

Restless - Week 1 Devotional

“Don’t go to bed mad. Stay up and fight about it.” Phyllis Diller

I’m sure most of you are too young to know of Phyllis Diller, but back in the day she was a widely recognized comedienne. So, I think, with her quote, she was trying to be more funny than spiritual, but I think she may have succeeded, at least a little, at both. Because, whether she realized it or not, her quote is a common interpretation (or misinterpretation) of Ephesians 4:26-27 that says, *“Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.”* I say misinterpretation because these verses are commonly translated along the lines of, *“don’t let the sun go down, or don’t go to bed, without working out every detail of a grievance, or a sin, you may have with, or against, another”*. While I think that may be admirable, I’m not sure it’s realistic, and I’m not even sure if that is what the writer of Ephesians (Paul) had in mind. When Paul said, *“Be angry and do not sin”*, that’s exactly what he meant. Unfortunately, there are very few of us, ok, one of us (Jesus), that have that ability. I think what Ephesians is trying to tell us is that we don’t have to work out every detail of our grievances before sundown, but we do need to work out our anger. Because if our anger is allowed to linger it will become sin. And our sin gives Satan an opportunity, a foothold, or an easy entrance to work in and on us. He’s pretty capable as it is, he doesn’t need our help.

I guess another, more up to date way of saying this is, can we just agree to disagree? Or more specifically, even if we can’t work out all the details, can we make a conscious effort not to let our anger carry over into other parts of our lives? Can we just be civil with each other? Can we just be nice to one another? To give an up-to-date answer, more often than not, we can’t, or we won’t.

Finally, we get to the business at hand. This week we start a new message series called *“Restless”*. In it, the teaching team will be looking at how the restless nature of our culture is impacting our souls. Specifically, for this week, they will be looking at how can we do a better job of “resting in God.” So, does *“going to bed mad”* have anything to do with *“resting in God?”* I think so, because anything that we allow to linger unchecked in our minds, in our souls, will go from the emotion of anger, to anxiousness, to worry, to restlessness and eventually, to the sin of anger. If sin is simply anything that comes between us and God, then how can we “rest in God,” if we can’t get close to God? We can’t.

So, this week, just agree to disagree. Make a conscious effort not to let your anger (or whatever it may be) carry over into other parts of our lives, into relationships with others. But more than that, don’t allow your anxiousness, or worry, or restlessness to linger and

fester into sin. A sin that comes between us and God. However, with God there is no agreeing to disagree, only agreeing to agree. But when we do, we will be given a rest like no other. Because only then we agree with God, will we know what it means “to rest in God.”