



Written by
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“Heart Break Café” Episode 1: "Taming Anger"

Scriptures:

Proverbs 15: 1
James 4: 1-3
James 3: 8
Mark 11: 25

Dramatic Category: Heart Break Café

NOTE: The pastor presents his sermon under the guise of having lunch with someone who is having a problem with some spiritual issue. Set a table and two chairs on stage. Follow the main cue lines in the menu/script, but adlib the rest. Have fun; this can be hilarious!

Topic: Anger is often a spiritual problem.

Performance Time: 20 minutes: *(This is the pastor's sermon, so it may be longer)*

Number of Players: 4 players *(2 men, 2 women)*

Objective:

Exhibiting anger is often a sign of a deeper, spiritual problem. Practical steps can be taken to control anger as we progress from controlling the tone of our voice, to controlling our frustrated desires, to curbing our tendency toward damaging speech, to finally learning how to forgive those whom we feel have wronged us.

Synopsis:

At the request of Carl's wife, pastor Barry agrees to discuss Carl's problem with anger over some refreshments at the Heartbreak cafe. During their conversation, LaRoue, the waitress, provides plenty of opportunities for Carl to practice Pastor Barry's advice about ways to control his anger from watching his tone of voice, to finally forgiving LaRoue.

Cast:

- LaRoue:** *A comical character. She is a truck stop-type waitress, gum chewing, raspy, wearing a food-stained apron, hair up in a bandanna, and has an attitude.*
- Noreyne:** *Voice of Carl's wife (offstage into a microphone)*
- Carl:** *A young man whose wife complained about his inability to control his anger.*
- Pastor:** *The pastor of the church, who delivers his sermon using Carl as the example and LaRoue as comic relief.*

Props:

- A bowl of fruit salad
- 2 iced-teas
- 2 table settings
- 2 "Heartbreak Cafe" menus with logos on the outside, and "cheat scripts" on the inside.

Note: At the end of this script, a "cheat sheet" is included. It is recommended that this cheat sheet be placed in the menu and left open on the table for the pastor and Carl to consult as the sermon progresses. LaRoue can also place a "cheat sheet" on her tray.

Sound:

- The sound of a phone ringing (This is optional if you decide to begin with "The Complaint.")
- Play "Rock Around The Clock" or some other 60's hit.
- A backstage microphone for Noreyne
- 3 wireless microphones

Stage:

- Set up one table with 2 chairs, center stage
- Design a Heart Break Café logo and display it on the screens before the skit starts
- Make scripture slides to display during the course of the sermon; they add "meat" to the moment, and make it appear less theatrical.

Lighting:

Change the lighting from the skit portion of the sermon to something different when the pastor gets up to talk. This protects the integrity of the sermon.

Note: A "FREEZE" or a stage "tableau" for Carl and LaRoue is recommended on a cue from the pastor, so that he can get up from the table and address the audience. This will give more a "regular sermon" feel. When the pastor sits back down at the table, it is a cue for Carl and LaRoue to resume the scene. Lighting changes will add to this 2-dimension feeling.

NOTE: The following is very loosely scripted and relies heavily on ad-lib because the dialogue between Carl and the pastor has to sound relaxed and casual. They can say whatever seems natural as long as the script's main points are covered.

Every pastor has his own way of crafting a sermon on anger management. The following are only the main points that LaRoue will be setting up and illustrating.

Please add whatever else the pastor wishes to say on the subject, and encourage LaRoue and Carl to antagonize one another to their hearts' content beyond the scripted lines.

The Script:

Optional Scene 1: "The Complaint"

(This is optional. You may decide to go straight into the "Heart Break Café" when it comes time for the pastor's sermon.)

(The pastor welcomes the audience early in the service, possibly after the first few songs of the service. In the middle of his greeting, the phone rings. He grins at the audience, trying to ignore the ring. He picks it up at the third ring. He is obviously bothered)

Pastor: *(Looking for the phone on stage)* I told the maintenance crew to remove this phone. I'm so sorry. *(He picks up the phone)* Hello.

Noreyne: *(into an offstage mic)* Pastor, this is Noreyne Parker, Carl's wife. I'm sorry to bother you, but I wondered if maybe you could talk to Carl sometime today. His temper is really becoming a problem and we need some help. Do you think you could talk to him some time soon?

Pastor: Well, ah...I could....

Noreyne: Oh, I'm sorry. Did I call at a bad time?

