

Ephesians 15-01-25b

Let's pick up our study now in Ephesians chapter 6 and our topic at this point is anger. Anger. Orge is the root word in Greek and from this has come a whole slew of derivative words but it has the idea of energetic agitation.

That's at the root of the word and you can do all the etymological exploration that you want to in various directions but here it is its use for anger that is in view. We saw this as I said back in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 26, be angry and do not sin. Let not the sun go down on your wrath and we saw the difference between anger and wrath there where in the first case be angry and do not sin we had the idea of anger expressed in the in the root word orge followed by the word translated wrath which par orge or par orgizmos.

Now what is the difference? Orgizo the verb orge the noun be angry not was in the present imperative. Do not persist in a state of anger. Be angry is okay but do not sin.

Don't persist in that state. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath par orgizmos and if you remember several weeks back when we when we covered this para alongside or what goes along with the anger is what is in view and par orgizmo or par yeah par orgizo as a verb and par orgizmos as a has the idea of that which makes angry causes anger so you can be upset at a thing I say upset advisedly I don't like to be described as upset if I am I may be unhappy I may be torqued about a thing I may even be angry about a thing but I do not like to be described as upset because upset means destabilized and trust me when I tell you if I am angry I am not unstable I am hyper stable I will focus I will doggedly persist and pursue until I am satisfied that whatever it is it caused my anger has been addressed I am not unstable I am excessively stable almost to a fault so it's not a matter of being upset upset implies emotional flailing upset you know people cry when they're upset when I'm angry I'm not ready to cry I'm ready to shoot I am ready to make something happen to solve whatever it is that is amiss well be angry and do not sin there is righteous indignation the Lord Jesus was angry when he cleansed the temple God has been angry innumerable times with his people in the Old Testament but you can do it in a non-sinful way how do we do this what is our context step back now what's the context in Ephesians chapter 4 chapter 5 chapter 6 what are we talking about God's structure you can be angry because something is not functioning as it should people are not functioning as they should but to avoid sin you do not abuse authority you do not commit mental sins against other people you do not use it as an occasion for verbal sins for denigrating for abusing for disparaging for spreading unfavorable descriptions and knowledge abroad you keep it in its limits and in its bounds God can be exceedingly angry God can be wroth but he doesn't violate the bounds of his integrity he is always righteous he does not sin we are to follow that model and it says do not let the sun go down on your par or gizmos those things that attend and accompany this attitude now I can look at something the government has done or some policy that is in place regarding taxes or whatever it might be and every time I revisit that subject there is a part of my soul that gets angry

because I perceive it to be evil and confiscatory and not reflecting God's priorities and God's values we are godless in many ways in the function of parts of our government laws have been passed that are egregiously immoral you know legalizing things that ought to remain illegal and so on and I can revisit that from time to time and there's a part of me that you could say is angry and I think it partakes of God's anger at these things but I don't walk around in a perpetual state I don't have a garage full of picket signs and you know well tomorrow morning I'm going to go out and I'm going to I'll show them what I think these people that run around to funerals and post signs and make a make a issue out of themselves you know when you start making it a cause and this is the part or this is what goes along with you can think of a thing and and there's a part of you that gets angry but you do not affiliate and and draw in a lot of things that on a daily basis are a part of your operation you're academically angry you are philosophically unhappy but you are not an active wrath monger okay par or gizmos well this is important we review 426 because the word in chapter 6 verse 4 you fathers do not provoke your children to wrath is the same word provoke to wrath is the single word par or gizmo if you take your children out provoke to wrath this is par or gizmo and this is a present active imperative the present imperative implies continuing action do not habitually provoke or make angry your children now lest you think that angry children isn't a big deal let me read you a few recent observations school shootings remember littleton colorado red lake minnesota recently a seven-year-old in tampa florida beat his seven-month-old half-sister to death because he was angry a seven-year-old beat a seven-month-old to death in the home nine-year-old boy in brooklyn new york stabbed and killed an 11-year-old friend over a ball they were playing a game soccer ball stabbed him and killed him over this ball and these are the sensational stories but there is a trend of anger and it has produced a large pharmaceutical industry to try to control children who have uncontrollable fits of rage um a recent study by the yale child study center in new haven connecticut found that preschoolers are being expelled at more than three times the rate of k-12 students preschoolers are being kicked out of preschool uh just over here in tarrant county there was a survey recently and they asked counselors and teachers what they are observing and the counselors who responded more than 85 percent of them said that kindergartners today have more emotional and behavioral problems than five years ago 67 percent of child care providers say the same thing about the young children in their care it's happening in schools all across the country first graders and kindergartners are cursing and punching teachers and hitting classmates and anecdotally i can tell you that my knowledge of people who are working in education and i know a few have seen the very same thing just uncontrolled and uncontrollable bursts of anger and rage in children beginning with small children very small children um so what is going on here well part of it is the culture and this is legitimate when your child sits and watches four to six hours of television every day and in those programs they repeatedly see that people who are upset react violently fistfights gunfights and the good guys are doing this you know when bruce willis is unhappy he's going to punch somebody when clint eastwood is unhappy he's going to shoot somebody the good guys the guys who are held up to be heroes are solving their fictional problems with violence now i'm as big a fan of a shoot-em-up as anybody you know this about me however a steady diet of this

