



July 8, 2024

God's Word and the accomplished works of Jesus Christ have set us free from every prison—physically, mentally, and spiritually.

*Ephesians 4:8:*

*Wherefore he saith, When he [Christ] ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

While this is an accomplished reality for the believer, mental prisons can still surround us in a category of life where we don't guard the Word in our heart. Anger is one such mental prison. By controlling our thinking and putting on the Word of God, we can experience the true freedom made available to us.

Anger is an emotion that can come from not controlling our thinking and can lead to the loss of rational thinking and sound decision-making. Many times, this emotion comes from focusing on a real or perceived offense—for example, being frustrated over situations that seem to run contrary to our preconceptions. Thoughts such as resentment, jealousy, and discouragement can all lead to anger.

Many years ago, I discovered that by using principles of the renewed mind, I could overcome negative emotions that caused me to be less than my best. Instead of letting myself get drawn into a downward spiral of thinking, I found that I could redirect my thoughts to the Word that countered the negative thoughts and allowed me to enjoy true freedom.

A great example of overcoming anger is found in II Kings 5. Naaman was captain of the army of the king of Syria, and he had leprosy. Through a series of events, he was directed to go to the man of God Elisha to be healed. By the time he arrived at Elisha's house, he had quite a preconceived idea of how the man of God would bring about his deliverance. But things did not develop exactly as he thought they should.

*II Kings 5:9-12:*

*So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.*

*And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.*

*But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.*

Naaman became angry. He perceived both the way Elisha handled this situation and the directions from God to be offensive. Elisha had only sent his servant to speak with him! Wash in the dirty old Jordan? Surely, Elisha should have done some extravagant process to deliver him. Naaman's dramatic reaction to the way God had proposed he be delivered nearly caused him to miss out on God's deliverance. But what followed shows Naaman's servants directing him to a clear path to overcome his anger.

*II Kings 5:13,14:*

*And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?*

*Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.*

Naaman's servants did something significant. They redirected Naaman's thinking away from the perceived offense to the simplicity of God's Word: wash and be clean. This is a primary key to overcoming anger. If we discover that our thoughts are not sound or based upon the truth of God's Word, we can redirect our thinking to the Word. There is an important verse regarding this:

*II Corinthians 10:5:*

*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

We can learn to identify and cast down thoughts that lead to anger.

When we control our thinking and put on the Word that addresses the need in our situation, we can enjoy true freedom in this category of life.

It has been said, “Temper gets you into trouble. Pride keeps you there.” By learning to control our thinking and putting on the Word of God, we can overcome the mental prison of anger and experience the true freedom made available to us.

*For more information, visit [www.theway.org](http://www.theway.org)*

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