

Understanding and Identifying Anger

Everything that happens in a Transformation Prayer Ministry session is directly linked to our experiential belief and the choices that we make. Nothing can stand in between us and freedom and no one can keep us from knowing God's truth and experiencing His peace, other than our own belief and willful choices. Conversely, no one can force us to move in the direction of freedom or believe something different than what we believe. It is all about choosing; choices that are made freely and continually, step by step.

The choices we make are highly influenced -nearly dictated- by what we experientially believe. And these beliefs may or may not immediately be apparent. Occasionally, it may feel as though we are doing everything in our power to move forward in the session, and yet it appears as though we are "stuck." As hard as it is to believe otherwise in these places, the reason for our being "stuck" is because our own foot is on the brake. We are only stuck because we are choosing to not move forward.

Stop Signs

Imagine that you are in your car, driving down the road, when you suddenly notice a stop sign a short distance ahead of you. What would you do? (Or rather, what **SHOULD** you do?) You should slowly bring your vehicle to a stop. But why would you do this? The stop sign is not directly in your way. It is not physically blocking you from moving forward. You **COULD** choose to drive past it without ever touching the brake pedal. The reason you choose to stop is because of what that sign represents; a belief that driving too quickly through the intersection could be dangerous. The sign also represents the potential threat of a traffic violation and the fine that comes with it. You believe that maintaining your speed and ignoring the sign is dangerous and potentially expensive. So, in light of what you believe, you choose to bring your vehicle to a halt.

This same dynamic is at play in a Transformation Prayer Ministry session. Here are several examples of beliefs that act as "stop signs" on our way to freedom. These beliefs are not rooted in the truth; they are lies. Beliefs such as "If I suppress my emotions I will not be overwhelmed by them," "Blocking the memory from surfacing keeps me from getting stuck in the pain," "My anger protects me from being hurt again," or "I must hold onto my anger because it holds the person accountable for what they did to me," all hinder the ministry process. And although these "deceitful stop signs" do not forcibly stop us or get in our way, they give us reason to pause. Until we know the truth, we will likely keep our foot on the brake and feel stuck, when in fact we are the ones choosing to not move forward.

The Elusive Presence of Anger

A "stop sign" that commonly shows up in a Transformation Prayer Ministry session is the presence of anger. Anger can cause our ministry session to stall out, keep us from receiving God's truth and generally hinder our moving forward. It is also often elusive and "hidden." Sometimes we deny being angry because we have been wrongly taught that it is always bad or sinful; especially anger we might feel toward God. The Bible tells us that we can be angry and

not sin when it says, "Be angry but do not sin..." (Eph. 4:26). Nevertheless, if you are angry, it is imperative that you be honest about this and expose what is there. This is your journey and you will need to be diligent to take ownership for whatever is inside of you. If you are angry at God. He already knows, since nothing is hidden from Him.

We are angry for specific reasons.

We often maintain a variety of reasons for holding onto anger. Some believe that their anger keeps them safe and protected. Some believe that their anger holds others into account. Some believe that their anger gives them a sense of control or empowerment. And although these beliefs may feel true in the moment, they are not. The truth is, holding onto anger actually keeps us in bondage, out-of-control, and in pain. Our anger does not hold others into account, keep things from happening, justify our behavior, or keep us protected and out of harm's way. Holding onto anger only keeps us in bondage and is like putting our fingers in our ears when it is time to hear truth from God. James the apostle says it clearly, "the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God" (Ja. 1:20).

Nevertheless, our belief will determine (or at least highly influence) what we choose to do. If I have a reason (something that I believe) for holding onto my anger then I will have great difficulty in ever letting it go. When anger is present, the goal is not to try to let it go, but rather to receive the Lord's perspective so that we do not "need" to remain angry.

Anger comes in all shapes and sizes. Sometimes it looks like revenge, hate, wrath, malice, rage, impatience, frustration, feeling "ticked, or miffed", feeling exasperated, flustered, aggravated, or irritated.

There is hope.

Anger will be released when the belief that holds it in place is replaced with God's truth. Nothing other than our lie-based belief holds our anger in place. For example, as long as we believe that our anger protects us from further harm, we will not likely lay it down. The answer is we simply need to receive truth from God where we believe lies.

If we are angry at God, there is a slight difference in how we find release. First, anger toward people often originates in the truth. More often than not we were justified in our initial flash of anger, however, we are choosing to hold on to it and by doing so we give the "devil opportunity" to deceive us (Eph. 4:26). Whereas, when we are angry with God it is always because of a misunderstanding we have about God and His purposes and never because God has wronged us. Once we identify why we are angry with God (the lie) we need to take our complaint to him (as Job contended with God). We should state our grievance to God directly. Once we do this, we must choose to be quiet and hear His response (just as Job did). God welcomes us to do this and wants us to know the truth. Once we know and operate in truth, we are able to let the anger go and choose to move forward in the session.

So as you proceed along through your TPM session, be aware of the possibility that you may be

harboring anger, resentment, or even rage toward others, yourself, your situation or even toward God. If this is the case, there will be a reason —belief- that keeps you holding on to it. If you come to a place where you seem to be stuck, emotionally shut down or cannot hear from God, look around for the possibility of there being the presence of anger and let your ministry facilitator know this is what you feel.

If at some point in a TPM session, your emotions may go away, no memory may come to mind, you may not hear anything from God. Should this happen, know this is common, explainable, and resolvable. Control lies in your hands. You will move forward when your belief in doing so allows you to. If your belief hinders you from moving forward, you can choose to identify this belief and receive God's perspective.