

ANGER MISMANAGEMENT: ONLY GRACE TRANSFORMS THE HEART

Introduction: Anger Is a Problem Both in the World and in the Church

Understanding Anger

A. What is anger?

1. Anger is an emotion. Anger is our whole-personed active response of negative moral judgment against perceived evil. (Robert Jones)
2. All anger seems righteous. *Jas 1:20; Rom 12:17-21*
3. Anger has a physical component. *Gen 4:5; Exod 32:19; Ps 4:4*
4. Anger is active. *Exod 32:19-20; Gen 39:19-20*

B. Anger is not necessarily sinful.

1. God gets angry. *Exod 4:14; 15:8; Num 25:4; Ps 7:11; 18:7-8; 2:4-5, 12; Deut 29:27-28; John 3:36; Rom 1:18*
2. Jesus was angry. *Mark 3:5; 10:14; Matt 21:12; John 2:13-17*

3. Righteous anger is rare! *Eph 4:26ff; Acts 17:16*

C. Anger is very deceptive. *Jer 17:9-10; Eph 4:25*

1. We typically try to justify our anger.

2. Some deny their anger or try to justify themselves by calling it something else.

3. Many blame their anger on something outside of themselves. *Mark 7:14-23*

4. Some try to blame genetics (nature) or their upbringing (nurture).

D. Anger is dangerous. *Eph 4:26-27; Eccl 7:9*

1. Anger is usually murderous by nature. *Matt 5:21ff; 1 Sam 20:30-33; 1 John 3:15; Prov 11:9; Gen 4:6-7; Acts 7:54ff*

2. Anger gives the devil an opportunity. *Eph 4:26-27; John 8:44; Jas 1:14-15*

3. Those who give in to anger are at risk of losing control. *Prov 25:28; 29:8, 11; 14:17*

4. Anger is destructive and leads to many other sins. *Eph 4:31; 1 Sam 18:8-9; Luke 15:28-30; Col 3:19; Prov. 29:22, 14:17; Num 20:6-12; Ps 106:32-33*

5. Anger is contagious. *Prov 22:24-25; 15:1,18*

What Causes Out-of-Control Anger?

A. Explanations of secular psychology – nature and nurture.

B. Scripture deals with most anger as a sin issue. *Matt 5:21-22; Jas 1:19-20; 4:1ff; Eph 4:26-27; Col 3:8; Prov 14:29; 15:18; 19:19; 22:24; 29:22; 2 Cor 7:10-11*

C. Scripture teaches that anger begins in the heart. *Mark 7:21; Matt 12:34*

D. We become angry because we want something (too much). *Jas 4:1-4; Isa 55:1-2*

1. What do I seek and treasure more than Christ? *Isa 55:1-2; Jas 4:4*

2. A legitimate desire when it becomes a controlling desire (or demand) becomes a sinfully idolatrous desire.

3. Angry people have false beliefs that they possess certain rights including the right to express their anger (judgment/revenge) when their rights are violated,

4. Angry people often succeed in getting what they want by manipulating others.

5. In the end angry people experience loss (including the loss of their idols).

What Are Some Unbiblical Means People Use to Deal with Anger?

A. Secular psychology promotes anger management – expressing, suppressing, calming.

B. Secular strategies try to keep anger at bay– relaxation, cognitive restructuring, problem solving, communication, humor, changing environment, counseling.

C. The secular methodologies do not address the heart of anger.

D. There are many sinful ways in which people deal with anger. *Prov 29:22; Eccl 7:9*

1. Ventilation. *Prov 12:18; 29:11; 25:28; Eph 4:29,31; Jas 1:19; 4:11-12; Gal 5:15; Rom 12:19-21; 1 Pet 3:8-9; Num 20:6-12*

