause for Prayer 51
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 52

Chapter 6: My Personalized Anger Management Toolkit 53
What's My Part? Removing the Beam Out of My Eye – Part I 53
What's My Part? Removing the Beam Out of My Eye – Part II 55
Pause for Prayer 58
Dirty Fighting Tactics Just For Christians 59

How We Victimize Ourselves and Others With Expectations 62
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 64

Chapter 7: More Tools For the Toolkit 65
If Anger is Good Enough For Jesus, Then It Is Good Enough For Me! 65
The Eight Commandments of Fair Fighting for Christians 66
Time-Out for Christians 69
Time-Out Contract for Christians 71
Pause for Prayer 73
How to Deal with Anger Toward the Church or Church Leaders 74
Pause for Prayer 77
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 78

Chapter 8: The Stinking Thinking of Anger 79
The Dirty Dozen: Twelve Styles of Distorted Thinking 79
How False Beliefs Trigger Anger 81
You May Be Right...You May Be Wrong: Taking a Second Look at Negative Assumptions 82
The Power of Self-Talk 84
Is My Self-Talk Negative or Positive? 85
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 87
Pause for Prayers 88

Chapter 9: Is It Anger or is it Something Else? 89
The "Secret Connection" Between Anger and Depression 89
Is It Really Anger? Get Behind the Mad to the Sad Using Anger as a Defense 90
Can I Trust My Own Feelings? 91
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 92
Pause for Prayer 93

Chapter 10: Road Rage: Is Your Anger Driving You? 94
The Derenski-Miller-Patton Road Rage Self-Assessment Test for Christians 94
What Triggers Your Road Rage? 97
Case History: Driving Under-the-Influence of Road Rage 99
Road Rage Management Contracts for Christians 101
Christian Road Rage Management Contract (Detailed Version) 102
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 103
Pause for Prayer 104

Chapter 11: Anger Management Through Compassion, Gratitude and Forgiveness 105
How Compassion and Love are More Powerful Than Self-Control 105
Why Be Angry When You Can be Grateful? Developing an Attitude of Gratitude 107
Forgiveness and Anger Management 109
The Patton-Derenski-Miller Model of Forgiveness – Part I 111
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 114
Pause for Prayer 115
The Patton-Derenski-Miller Model of Forgiveness – Part II 116
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 118
Pause for Prayer 119
Case History: The Peace That Only Forgiveness Brings 120

Chapter 12: Leadership or Dictatorship? Understanding Male Headship in a Marriage 121
The Bible's Blueprint for Male Headship in a Marriage 121
What Does the Bible Say About Abuse in the Home? 123
Sexual Manipulation, Coercion, Aggression, and Abuse 126
It's Your Turn: Writing Your Own Anger Management Book 127
Pause for Prayer 128
Case History: Misusing Male Leadership as an Excuse for Abuse 129

Chapter 13: Just for Pastors and their Spouses 132
Pastors and Anger: Special Considerations 132
Just for Pastors and Their Wives: Rating Your Pastor-Husband's Anger 135
Case History: When Pastors Commit Domestic Abuse 138
Pause for Prayer 139

Chapter 14: What If All This Does Not Work? 140
Feel Like You Are Missing Something? 140
Pause for Prayer 143

Final Revelations 144
Pause for Prayer 145

About the Authors 146

LET NOT THE SUN GO DOWN...ON YOUR ANGER WORKBOOK

FOREWORD BY PASTOR GARY HOWSE

Do you have a problem with anger or not? Then this handbook IS for you. If you are a man, woman, teen, executive, athlete, pastor, day laborer, a domestic manager, politician, deacon on the church board – then this book is for you.

As I reviewed the book, I quickly saw how I needed to participate in the action points, prayers and analysis of my own life to discover and deal with anger issues in my life, particularly when I read the questions offered for the Pastor's Wife.

The authors do an excellent presentation of blending the psychological, practical and spiritual aspects of our complex lives and still bring us to the foot of the Cross where all our healing and restoration is found.

Read the book from an open heart to hear from God and you will hear Him.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Matthew 8:20 says that "when two or three are gathered together in my name, there I will be in the midst of them." This promise from God "came to life" for the authors through the guidance and support of two very precious pastors – Gary Howse and Dan Broyles. Both Pastors Howse and Broyles have extended their valuable time, expertise and grace to the authors. These pastors' various contributions to the book and workbook are deeply appreciated.