Pastor: *(looking awkwardly at the audience)* Well, I am with a few people at the moment, but tell Carl that I'll meet him at the Heartbreak Café after church, okay?

Noreyne: Thank you, Pastor Barry. I sure appreciate it. Bye.

Pastor: *(putting the phone down)* Sorry about that folks. I'll have them move that phone. Let's get on with our service, shall we?

Scene 2: "The Introduction"

(The service continues in whatever fashion is customary for your church. After some more of the service has passed, possibly more songs, someone (perhaps an associate pastor) gets up to introduce the sermon today on the very serious subject of Taming Anger. After the introduction, the music "Rock around the Clock (or whatever theme song you have chosen to play) is played and the serious tone set in the introduction is shattered.)

Scene 3: "The Heart Break Cafe"

MUSIC: "Rock Around the Clock"

GRAPHIC: Display the "Heart Break Café" logo.

LIGHTS: UP BACK WALL, COLORFUL STAGE LIGHTING

(The pastor and Carl walk toward the front of the stage as the theme music is playing.)

Description of action:

Pastor and Carl welcome each other

Pastor shares that anger can be a real problem in life.

LaRoue enters

- LaRoue:** *(In a Brooklyn, New York-type accent while chewing her gum)*
Hi there. Welcome to the "Heartbreak Cafe." Stay for a while, leave with a smile.
My name's LaRoue. What can I getcha'. *(She hands them the menus and waters.)*
- Carl:** I'll have an iced tea with lemon.
- LaRoue:** *(Writing on her pad)* One iced tea with lemon.
(To the pastor) And you, sir?
- Pastor:** I'll have an iced tea also.
- LaRoue:** *(writing on the pad.)* Two iced-teas.
- Carl:** *(In a condescending tone)* He just wants one iced tea, not two.
- LaRoue:** *(Equally condescending)* I know that. Your iced tea plus his iced tea makes two iced teas. One, two...are you with me, mister?
- Carl:** *(Taking offense)* Don't get smart with me.
- LaRoue:** *(Snippy)* There's no way I could get smart "with" you.
- Pastor:** *(Jumping in to make peace)*
Okay, what do you want to eat, Carl?
- Carl:** I'll just have pie. Do you have pie?
- LaRoue:** Of course we have pie. This is a restaurant.
- Carl:** *(trying to control his temper)* What kind do you have?
- LaRoue:** Boysenberry, cherry, apple, razzleberry, pecan,
(She lists a bunch more.)
- Carl:** I'll have apple.
- LaRoue:** Dutch apple, apple crumb, French apple, sour-cream apple, deep dish apple, or apple cobbler.
- Carl:** *(Becoming irritated & snapping back)* Just apple pie.
Does it have to be so complicated.
- LaRoue:** All right then, uncomplicated apple pie. Do you want that
with cheese or ice cream?

Carl: Nothing.

LaRoue: Heated or cold.

Carl: Cold.

LaRoue: Got it. *(Staring right at Carl)* One cold nothing.
(Turning to the Pastor) And you, sir. Are you ready to order?

Pastor: No, I'll just have the ice-tea; I'm not very hungry.

LaRoue: Okay; I'll get your ice-teas; *(she leaves, giving Carl a glare)*

Carl: Can you believe how rude the help is around here?

Pastor: She wasn't the only one who was rude, Carl.

FREEZE #1: *(Carl freezes)*

LIGHT: CHANGE TO SERMON LIGHT AS BARRY STEPS CENTER

SERMON POINT 1: "Tone Of Voice"

Scripture: Proverbs 15: 1 "A *gentle answer turns away wrath.*"

(The point in this that Carl was as much to blame as LaRoue because of his harsh tone with her. He invites conflict with his tone.)

LIGHT: RETURN TO "CAFÉ" LIGHTING

PASTOR RETURNS TO THE TABLE: ACTION RESUMES

Carl: *(Cue line for LaRoue's entrance.)* Okay, maybe you're right. I should watch my tone.

(LaRoue enters with the two iced teas, but no pie. Just a look of disgust.)

LaRoue: *(In a fighting tone)* We're out of uncomplicated apple. Sorry. Do you want to complicate things?

Carl: *(Trying to be nice to her)* Oh, well....ah...French apple will be fine, with no cheese.

LaRoue: *(under her breath as she exits)* Of course not, that would make it way too complicated.

Pastor: That's good, Carl. You didn't let disappointment get in the way of the tone in your voice. That's the root of anger, you know.

Carl: Pie?

Pastor: No, not getting what you want.

