

# Biblical Living (2) – Anger

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Sinful anger is involved in the vast majority of other life issues – marriage, parenting, crisis counselling, conflict resolution.

## I. Destructive results of anger:

- 1) Conflict (Prov 15:18)
- 2) Foolish behaviour (Prov 25:28)
- 3) Broken relationships (Prov 18:19)
- 4) More anger (Prov 19:19 ) Anger is habit forming – the more you get angry, the angrier you get. Note: the Bible does not teach catharsis as a means of dealing with anger. Punching a pillow, shouting while alone in a room, doing combat sports is thought to release anger. Biblically, the more anger is expressed, the more of it there will be.
- 5) More sin – hurtful words, lies, slander, bitterness, gossip.
- 6) Satanic opportunity (Eph 4:26)

## II. Overcoming Anger

- 1) Accepting responsibility. Angry people blame God, other people, and circumstances for their anger. Biblically, we get angry because we have strong desires that are not met (James 1:12-13, 4:1).
- 2) Call our anger-sins by biblical names
  1. impatience (1 Thes 5:14-15) Impatience is mental, verbal, or non-verbal revenge, repayment, or *retaliation*. It is repaying the "evil" of inconvenience with mental complaining, a sharp word, rolling the eyes, or a glare of disgust
  2. bitterness (Eph 4:31). Bitterness is settled anger, a brooding, nursed and recycled resentment. Clamming up is the opposite of blowing up – but they are both forms of sinful anger.
  3. wrath (Eph 4:31) – animosity, fury, rage, exasperation
  4. clamour (Eph 4:31) – raised-voice shouting, back and forth argument.
  5. evil-speaking (Eph 4:31), angry insults, attacking words, name-calling, mocking, untrue accusations
  6. malice (Eph 4:31) – the desire to hurt another person, crush him or her emotionally, make another look foolish.

- 3) Confess anger as a sin to God. Seek forgiveness from God and from the people he has been angry at.
- 4) Track the beginnings of anger – internal or external expressions of it. (fists clenched, raised voice, red face, tight feeling in stomach, resentful thoughts, etc.),
- 5) Consider your motives in anger. What is it that you want that anger pursues? Manipulation of others, intimidation of others, revenge for hurt, protection from threats.
- 6) Replace the *I deserve* mentality behind the sinful desire with a biblical view of God, others and self.
- 7) Repent of angry responses
  - verbal or non-verbal retaliation for inconvenience (impatience)
  - brooding over past wrongs (bitterness)
  - getting steamed up when his "rights" have been violated (anger/wrath)
  - cranking up the volume when he disagrees with someone (clamour)
  - insulting, hurtful words (evil speaking)
  - wishing evil on another person or working for his hurt (malice)
- 8) By the Holy Spirit's power, replace anger with godly opposites:
  1. Kindness (Eph 4:32)
  2. Tenderheartedness. (Eph 4:32) Compassion or tender-heartedness views another person's sin as something to be forgiven, not as an opportunity for anger.
  3. Forgiveness (Eph 4:32)
  4. Patience Patience replaces the sin of retaliating for inconvenience.
  5. Humility (Rom 12:3)
  6. Self-Control (Prov 16:32)
  7. Momentary Silence (Prov 15:28)
  8. Gentle words (Prov 15:1)
  9. Refusal to take revenge (Prov 20:22)
  10. Self-control

- 9) Maintain certain spiritual disciplines: prayer, Scripture memory regarding anger – especially Proverbs, journaling regarding anger, and avoiding people and media that encourage anger.

### **III. What About Righteous Anger?**

God is angry at sin because it offends and desecrates His glory. Seldom do sinners properly approximate this righteous demand that sin be turned to righteousness.

Genuine righteous anger is:

1. momentary.
2. not expressed with clamour, evil speaking, etc.
3. over sin and its effects.
4. concerned with God's glory, not men's.
5. willing to trust God as Judge (Prov 20:22; Ecc 12:14; 1 Pet 2:23).