

Review of Anger Complex; Giving the Devil a Chance; Illustration: Relationship between Employers & Employees & the Anger Complex, Eph 4:26-27,30-32

1. The commandment to “stop giving” combines the negative *mēde* with the present active imperative of the verb **δίδωμι, *didōmi*** which means “to yield” your place in the local phalanx to demonic forces.
2. Dissention results in going to battle in the Invisible War without sword, shield, helmet, belt, boots, and breastplate. The ranks are broken and the line is forced. The physical building may stand but the edification complexes in the souls of the congregation are damaged or hindered due to the distraction.
3. The verb *didōmi* means to give but here the believer is to “stop giving.” The present tense is durative: an action occurring in the past described as continuing into the present. The antagonist has allowed impulsive anger to become a facilitated behavior pattern of bitterness.
4. The believers at Ephesus produce the action of the verb by giving this opportunity to the devil. The imperative mood is prohibitive referring to an action in progress that they are now told to stop.
5. What they are told to stop doing is stated next in the verse by the noun **τόπος, *topos***. This word has many meanings dependent upon the context: (1) a position, or an office of rank or influence, or (2) a possibility, an opportunity, or a chance.¹
6. When we decide to allow circumstances to dominate our spiritual life we enter into chronic sinning. As we learned in our study of Romans 6-7, this occurs when we choose to commit an ongoing *ménage à trois* with our first husband, the sinful nature.
7. This results in demon influence having authority over the command post of our souls. The word is **διάβολος, *diabolos***: “the devil.” This is not a proper noun but rather a descriptive title for Lucifer. It means “accuser” or “slanderer.”
8. Paul predicts that Satan will influence the believer who carries around a chronic sin such as bitterness – a sin which is manifested by its tendency to malign, accuse, and slander others.
9. Since no believer can be demon possessed, the best way to translate this verse is to emphasize the carnal believer’s vulnerability to satanic influence:

Ephesians 4:27 - Stop giving the devil a chance to exert his influence.

¹ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. William F. Arndt and F. Wilber Gingrich (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957, 1979), 823.

10. There are two approaches this passage: (1) from the viewpoint of the person who is the victim of another person's wrongdoing and (2) from the viewpoint of the person who is the wrongdoer.
11. Here's what I mean by this: when two believers are at odds it is not uncommon for both to consider themselves to be right. But quite often the reality of the case is that one is right while the other is wrong.
12. This frequently happens in a business situation. Party A employs Party B providing B with a salary plus a number of fringe benefits. In addition, Party A has certain standards to which Party B is required to submit.
13. In this association, Party A seeks to not only rely on Party B to perform certain tasks in compliance with these standards, but also to do so with good manners, respect for authority, and with a positive mental-attitude.
14. There is a difference between management and leadership. Management regulates while leadership motivates. If Party A is a "manager" then Party B is overwhelmed by details, regulations, and micromanagement.
15. But if Party A is a "leader" then Party B becomes an apprentice who can learn from the boss how things should be done and how to improve work skills as well as personality traits.
16. Therefore, management is oppressive while leadership is demanding. There is a difference. The oppressive "manager" imposes an unjust and cruel exercise of authority over Party B and as a result Party B is frustrated and unmotivated.
17. But the demanding leader looks at the Big Picture seeing Party B's great potential not only as an employee but also as a person.
18. Party A is in a position of leadership and authority because of experience, knowledge, and wisdom which comes to any person who, over time, has a desire to improve and advance and become professional.
19. When employers are leaders then those who work for them have an opportunity to learn from that person's experience, knowledge, and wisdom.
20. Yet, in every organization there is a multiplicity of Party B's. Some want to just have a good time, walk their way through whatever tasks are assigned with no interest in improving their work skills or their personal character.
21. A demanding leader, who is paying Party B a salary has every right and even the obligation to instruct Party B in how to become more efficient in the workplace and to point out mind-sets and dispositions that betray negative mental attitudes and over-emphasis on self.
22. Every organization has people in authority—Party A. Some are managers while some are leaders. Every organization also has employees—Party B's. Virtually every Party B has a day when Party A has something to say about how Party B is doing the job assigned or the need for an attitude adjustment.

23. Party B's that will not take criticism, but consider all efforts at correction and guidance to be an insult are those who are on the flip side of Ephesians 4:26.
24. We will first look at the entire passage from the standpoint of Party A who is dealing with a Party B who has coped an attitude or become involved in misbehavior:

Ephesians 4:26 - Be angry with righteous indignation [ὀργίζω, *orgizō*], and yet do not sin in your anger: do not permit the sun to go down on your intensified anger [παροργισμός, *parorgismos*: **seething anger that leads to chronic bitterness**].”

25. Here the Party A employer expresses righteous indignation over the behavior of employee, Party B, but is instructed not to allow Party B's actions to result in anger or bitterness.

Ephesians 4:27 - Do not be giving opportunity to the devil.

26. If a leadership-style Party A allows righteous indignation to devolve into *orgizō* anger and does not deal with it through rebound before sunset then bitterness will result over Party B's misbehavior.

Ephesians 4:30 - Stop grieving the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you have been sealed for a day of redemption [**ultimate sanctification**].

v. 31 - All categories of bitterness [πικρία, *pikria*: **seething anger**], both wrath [θυμός, *thumos*: **explosive or operational anger**], and anger [ὀργή, *orgē*: **impulsive or motivational anger**], both **vociferation and slander, must be removed from you, together with all evil** [**malice, revenge motivation, revenge modus operandi**].

27. For leadership authority to maintain objectivity, the soul must be clear of mental attitude sins that lead to the chronic sin of bitterness and the possibility of explosive anger which is operational.
28. The solution to the situation on the part of a leadership-oriented Party A is stated in the last verse of the chapter:

Ephesians 4:32 - But become kind, performing gracious acts toward each other, and compassionate, and keep on forgiving each other, just as God also by means of Christ has forgiven you.

29. Leadership-oriented Party A must maintain a willingness to forgive Party B should rebound and Bible study succeed in a recovery from the reactor factors that resulted in anger and bitterness.