Carl: Oh, I'm fine about not getting what I want.

FREEZE #2: *(Carl freezes)*

LIGHT: CHANGE TO SERMON LIGHT AS BARRY STEPS CENTER

SERMON POINT 2: "Frustrated Desires"

Scripture: James 4:1-3

"What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight."

LIGHT: RETURN TO "CAFÉ" LIGHTING

PASTOR RETURNS TO THE TABLE AND THE ACTION RESUMES

LaRoue: *(LaRoue returns without any pie)* See that couple over there. *(She points off into the distance.)* He's eating your piece of French Apple pie. We're all out.

Carl: *(Looses control)* What! I just want apple pie! Is that so hard? Can't you keep track of what you're out of?

LaRoue: Yep, I sure can; and right now, I'm out of patience. *(She glares at Carl with pen in hand to write his next order.)*

Carl: I'll have some fruit salad.

LaRoue: *(exiting)* Good. That only comes uncomplicated. *(She begins to exit)*

Carl: Are you sure it's not spoiled?

LaRoue: *(snippily to Carl)* I don't think any of the "fruit" is spoiled. *(She exits.)*

Carl: Did you hear that? She insinuated that I was spoiled. That's it. I want to see the manager. She should be fired.

Pastor: *(Pulling Carl back down into the chair.)* Calm down Carl. Now you see how the words you choose can cause a fight.

FREEZE #3: *(Carl freezes)*

LIGHT: CHANGE TO SERMON LIGHT AS BARRY STEPS CENTER

SERMON POINT 3: "Damaging Speech"

Scripture: James 3:8

"No human being can tame the tongue; a restless evil, full of deadly poison."

(The pastor expounds on that until he is finished making the point)

LIGHT: RETURN TO "CAFÉ" LIGHTING

THE PASTOR RETURNS TO HIS SEAT AND THE ACTION BEGINS.

Carl: *(Trying to suck the iced tea through the straw, but he is having difficulty.)*
Something is wrong with this straw. It's not working. *(He pulls the straw out and examines it.)*

LaRoue: *(enters carrying the iced tea pitcher.)* Is everything Okay here.
Can I refill those teas for you?

Carl: I can't get my tea up through this straw. *(He holds the straw out for her to see.)*

LaRoue: Of course not. It works better if you put it in the glass.
(She puts it back in the glass for him.) Now try it.

Carl: *(beginning to loose his temper, but being calmed down by the facial expressions and gestures of the pastor.)* I have tried that. *(harshly)* The straw isn't working.

LaRoue: *(pulling out the straw, and examining it up close.)* Oh, I see the problem. You have a lemon pit stuck in the straw.

(She puts the straw to her lips, turns to Carl and blows with all her might. The pit is shot right into his face. Of course, this is an imagined pit and Carl reacts as though he has been hit squarely in the face.)

There, it should be fine now.

(She puts the straw back into the glass, refills both iced teas, and walks away. Carl looks on in disbelief, and the Pastor is working hard not to bust out laughing.)

Carl: *(Beside himself with anger)* That's it. I'm going to report her.

Pastor: *(Pulling Carl back as he tries to follow LaRoue)* Let it go.

Carl: Let it go! I'm not going to let her do that to me.

Pastor: For get it.

Carl: I can't forget that. She made me look like a fool. What am I supposed to do about that?

Pastor: Forgive her.

Carl: Forgive her?

Pastor: Yes. Forgive her, then forget it. That's the key to solving a lot of anger problems, Carl. Forgiveness ends anger.

Carl: Oh, this just gets better.

FREEZE #1: (Carl freezes)

LIGHT: CHANGE TO SERMON LIGHT AS BARRY STEPS CENTER

SERMON POINT 4: "Forgive"

Scripture: Mark 11:25

"And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Note: If he likes the analogy, the pastor might liken the pit caught in the straw to an unforgiving heart. The "living water" (iced tea) of God's love cannot fill a person's life if the "pit" of unforgiveness is in the way. Sometimes we have to forgive even before people apologize; remember, God loved us "while we were yet sinners."

LIGHT: RETURN TO "CAFÉ" LIGHTING

THE PASTOR RETURNS TO HIS SEAT AND THE ACTION RESUMES

LaRoue: *(Re-enters with the check)* Is there anything else I can get you gentlemen today?

Pastor: No, that will be all. *(He prepares to pay.)*

Carl: *(To LaRoue)* I forgive you for being so rude.