as a substitute for nurturing children well i've got to go do stuff so i'm going to sit my kid in front and that will keep them out of trouble and what they're getting is undigested violence we're not talking about it we're not engaging in any other form of constructive child training here we're just using the tv or now the internet as a babysitter we're putting on a video we're sitting in the back seat of the car for a long trip and sticking something on the roof and whatever it is they're watching that's that's their child training it is in lieu of parental time parental training and instruction discussion and discipline one study showed that 40 of violence depicted in the media is the good guys and so kids are learning that good people are violent research at the university of washington in seattle found that for every hour of tv that four-year-olds watch in a day their risk of becoming bullies at ages six to eleven increases by six to nine percent so the more hours of tv that four-year-olds watch the more likely they are to exhibit bullying behavior and it's directly proportional the more tv the more bullying in ann arbor michigan they found that girls aged six to ten who often watch shows with aggressive protagonists were found to be more likely to develop into angry adults than girls who watch none or few of these programs and this doesn't even count video games you know they i can slaughter i'll never forget the first time i saw i forget the game it was but uh you know you shoot somebody and uh there's this gory splat of blood and then there's a jawbone spinning on the floor uh what you know as as the smoke clears you just see this piece of bloody bone spinning on the floor and i thought that's graphic um so what you know you say well okay less violent television i mean you know we like to think ah doesn't matter but it actually does um and these you know it's in the music there's violent lyrics especially in some of the newer forms of music uh don't get me started on rap uh but the biggest problem and the biggest influence in the home should be parents parents do not provoke your children to that which accompanies anger that which manifests anger it's one thing if you say no you can't have that and your child gets angry it's something else when something you do causes what they like to call acting out and especially when you allow that behavior where there is manifested anger and it's your fault it's okay to be unhappy when you're denied a thing or when you are told to do a thing you know it's a natural reaction and there's nothing intrinsically wrong with that mental disappointment or dissatisfaction and you can't really say to somebody don't feel that way it's like any other emotion you can't tell somebody to have an emotion or to not have an emotion you tell somebody get angry about this well i just don't feel angry you tell somebody love this or love me well you can't just tell somebody to have an emotion and the flip side of that is you can't tell somebody to just turn off emotion you're wasting your time emotions have a cause and that's what paul is addressing here when he says fathers and read here parents do not provoke and there's no word for provoke this is just the uh the negative tied to the verb par or gizzo don't make your children angry in an acting out kind of way you cannot avoid making decisions setting policies ensuring obedience that doesn't cause the kind of anger that is allowed back in 426 even adults have anger that's allowed they can be angry but they can't sin you can be angry you can be unhappy that's okay you're tired you're cranky you're hungry we took too long it's my fault fine however you will obey well they can be riled inside and it can actually be in a non-sinful way the sin comes with the par or gizmo or gizzo par or gizmos where there is behavior there is a look

