



Williams Chapel Church
Chief Apostle Kimberly L. Nixon, Pastor
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 617, Spring Lake, N.C. 28390
1230 N. Bragg Blvd., Spring Lake, N.C. 28390
Phone: 910-436-3186
Fax: 910-436-6347



Anger and Grief

Jonah 4:9 KJV

And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.

John 11:32-33 AMPC

When Mary came to the place where Jesus was and saw Him, she dropped down at His feet, saying to Him, Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. [33] When Jesus saw her sobbing, and the Jews who came with her [also] sobbing, He was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. [He chafed in spirit and sighed and was disturbed.]

“**Chafed in spirit**” is a powerful description of what prolonged grief, frustration, disappointment, or pressure can do internally.

To be **chafed** literally means to become irritated or made sore through repeated friction. Applied to the spirit, it paints the picture of a person who has endured **so much-repeated emotional friction that the inner person has become raw and irritated**.

Anger and grief are often deeply connected. **Sometimes anger is grief that has found a voice**. When something precious has been lost—whether a person, relationship, health, independence, opportunity, dream, season of life, sense of safety, or expectation—grief does not always appear as tears. Sometimes **grief comes out angry**.

We tend to associate grief with sadness, but grief can also sound like:

“Why did this happen?”

“This wasn’t supposed to happen.”

“I didn’t deserve this.”

“I want my old life back.”

“Why couldn’t things have stayed the way they were?”

“God, why did You allow this?”

Those statements may sound angry, but underneath them is often a heart mourning what has changed.

Anger Can Be the Protest of Grief

There is something in grief that protests reality:

“I don’t want this to be true.”

Anger can emerge in the distance between **the life we expected and the life we are now experiencing**.

That is why major transitions can generate surprising anger. You may understand intellectually that something has changed while emotionally still struggling to accept what the change has cost.

Anger says, **“Something has been taken from me.”**

Grief says, **“And I miss what I had.”**

Anger says, **“This should not have happened.”**

Grief says, **“But it did, and now I have to learn how to live with what has changed.”**

Sometimes We Become Angry at the Wrong Thing

Grief can also **displace anger**. The person or situation receiving our anger may not be its original source.

You can be grieving one thing and become irritated about another. A ***minor inconvenience produces a major reaction***. Someone says something relatively small, but it touches something enormous inside you.

The reaction is about **more than the moment**.

That is why healing requires us to ask:

“What am I really angry about—and what am I grieving underneath it?”

That question can uncover layers of loss that have never been acknowledged.

Anger Can Protect Us From Vulnerability

Sometimes anger feels stronger than sadness.

Anger makes us feel powerful.
Grief makes us feel vulnerable.

Anger says, **“I’ll fight.”**
Grief says, **“I’m hurting.”**

Anger says, **“Leave me alone.”**
Grief says, **“Please understand what I’ve lost.”**

Anger may therefore become emotional armor. It protects the tender places we are not yet ready to expose.

But eventually, healing requires us to remove enough of the armor to **grieve honestly**.

Scripture Gives Grief Permission to Speak

The Bible does not sanitize human emotion. Job lamented. Jeremiah wept. David cried out. Martha questioned Jesus after Lazarus died: *“Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died”* (John 11:21).

And remarkably, Jesus did not rebuke her grief.

Jesus Himself wept.

Biblical faith therefore does not require us to deny painful emotions. **Lament allows faith and pain to occupy the same prayer.**

You can believe God **and** grieve.

You can trust God **and** be disappointed.

You can worship God **and** ask questions.

You can know God is faithful while admitting, **“Lord, this hurts.”**

Healing Anger May Require Grieving the Loss

Sometimes we keep asking God to remove anger when what our hearts actually need is permission to **mourn**.

The healing journey may sound like:

“I’m angry.”

Then:

“I’m angry because something changed.”

Then:

“I’m hurting because I lost something precious.”

And finally:

“God, help me grieve what was, accept what is, and discover what can still be.”

That last movement is important. Grief does not require forgetting the former season. Healing means the former season **no longer has to be restored exactly as it was for life to have meaning again.**

Let's reflect on the framework we've used before:

Face it — *This happened.*

Feel it — *This hurt me.*

Frame it — *This changed part of my story, but it does not have to define my entire story.*

Free it — *I release my demand that life must return to what it was before I can live fully again.*

Perhaps the central truth on **Anger and Grief** is this:

Sometimes the anger cannot be healed until the grief underneath it has been heard.

And when we finally allow ourselves to say, **“I’m not only angry—I’m grieving,”** we may have reached the place where deeper healing can begin.

09/23/2026