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The authors truly experienced God's presence through these two men of God.

AUTHORS' RECOMMENDATIONS

The information in this workbook is intended for educational and informative purposes, only and is not intended as a substitute for seeking professional help. The authors highly recommend that readers consult with a pastor, church elders, and/or a licensed Christian counselor as they complete this workbook for personal guidance and support. If you experience any uncomfortable feelings, thoughts or behaviors while reading this workbook, seek professional help from a licensed Christian therapist as soon as possible. Call 911 immediately if you are in danger of hurting yourself or someone else.

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INTRODUCTION

TODAY YOU ARE GOING TO DIE

You read that right. Imagine that this is your last day on Earth. Maybe you will be killed suddenly in a car accident. Or maybe you will suffer a fatal heart attack. Whatever the circumstances, imagine that in a matter of a few minutes, you will no longer exist in this world.

Your boss expected you at work in the morning. You have responsibilities to take care of at home. And your children are wondering what happened to their daddy or mommy. But all of that is over because you are dead.

What will people say about you now that you are dead?

Who will mourn your death? Who will miss you? Cry for you? Who will be angry that you died? What will people say at your funeral? Sure, people will probably say a lot of good things about you at your funeral. After all, you are a Christian, right? Christian funerals are all about celebrating the believer's life and taking comfort that the loved one is in Heaven, right?

But what will be said about you after you have been dead for a few weeks?

Will your spouse in the wee early hours of the morning suddenly awaken and feel a tiny bit *relieved that you died because you upset everyone so much*? Maybe a hidden, deeply wounded place in the hearts of your children will be calmed in some way that you died, because you scared them over the years, time and time again, with your anger.

Perhaps even your own mother or grandmother was afraid of you because you are an angry person – oops, I mean, *you were an angry person* because remember *now you are dead and it is too late to change the memories that you have left behind*. Is that the legacy you want to leave with your family and friends when you are dead?

Do you want your tombstone to say, "Here lays an angry person who was too stubborn to admit it"?

That's just great, isn't it – you get to spend eternity in Heaven while the people who you claimed mattered the most to you are left to struggle with their memories of you blaming, intimidating, and scaring them! Their feelings of grief are a confusing mix of love, loss, *and a new sense of peacefulness* because you can no longer scare them with your anger.

Now, wait just a moment, you might be saying to yourself, I wasn't really that angry and hard to live with – the real problem was that my spouse was too emotionally sensitive. My wife was afraid to deal with conflict and over-reacted to my loud voice. Or, my husband was too in touch with his feelings and my anger intimidated him.

And my children, of course I loved them, but they were not strong enough to deal with the real world. I had to be hard on my kids because I wanted to prepare them to handle life.

Sure, maybe I had one too many arguments with my mother or dad over the years but they deserved it, didn't they, after everything they put me through during childhood! And some of my Christian

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friends were *sooooooooo* self-righteous, always preaching to me about how my anger was tearing apart my family. What do they know?

Look, if you want to see someone with a real anger problem, then try working with my boss and most of my co-workers – now those people have real issues!

So you tell yourself, "I didn't have a problem with anger; it was everyone else that had a problem!"

But when you tell yourself that everyone else in your life has problems then you know you are in really big trouble. It is called being in denial. Think about this for a moment… *what if you die and you were wrong?* What if your spouse and children really meant what they said to you over the years - that your anger scared them, made them cry, caused their stomachaches, gave them nightmares, or triggered thoughts of revenge?

Now that you are dead you can no longer try to convince them that their feelings about your anger are wrong. You are no longer able to manipulate or control them with your anger because, let's not forget, *you are dead.*

Well I am NOT dead yet, you might be telling yourself right about now. Maybe you have had enough of this "pretend that this is your last day on Earth" exercise.

But consider this: *What if your relationship with your spouse or children is dying?*

Anger is often one of the most destructive works of the flesh. What if your family members or friends are distancing themselves from you, a little bit every day, to protect their hearts, mind, bodies, and spirits from your angry outbursts? Maybe you are noticing that something feels different at home, that your spouse is not talking with you as much or your children are turning to other people for support instead of coming to you.