there is a slam door there is a thrown down item there is this hubris there is this rebellious spirit manifesting itself you keep your anger in bounds and don't cherish it don't let the sun go down this is why paul gave the instruction back in 426 now he can talk about par or gizmos par or gizzo and say don't provoke that kind of thing in your child unspoken and unwritten here is don't worry so much about anger that isn't sin kids are going to get angry about all kinds of things many adults are setting the opposite kind of example many parents are themselves poor examples of self-control and i don't like the word modeling it sounds like well i'm i'm going to i'm going to portray a behavior for your benefit you know i'm going i'm going to act i'm going to put on a show uh because i want to model spirituality for you i'm i'm going to pray out loud in front of you so you'll learn to pray i'm going to you know kiss your mother in front of you so you'll know that that married people ought to love each other and you know i'm going to model this behavior modeling behavior implies i'm doing this for observation you don't act we should be when you are a thing you don't have to model it you don't have to imitate it you don't have to to put on a mask and pretend to be it you are it so boo on modeling and let's concentrate on being and what this means is that parents have to first and foremost focus on their own health health their individual spiritual health their health as husbands and wives that's why paul put that first wives you need to be those who recognize the principles reflected in submission husbands you need to recognize and live in and become those principles of love that jesus christ himself exhibited self-sacrificially for the will of the father for the purpose of being beneficial to the church and presenting it to himself which is pleasing well pleasing to the father this has to exist first if you can get that squared away the parenting becomes much easier and the example that you exhibit will influence your children if you have uncontrollable anger wife gets angry at the husband because he's a dummy the husband gets angry at the wife because he doesn't think she's doing what she should that anger is it's impossible for it not to be observed by children and in your failure to discipline and control yourself and in your failure to cultivate and build strong marital relationship you break this commandment because you are causing your children to be angry because they're doing what you do you know little pitchers have big spouts they say what you say they use the language they hear you using and they learn their behaviors they learn their responses to uh situations and circumstances they learn how to respond by watching you that's the great fearful hazard of being a parent is you've got somebody that's just soaking up now what's worse at least i have some potential to control the example set in the home in front of the children i cannot control what goes on at daycare what other little evil children are doing in their response to circumstances and if your child is not learning by watching his parents because his parents are unavailable where is he learning well in the old days we had extended family and this is a wonderful model grandma is there grandpa is there an aunt is there an older sibling is there there's someone in the family who shares the values of that family hopefully the spiritual health and well-being of that family can step in that's a wonderful thing there are circumstances there are periods of time where you just are forced to have strangers babysit your kid but you want to try to pray your way out of that circumstance because unless you know the people well unless you're confident that that is a nurturing environment it is going to be trouble it is going to be trouble and you are going to be

violating this command you are going to be putting a cause for anger in your children you're going to be teaching them angry responses because that's the environment you've put them in godless environment godless people godless other children who are operating out of the flesh you cannot help but be planting the seeds of anger and later problems in your children so this is something we have to think about so if you are an adult if you're a parent and you erupt in rage and throw tantrums and fits how can you be surprised when your child does the same thing you heard not that long ago that there was a dad here in texas that shot a high school coach when his son got kicked off the team shot him this guy's spiritual life needs work yes a parent in massachusetts was going to watch his kid play hockey and got upset because he didn't think one of the kids was doing right and grabbed the kid started shaking him and yelling in his face kid was eight years old not even his kid and they had to ban the guy from even attending the games adults possibly as a result of growing up without learning anger management skills without having spiritual resources to draw upon everybody's going to get angry but it is the level of anger and it is the prevalence of anger and it is the inability to control and deal with it that is the problem studies have shown this is a quote studies have shown that harsh parents are more apt to raise explosive kids while warm authoritative fathers and mothers are more likely to bring up well-behaved emotionally intelligent children one of the changes i've seen in child development literature in the last 10 years or so when i was actively involved in a child-based ministry here non-profit organization that dealt with children a lot i read the literature i heard the the talk and the approaches and all of that and it was all on positive reinforcement and you know let them be themselves and don't don't squish their id and all the rest of it don't mash their ego you know self-expression is what they have come to discover because that train ran way off the tracks i mean all of those black and white things they used to show the guys with the flapping wings you know hitting the ground and all the trains crashing that's what happened with that policy and they found out that it absolutely did not work and i am gratified to see that now even in secular child development literature this is what they say listen to this warm and authoritative fathers and mothers you have to establish boundaries elizabeth mckenzie phd child psychologist in seattle says that aggressive children with difficult temperaments require limit setting isn't that refreshing somebody out on the economy says when you've got children that are running amok you've got to set limits praise god somebody finally woke up and smelled the coffee it's only taken him i don't know 20 or 30 years but they finally said wow dr spock was wrong elizabeth mckenzie phd seattle these kids require constant limit setting if parents don't adopt a calm but firm mode from the get-go the child may quickly become hard to handle it's easy to respond with anger and coercive parenting approaches because you don't know what else to do says dr mckenzie but this is a recipe for mayhem because harsh punitive responses tend to ratchet up the child's aggressiveness this is she mentioned spanking in there but this is stupid spanking this is spanking in anger this is being inconsistent this is uh doing it wrong if you can't do spanking right don't spank you're better off doing the timeout thing and and good luck but either do it right or don't do it all and by the way not all children require spanking many many children especially when they start young with with respect for the lord all it takes is a look it's that it's like god saying i will guide you with mine eye and many times you can

