



Marriage Growth-Track

Week 3 - Day 2

Replacing anger with grace

By Jarrod & Katy Wilson

*Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.
Ephesians 4:31*

There's not much to misinterpret in this verse—no maybes, no extenuating circumstances, no special exceptions. This is what we learn from this verse:

- Rid yourself of anger—all of it!

Have you ever known anyone who becomes somebody entirely different when they get behind the wheel of a car? You don't have to be on the road too long before you witness an incidence of road rage—sometimes even several times in a day. There's something about controlling a 2-ton speeding vehicle down the interstate that empowers some people to become complete jerks. It's like the rules of basic kindness literally fly right out the window when you cut them off.

It's kind of like that on some social media platforms, too. Maybe it's the lack of eye-to-eye contact or even complete anonymity that allows for over-the-top rude, hateful, hurtful, and mean-spirited comments.

Sadly, sometimes some of the most damaging comments make their way into our heated 'discussions' between husband and wife. Maybe we feel particularly strong about making a point or winning the argument or not backing down—whatever it is, once we cross line and cut lose with harmful words, it is difficult to undo the damage. This was the case for one young couple recently.

This is her story:

"A couple of years ago I found myself at a Bible study venting years' worth of pent-up frustration about my husband. Two things were unfortunate about this event: first, my husband was sitting right beside me; and second, we were actually leading the group. Talk about not the time or place! I think that the importance of forgiving my husband and letting go of my anger is the benefit I receive when I let things go, not the benefit he receives when I let him off the hook.

"Bitterness, anger, and slander, more often not, lead me back to feeling like a fool and having no control. True forgiveness, kindness, and compassion make me feel like have wisdom and control. It is hard not to slink back to that familiar place of anger with my husband every time a snippet rears its head to remind me of the past. In those

moments, I would remind him of how he hurt me. And every time I did that, we would take a few steps backward in the gains we had made to make our marriage great. I was basically sabotaging the one thing that I wanted most desperately. My advice: let go of anger and bitterness and replace it with kindness and compassion and then see what happens.”

Discussion Questions:

1. When you get angry, are you focused on your own welfare, comfort, or happiness, or are you focused on your spouse’s
2. Is it rational to get angry of things that upon further examination are trivial, petty, or quite possibly misunderstood?

Action Steps:

Analyze what is making you angry, and make a plan to show love, grace, and mercy to your spouse like God does to you.

Prayer:

“Father God, thank you for forgiving us of our sins. We know that there is nothing that we can do to make us worthy of it. Open our hearts to forgive each other for the wrongs we may have caused, and help us to show compassion when the ones we love make mistakes. Amen.”