The people who count the most in your life may be dying a slow, painful emotional death because you are killing their spirits with your anger.

Some Christians may be even more susceptible to developing anger problems due to the false belief that *because God has forgiven them* that it somehow *decreases the scary impact of their rage on their family.* Some Christians deny or minimize the devastating consequences of their anger because they expect their family to forgive them, again and again, and love them unconditionally.

But the real issue is not about your family forgiving you – it is about your anger problems and lack of repentance. What is *repentance*? It is a change of heart, a change of mind and a change in behavior. Repentance is not simply a temporary shift in feelings, e.g., "I don't feel angry with my wife today so my anger management problems must have been solved." Repentance involves a new direction that others can see – including God – with consistency.

Like substance abusers that do not recognize that they have problems with alcohol or other drugs, many people with anger problems do not recognize that they have a problem with anger. You cannot assume that you are a good judge of the intensity and frequency of your own anger. It is a

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good idea to ask your family members, friends, and co-workers if they see anger problems in your life. Listen to what they tell you. Believe what they say.

Also, talk with your pastor or other church leaders to see if they have noticed problems about your expression of anger or other feelings. It is also a wise idea to review the information in this book with other people who know you well in order to get their feedback and insight.

Remember, today is the first day of the rest of your life – it is never too late to begin making changes about the ways in which you handle your anger. *But also, remember that today may be the last day of your life* – so do not put off making changes with your anger.

After all, people don't die wishing they had shown more anger toward the people they loved.

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IS THIS BOOK RIGHT FOR ME?
CAN THIS BOOK HELP SOMEONE I LOVE?

Are you looking for a Bible-based book to help you deal with your feelings of disappointment, hurt and anger?
Then this book might be an answer to your prayers or your family's prayers.
Please spend five more minutes reading the next few pages because it might change your life.

After all, what more are you willing to risk losing because of your anger?

This book is intended to help you discover your own path of recovery so that you can change the direction of your personal legacy from anger to serenity. Unlike other books about anger, you will be given the opportunity to write your own, one-of-a-kind anger management journal that is personalized just for you, as led by God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in order to bring glory to the Lord's kingdom.

Unlike the righteous anger of God, the anger that we human beings often experience is hurtful to other people and ourselves. Being a Christian does not automatically guarantee that we do not have a problem with our anger. Many Christians with anger management problems do not realize that the people they love the most feel anxious or frightened by their anger. They do not recognize that co-workers on the job avoid them because of their angry outbursts. People with anger issues may be refused promotions at work. Fellow church members may steer clear of them due to their anger. Even their pastors may be wary of their anger.

Although your anger hurts others, it also hurts you – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. But the most important consideration of all is that the Bible teaches us that our anger can grieve the Holy Spirit of God (Ephesians 4:30). What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit? It means that we are not being the person that God intended us to be.

People with anger problems typically feel powerless in changing their angry thoughts, feelings and behaviors, yet with God's help, coupled with the power of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Scriptures, any person can break free from the stronghold of anger and hostility. As you read this book and complete the exercises, you will learn Bible-based insights and practical anger management tools that will help you to develop self-control. How do you define "*self-control*"? It means to be "*meek.*" You might be thinking right now that the last thing you want to be is meek! Most people misunderstand the power of being meek. To be meek is not to be weak. You can compare being meek to a horse that has a bit in its mouth that is controlling the direction of the horse. The horse is still a powerful being but it needs the security of being led by the bit.

This book is intended for Christians who are concerned about their feelings of anger and how it impacts their daily lives. This material teaches individuals how to have less anger in their relationships and ways to express wants and needs more directly. It gives practical, Christian-based information to help individuals manage conflict and solve problems in various situations.

Unlike many anger management books that are too theoretical and difficult to apply in everyday situations, the information in this book is easy to use and can be applied to real events in your daily life. This book is an interactive, self-help book and features personal thought-provoking questions. The more time and effort you spend working on the lessons, the more you will increase your ability to handle your anger and resolve conflicts more effectively.

This book also helps you to develop a personalized *Action Plan* for dealing with your anger so

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