create more grief and desire to do better in a child by a disappointed look than any kind of physical seldom required if you do it right it's a seldom used measure it's only when the foolishness is bound up in their heart that you've got to drive it from them and that's not that common but people do it wrong and they do it out of frustration they do it because they can't think of what else to do anger why are kids angry anger is usually an expression of frustration for younger children they will translate sadness and other unexplained emotions they'll just get angry because they it's kind of a default response they don't know what else to do so the anger just comes out so the national institute of mental health in Bethesda Maryland followed 72 children in the Washington DC area and they found that four to five year olds who behave belligerently had about the same amount of concern for others as their peers did at four to five they're belligerent but they're still malleable their ability to empathize is pretty much like everybody else but when they turn six and seven and start getting into those elementary school years kids who continue to lash out were less empathetic and more prone to ignore avoid or laugh at people in pain than those who had outgrown their aggression what is this this is lack of sensitivity lack of being able to put yourself in someone else's position and this is a skill that can be taught but you have to teach it young and you have to exhibit it young if you discipline your children in an understanding way i know this doesn't seem fair i know you're hungry and tired but i understand how you feel but this is a necessary measure what did Jesus say to John at the Jordan look i know this doesn't make sense to you but you've got to allow it for now there's some explanation there so that John's just not like i just totally don't understand this this seems completely wrong to me it's backward like Peter Lord you will never wash my feet and Jesus basically does the same thing look Peter i need to give you enough of an explanation that you'll be okay with this i know it seems backward to you you should be washing my feet i know that seems that way but this is necessary you've got to let me do this and parents have to be inculcating children with empathy toward others put the interests of others ahead of your own you can't put their interests ahead of your own if you're not sensitive to them if you don't even think about what their interests are and this is the problem with angry and belligerent children who become bullies is they're not being taught this you know why there is not enough time with a parent who knows what they're doing to inculcate these things at an early age and you create an obstacle that is going to have to be overcome later it's not determinative the child is not trapped and oh my goodness we made a mistake and now they're forever warped and blighted God can overcome anything but you make an obstacle it is difficult if we do not concentrate on being those who engender the respect that undergirds healthy obedience if we do not engender the respect that undergirds the command to honor your father and mother it's a lot easier to honor and obey someone who is striving hard with all of their flaws and their failures to do the right thing who is who is on your team who wants you to understand wants you to be aware that there are bigger issues at stake and is willing to take the time to invest in that understanding and you cannot avoid making your children angry if you don't build a time relationships are built in time no time no relationship if you're you and your spouse or got complicated busy schedules and you kind of high and by and i left you a sack lunch and there's you know cold chicken leg in the refrigerator