LaRoue: *(Flying off the handle)* Me being rude! Well, save it mister. You are the rudest customer I've had all day! *(She is ready to fight.)*

Pastor: *(standing between them to make peace)* Okay, we have to be going. It's been great to be here. Thanks for your service, ah...what is your name?

LaRoue: LaRoue.

Pastor: Well, LaRoue, like I said, it's been a pleasure. We'll see you again. *(She exits, glaring at Carl as the Pastor pushes her along)*

I'll get this. *(He puts down a few dollars after looking at the check)*

Carl: I'll get the tip. Got a pencil?

Pastor: A pencil?

Carl: So I can write out the tip. I want to give her a few pointers on customer relations. *(He fumbles for his wallet & lays down a dollar.)* I was ready to forgive her. All she had to do was apologize.

Pastor: You weren't ready to forgive her. You were ready to accuse her, force her into a confession, then generously forgive her to make yourself look good.

Carl: I was not!

Pastor: Forgiveness does not mean conquest, Carl. The first step in forgiveness is self-control and a little humility. You have to fight the urge to conquer the moment and the person, then realize that you are a sinner forgiven by God everyday.

Anger comes from not being able to get your way or protect the image you have of yourself. Try giving up your way and reflecting God's image. You might be a happier man, with a happier family.

Carl: *(looking back over his shoulder at the table as they exit.)*
I just can't believe they let a woman like that loose on innocent customers.

Pastor: What makes you think they let her loose on innocent customers?
(They exit)

The End

(Repeat the "Rock Around the Clock" music or go into a more somber moment if the pastor intends to offer an invitation or invite people up for prayer if they are having trouble controlling anger.)

Taming Anger “Cheat Script”

(Place this inside Carl and Barry’s legal-sized menus, and tape it to LaRoue’s tray.)

LaRoue: Welcome to the "Heartbreak Cafe." etc....

Carl: I'll have an iced tea with lemon. *(Iced tea gag)*

LaRoue: *(one + one = 2 iced tea gag)*

Carl: Don't get smart with me.

LaRoue: There's no way I could get smart "with" you.

Pastor: Okay, what do you want to eat, Carl?

Carl: I'll just have pie. Do you have pie? *(Pie gag)*

Carl: Just apple pie. so complicated? Cold, nothing

LaRoue: One cold nothing. ...Pastor orders nothing

Carl: Can you believe how rude the help is around here?

Pastor: Cue line #1:
She wasn't the only one who was rude, Carl.

FREEZE #1: SERMON POINT 1: “Tone Of Voice”

Scripture: Proverbs 15: 1

“A gentle answer turns away wrath.”

Carl: *(Cue line for LaRoue's entrance.)*
Okay, maybe you're right. I should watch my tone.

LaRoue: *(out of French Apple gag)* orders plain apple.

Pastor: disappointment gets in the way
root of anger, you know.

Carl: Pie?

Pastor: No, not getting what you want.

Carl: Cue line #2: ..fine about not getting what I want.

FREEZE #2: SERMON POINT 2: “Frustrated Desires”
Scripture: James 4:1-3
“I know the source...”

LaRoue: *(last piece of pie gag)*

Carl: *Lose control* What! I apple pie! so hard?
Can't you keep track of what you're out of?

LaRoue: ... out of patience.

Carl: *(orders fruit)*

LaRoue: *(exiting)* comes uncomplicated.

Carl: not spoiled?

LaRoue: sure the "fruit" is not spoiled.

Carl: Cue #3: Did you hear that?
I want to see the manager. She should be fired.

Pastor: Now you see how the words you choose can cause a fight.

FREEZE #3: SERMON POINT 3: “Damaging Speech”
Scripture: James 3: 8
“No human being can tame...”

LaRoue: Is everything Okay here. refill those teas

Carl: ... wrong with this straw. It's not working.

(straw gag)

Carl: I'm going to report her.

Pastor: Let it go. (*Carl is beside himself*)

Carl: Cue #4: Oh, this just gets better.

FREEZE #4: SERMON POINT 4: “Forgive”

Scripture: Mark 11:25

“And when you stand praying...”

LaRoue: (*w check*) anything else

Pastor: No, that will be all. (*He prepares to pay.*)

Carl: I forgive you for being so rude. They argue

Pastor: it was a pleasure.... (*she exits*)

Carl: tip....pencil....write out tip.

Pastor: weren't ready to forgive...ready to accuse...make yourself look good.

Carl: let a woman like that loose...innocent customers.

Pastor: What makes you think they let her loose on innocent customers?