

## Anger and Self Control

**[James 1:19-20]** My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

**Everyone Gets Angry:** The key to dealing with anger is through self control, patience and love in order to initiate peaceable communication aimed at resolving the issue at hand.

**God's Anger:** God is love, and God is holy, and because of this God gets angry with people everyday. When people violate the principles God has laid out for us in His word He may get angry. He knows that when we do this we will get hurt or hurt others around us because of our actions. God is patient with people who do wrong because He wants them to repent so He can forgive them. The desire of God's heart is to forgive us, but He will punish us if we ultimately do not turn from our sin.

**Human Anger:** Sometimes we fail to remember that God wants us to repent so He can forgive us or sometimes we think that God should judge a person immediately so that we can be satisfied.

We need to remember that we are made in the image of God so within all of us there is a concern for righteousness and justice. Whether Christian or non-Christian, we are moral creatures who have a sense of right and wrong and we get angry when our sense of right and wrong is violated.

The purpose of anger is to motivate us to take constructive action to try to right the wrong that we believe has done against us. Human anger can be separated into two categories selfish anger and righteous anger.

**Selfish Anger:** The anger that results when a sin hasn't been committed against us; however, we get angry because someone didn't do something the way we thought it should be done or someone said something we didn't like. Selfish anger is not legitimate anger and most of the time the anger we experience is a result of selfish anger not righteous anger.

**Righteous Anger:** The anger that results when a sin has been committed against us.

## HOW TO PROCESS ANGER

### **1) Admit to Yourself That You're Angry**

- Feeling anger is not a sin, but people often sin when they are angry.
- It is not God's will for people to sin when they are angry.
- Anger is supposed to motivate us to take positive action to right a wrong.
- Sometimes we don't want to admit we're angry because we feel that we shouldn't be angry at all. We may say, I'm not angry...I'm just hurt or disappointed.
- Hiding your anger is a very dangerous thing to do and can result in long term problems.

### **2) Stop and Think Before You Do Anything**

- Take a break...do something like taking a deep breath or taking a walk. Try to completely remove yourself from the situation if possible.
- Pray for God to give you self-control in times when you first feel anger. We don't need to fly off the handle or explode and hurt people and make things worse.
- The entire point of stopping and taking this break is to determine the type of anger we're feeling.
- The most important question we need to ask ourselves right now is...“Was a sin committed against me?”
- Once we have determined whether a sin has been committed against us or not, we can then move on to properly dealing with it in a loving fashion.

### **3) Deal with The Anger**

#### **No Sin Was Committed**

(Selfish Anger)

1. Accept the fact that this person didn't sin against us, they just didn't do what we wanted.
2. Confess your selfishness to God and yourself and ask God to forgive you for getting angry over something like this.
3. Talk to the person who made you angry and ask them if they can change the thing that irritates or upsets you.
4. If they agree to change then thank them and the situation is resolved.
5. If they don't agree to change, you should try to be understanding and live with it.

**Sin Was Committed**

(Righteous Anger)

1. Lovingly confront the person and explain how you believe the person sinned against you.
2. Give the person time to repent and ask for forgiveness or explain their side of the story. (Remember, you may have misunderstood someone's words or actions.)
3. If you misunderstood them, immediately apologize to them for jumping to the wrong conclusion.
4. If they admit their sin and repent and ask for forgiveness, immediately forgive them.
5. If they deny the sin and refuse to repent then we need to release the person and our anger to God.

**[Ephesians 4:2-3] Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.**

When a person refuses to accept their sin and repent we have a tendency to want to retaliate and take revenge against them. It is very important for us to remember that THIS IS NOT OUR JOB...IT'S GOD'S JOB TO JUDGE AND TAKE VENGEANCE.

**[Romans 12:19-21] Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

**ANGER WAS MEANT TO BE A VISITOR NOT A RESIDENT**

When we hold our anger inside it turns to bitterness and bitterness turns to hate. Hate says, "I'll make you pay if it's the last thing I do." People can spend their entire lives waiting for the opportunity to get vengeance against someone who has wronged them. This is definitely not biblical.

Romans 12:20 explains how God wants us to treat a person who refuses to repent for their sins against us. We are to RETURN GOOD FOR EVIL. In this passage the term, "Heap burning coals on their heads" is often misunderstood as a vengeful action; However, it is not meant in this way...

In biblical times, each household had a bed of coals that they used for cooking meals and heating their homes. If your coals went out, your livelihood was at stake so you would go to your neighbor and ask to borrow some coals from them. The neighbor would put the coals in a jar and the borrowing neighbor would carry the jar of coals back to his house on his head. This is where the scriptural meaning of “heap burning coals on his head.” came from. You were doing something good for someone not taking vengeance.

By repaying good for evil doesn't mean that everyone will come back and make things right with you and repent. But what it does mean is that you are doing what is right in God's eyes. You have chosen to do the right thing in a situation where you've been wronged and they have not chosen to confess or repent. You have decided to be an agent of God and reach out to this person in the name of God.

**[Ephesians 4:26-27] "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.**

Pay special attention to the last part of this verse...When you hold onto anger, you give Satan the opportunity to gain control over your emotions and your life.