and you know see you tomorrow night you cannot nurture and build relationship without an investment of time by the way you cannot build and nurture your relationship with god without investing time this is why daily reflection daily setting aside time for prayer evening and morning and at noon i will pray and cry aloud so that god hears my voice i will go to the inner chamber i will pray and seek his face the lord jesus is a great example of prayer he's god the son you would think if anybody doesn't need to pray it's him and you see constant references to him going off by himself to pray to renew and restore and cultivate his relationship with his own heavenly father now if the lord jesus needs to do it how much more we right same thing in children yes children need to obey their parents yes they need to honor their father and mother but parents need to ensure that there is adequate time spent so that bonds of empathy and examples of self-control and the establishment and maintenance of boundaries and limits are accomplished now even if there's some situation where you cannot do this personally it's just impossible to do personally then whoever is going to do it by proxy whoever is minding the children it is the parent's responsibility not the minder the parent has to ensure that the minder is doing as much of this as can be done in the absence of the parent i know there are situations especially in this day and age where it is just physically not possible god hasn't granted the grace to do it yourself but you do not lose the responsibility you can delegate the authority but you do not delegate responsibility and you are still accountable before god for the way that child is trained in the hands of those that are doing it on your behalf so anger is at the root of so many other problems and we have to find ways to deal with this and oddly enough the consistent maintenance of structure and the consistent enforcement of limits is one of the ways to reduce frustration in children children get frustrated when the walls keep changing position when what was okay yesterday isn't okay today and what isn't okay today i see my brother doing tomorrow and no consequence frustration leads to anger consistency in establishing and maintaining limits greatly reduces frustration which is the root of anger in many many children as well as adults angry outbursts can be triggered by embarrassment so it would be helpful if parents did not embarrass their children unless you do it in a calculated and meaningful way there's a time when that's a tool but it's not often but children can get angry when they feel hurt and they're hurt by embarrassment loneliness isolation anxiety anytime uh and this again is true for adults but especially children if you feel helpless to understand the situation fully and helpless to change it this can you know sometimes if you can find a way to grant the person some control some operational functional things to do this is the way we feel like we're in control well i can do something here i can i i can function within this larger situation but anger is a response to frustration um so if we want to fulfill this command and and by the way we're all children of god and then into in a larger sense this applies to our dealings with one another these are sort of universal principles that are illustrated and reflected in parents and children we should honor one another especially you know those who are elders in the faith so to speak and those who are a little further along need to be patient and kind tender-hearted forgiving of those who are perhaps could be viewed as children in the faith not as far along don't have as many tools haven't got the maturity and the experience that we have we are elders in that sense and we have the same responsibility to each other don't embarrass don't

frustrate don't create we have enough problems without creating problems for each other so this is really a fruitful area for self-analysis and reflection are there ways and and i'm sure you know all of us can think of ways that we could do better we could improve we can break bad habits and even long-standing patterns to fulfill this command fathers do not provoke your children to wrath bring them up in the training and admonition of the lord the word training there is paideia paideuo is the is now and paidos this is the word for child but the word here means disciplined instruction disciplined instruction and it is used even of the lord jesus who learned obedience through the things that he suffered paidos it is structured experience training in a structured environment and of course admonition this is the flip side of that this is the nouthance anytime you see n-o-u you think this has to do with the mind the understanding and so you impart understanding so you have disciplined instruction this is as though you are a child you're submissive you're ready to be instructed and somebody is ready to give you that instruction for your benefit so that you can grow you instruct children so that they can grow and mature not so they can be really good children so that they can move forward and grow out of being children that's the purpose of the instruction paidos idea this has the idea of giving somebody what they need to grow up out of childhood and then nouthance this is imparting understanding suffer it to be so now it is necessary to fulfill righteousness peter if i don't wash your feet you won't have any inheritance with me you won't have a part with me have a corrective influence on someone by giving them understanding this is the reason we have this rule do you see what happened i told you to set this top up you didn't now you see the kool-aid all over the upholstery there's a reason we have the top up rule for your sippy cup there's a reason we say don't set the glassware too close to the edge of the table do you see how this got accidentally bumped and has shattered i did this the other day uh knocked off a glass we've had forever and shattered on the floor because it was too close to the edge and i knocked it off and you know spotting that glass i should have moved it to the center i didn't broke one of my own rules broke the glass instruction understanding this is why we have these rules do you see the sense of it not just it's my rule do it because i said so here's why here are consequences when when we don't follow this policy and all of us need to look to it understanding nouthance so bring them up is ek trefo trefo means to grow a thing to it actually means to feed a thing to to nourish with food trefo and ek trefo is our word so what does it mean feed out your children feed them so that they grow out of being children ek trefo bring them up doesn't quite get it give them what they need to move up and out of childhood ek trefo feed them out build them up and out with structured disciplined instruction and giving them understanding not just the what but the why not just the how but the rationale the the wisdom that underlies these things training and admonition of the lord how many times have we seen this all through chapter 5 in the fear of god in the lord all of this in the sphere of our relationship with god well that's ephesians chapter 6 verses 1 through 4 we'll pick up in verse 5 next time looking at bond servants oh my goodness the bible condones slavery well we'll see what the bible actually has to say about slavery next time father thank you for the truth of your word thank you for its pertinence its meaning its uh immediate application value for us day by day hour by hour as we experience the circumstances and the situations that you have built into our

lives we pray that god the holy spirit will bring this to our minds help us to see clearly through the fog of those circumstances and situations how we can put these truths into practice how we ourselves can become wise and understanding and how we can speak the truth to one another in love and impart that understanding to one another and especially to the generation that is coming up behind us we pray these things in jesus name amen