

Spirit-Filled Pastor: 3 Ways to Deal With the Cancer of Hostility

The shock and awe of the past several months have me wondering, *How much more can the system handle?*

The turbulence has many of us doing an internal evaluation and asking, "What can I do?" While others feel the problems are so big, they are jumping straight to "I can't do anything."

There are many disturbing questions of our time: Russian interference in elections, hostility in the nations, and the list goes on. Both Democrats and Republicans seem to be living on the offensive.

Does anyone else keep thinking, *Are there any adults in the room?*

Almost every person I have ever counseled about problems in a marriage, even counselors that I have talked to about marriage problems, agrees that it usually comes down to one issue: One or both partners are being immature.

As the saying goes, "If it's not working for one person, it isn't working for anybody."

How can we solve mature, complicated problems with hostile, immature responses that lead to bitterness and division?

When you ask people what the opposite of love is, the automatic answer is hate. However, the opposite of love is hostility. Hostility is built on selfishness and division.

Hostility is a sin. Jesus Christ came to crush the lie of hostility. Hostile behavior is the action of enemies, and there is so much divisiveness that exists in hearts today.

Each follower of Christ must be able to discern the difference between hostility and anger.

Anger should be built on righteousness. The Bible teaches us to both be angry and sin not. We *should* be angry at what the devil and the world system is doing. However, we can't let the sun set on our anger.

When anger ferments, it becomes hostility.

Anger, when properly expressed, makes a bad situation better. Hostility, when revealed, makes a bad situation worse.

Hostility is first found in our emotions. It burns in feelings of unfriendliness, ill will and antagonism. Then, it seeps into our expressions. We begin to express unfriendliness and treat people as if they are our enemies. We begin to enjoy the thought of them getting sick, and, in the extreme, hostility becomes expressions of warfare.

Our emotions become our expressions, and our expressions become our experience.

When we ask, "What can I do?" we build barriers, we stretch fences, we begin to construct walls that separate us from the other.

In the age of immaturity and the atmosphere of hostility, when the heart and mind feed on offense, we must understand three important principles:

1. **Recognize.** You can't deal with a problem until you learn how to recognize it. Most importantly, you must acknowledge the enemy in yourself. It is too easy to slip into the negative and forget you are no longer counting the blessings. You become confused by everything around you.

2. **Repent.** "Repent" is a biblical word. John the Baptist came preaching repentance. In the book of Revelation, we see clearly in the churches of Asia Minor where God calls His

people to repent. We must repent of our selfishness. We must repent for trusting in the systems of man and not God.

3. Respond. Repentance brings brokenness and establishes a relationship where we can respond like Christ. Our response is formed out of heart evaluation. Proverbs tells us to guard our heart because everything flows from it, including our actions (see Prov. 4:23).

If you're reading this today, I would like for you to say those three words out loud: recognize, repent, respond.

When you recognize and repent, you can respond with the love of God.

I am sure many of you are just like me. Your hearts are broken, longing for a fresh move of the Holy Spirit—because nothing is impossible with God.

All things are possible for those who believe.

We must recognize the enemy, repent of self and respond with His love.

You're beautiful. I see Jesus in you.

Have a great week. {eoa}

Mikel French has challenged spiritual awakening all across America, where many celebrations extended into multiple weeks, and has conducted celebrations in France, Sweden, Russia, Romania, Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, Germany, South Africa, Malawi, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Haiti, Japan, Singapore, India and Thailand. He conducted an outreach celebration in Manila, Philippines, reaching 200,000 teenagers with the book of hope. Through the generous support of partners, he has presented the message of Jesus Christ to millions of people in the nation of Russia through televised citywide soul-winning celebrations. Mikel considers it an honor to assist in conducting the annual pastor's conference,

where thousands of pastors from Russia's 11 time zones come for training, teaching and equipping. Mikel and his wife, Marsha, reside in Tulsa, Oklahoma.