

HOW TO DEAL WITH ANGER? PART ONE

Introduction: *I can't control my temper, no matter what I try!*

A. The truth is that we *do control our anger* quite well!

B. The sobering truth is also that anger and stress bring huge destruction:
Prov. 27:4; James 1:20

I. GOD AND ANGER

A. God doesn't hide His anger in the Bible (John 3:16 vs. 36)

B. Why do we feel 'uncomfortable' with speaking about God's anger?
1. Is it because we think about our/other human's anger outbursts?

2. Is it because we think that anger is a negative character trait?

C. God's anger is a positive and virtuous attribute

1. It is His eternal detestation of all ungodliness & unrighteousness

2. It is His Divine displeasure & indignation against sin

3. It is His holiness stirred into action in punishing sin

4. It is always linked to His holy justice (Ex 34:7)

D. How does God express His anger?

1. By *withholding* Himself as a **spiritual judgment**: Rom. 1:18, 24, 26, 28-32

2. By *expressing* Himself in a **temporal judgment**: **2 Kings 24:20; Is. 30:30**

3. By *executing* an **eternal judgment**: Rev. 6:16

II. YOU AND ANGER

A. What is anger?

1. Anger is an *emotional response or communication of our feelings in reactions to another's behavior or to circumstances arising*

2. Anger is our responsibility

B. God in Himself and in His Word teaches us that anger can be good or bad

1. Bad anger: Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8

2. Good anger: Eph. 4:26; Ex. 4:14; Mark 3:5; John 2:13-17; Acts 17:16;
2 Cor. 7:9-11

C. What are the characteristics of sinful anger?

1. When we become or are angry for the wrong reasons

a. out of a sense of *frustration – inability* (1 Kings 21:4)

b. out of a sense of *entitlement - selfishness* (Luke 15:28-32)

- c. out of a sense of *self-pity* (Ps. 73)
 - d. out of a sense of *personal offense* (1 Sam. 25:12-13; 2 Kings 5:11)
2. When our anger turns into or involves brooding and fretting (Ps. 37:1, 7, 8; Eph. 4:31)
- a. what is ‘fretting?’
 - b. how do I know I am ‘fretting?’ (Heb. 12:15)
 - c. how do people justify ‘bitterness?’
3. When our anger controls us and leads to actions, words or attitudes we later need to regret or repent from (Ps. 106:32-33; 1 Sam. 20)
4. When we pretend that we aren’t angry (Eph. 4:25; James 5:16)
5. When we return evil for evil or attack the person with whom we are angry (Gen. 4).
- a. expressed verbally and loudly
 - b. expressed passively
 - c. expressed physically

D. Anger at God

1. Is it acceptable or ever right to be angry with God?
 - a. consider what usually is the context of this anger

- b. consider some Biblical examples

- Cain in Gen. 4
- David in 1 Chron. 13:10
- Jonah in Jonah 4:1-10

- c. by contrast, consider Job after his catastrophic day in Job 1:22

D. How to deal with *anger against God*?

1. First, seek to recognize that *anger against God* may be present ‘deep down’

2. Recognize that God’s Sovereignty is never separated from His goodness and wisdom

3. Verbalize your repentance in confession and seeking forgiveness and trust

- a. confess you are angry for the wrong reasons
 - b. feel tempted to respond in an ungodly way
 - c. take full responsibility for your anger & seek forgiveness
 - d. pray for help to respond in biblical constructive way

4. Express your deepest questions to God openly

- a. God doesn’t expect us to *put the lid on and don’t moan*

- b. He has given us Biblical examples of *how to lament or complaint*

c. Yet all these expressions are respectful of God's Being

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the two types of anger do you find you experience the most?

2. Identify some specific reasons that makes your anger sinful?

3. Often people become angry because they feel 'their rights' haven't been honored. It may be possible though, that your 'right' isn't Biblical. For example, someone can be angry because he feels he has a right to be healthy. In this light, examine whether your sinful anger outbursts are tied in to your perceived but perhaps undefined "rights." To help you, here are a few 'rights' people often claim.
 - Right to privacy
 - Right to express personal opinions
 - Right to earn and use money
 - Right to be obeyed
 - Right to make your own decisions
 - Right to have your own time
 - Right to be respected and recognized

4. What happens to you when you allow your anger to control you?

5. Looking back, recall two situations when you have been controlled by your anger and done something sinful or destructive. What did you learn from these anger outbursts?

6. In anticipation of the next session, try to list as many causes of anger. If possible, after listing them, see if you can “prioritize” them. In other words, indicate which things seem to cause anger the soonest or most often.

7. Are you or any of your family members guilty of any of these forms of sinful anger covered in this section?