2. Displacement. *Matt 5:21-22*

3. Internalizing. *Lev 19:17-18; 1 Kgs 21:4; Eph 4:31*

4. Excusing. *Jas 1:13-15; 19-20; 1 Cor 10:13*

You Can Overcome Anger by God's Grace: Address Your Heart with Gospel Truth

A. The key is what you are saying in your own heart. *Phil 4:8-9; Prov 4:23; Mark 7:21-23*

B. Five things to tell yourself when you are getting angry.

1. I want something too much – Idolatry. *Jas 4:1-4; Isa 55:1-2; Rom 1:25*

2. I am not God – Judge. *Jas 1:19-20; 4:19-20; Gen 50:19; 1 Pet 2:23; Matt 7:1ff; 1 Cor 4:5; Rom 12:17-21*

3. God has been very gracious to me – In Christ. *Exod 34:6; Ps 103:8; Eph 4:31-32; Col 3:13; Matt 18:22-35; 1 Tim 1:15-16; Rom 5:10, 3:21-26; Prov 19:11; 1 Pet 4:8*

4. God is in control – He is doing good and will not give me more than I can bear. *1 Cor 10:13; Gen 50:21; Rom 8:28; Acts 2:23; Ps 103:19; Jas 1:2ff; 1 Pet 1:6-7; Prov 21:1*

5. Remember who I am – A new creature in Christ. *Rom 6:11; 2 Cor 5:17; 1 Pet 4:1-6; 1 Cor 10:13; Gal 5:13-16, 19-23; Titus 3:3*

C. Five more things to remember as you are calming down.

1. God's grace helps me to exercise self control, patience and gentleness. *1 Cor 13:4-5; Jas 1:19; Titus 1:7; Prov 12:16; 14:29; 16:32; 19:11; 29:8, 11; 14:17; Col 3:19*

2. God's grace enables me to speak with gentleness and grace. *Prov 15:1; Eph 4:29*

3. God's grace enables me to lovingly do good to those who wronged me. *Rom 12:20; Matt 5:43ff; Gen 50:21; 45:7-11; Luke 6:27-28; Eph 5:1-2*

4. God's grace enables me to receive correction, even from those who hurt me. *Prov 9:8; 13:10; 2 Sam 16:5-13; Matt 7:1ff*

5. God's grace helps me to pursue the restoration of those who hurt me. *Gal 6:1-2*

- Their sin is primarily against God (it is not about me!). *Ps 51:4*

- My objective is to restore (not to vent or to judge) my brother/sister. *Matt 4:21*

- If I am to help, I must be "spiritual" and gentle. *Gal 5:13-23*

D. Five more practical principles.

1. Don't be quarrelsome. *Prov 17:14; 29:3; 26:20; 1 Pet 3:7*

2. Deal with your anger and conflict quickly. *Eph 4:26-27; Matt 5:23-24; 7:1ff*

3. Prepare for temptation. *Prov 21:5*

4. Seek God's help through prayer. *Heb 4:16*

5. Your anger can motivate you to pursue a biblical solution to problems.

Common Questions About Anger

A. When is anger righteous? (From Robert Jones, *Uprooting Anger*) *Mark 3:1-6*

1. A real sin has taken place. *1 Sam 11:1-6; Mark 10:13-16; Acts 17:16; 1 John 3:4*

2. My concern is for God's kingdom, not my own. *John 2:13-17; Ps 119:52-54; 103-104, 127-128, 139:22*

3. Anger is righteously expressed. *Ps 106:33; Rom 12:17-21; Gal 6:1-2*

B. How can you be angry and yet not sin? *Eph 4:26; Jas 1:19*

C. Is it ever permissible to be angry with God? *Dan 4:34-35; Job 1:22, 2:9; Rom 9:20; Jas 1:13; Ps 73:2-3; 1 Chr 13:11-13; Gen 4:6-7; Deut 29:29; Hab 1:1-4, 1:12-2:1; Ps 13:1ff, 62:8, 115:3*

D. What if you are angry with yourself?

1. Sometimes we are angry at ourselves because of pride. *Jer 17:9*

2. The only verdict which matters is that of God Who has declared you righteous for Christ's sake. *Phil 3:9; 1 Tim 1:15-16; 1 Cor 6:9-11*

Counseling an Angry Person

A. Data gathering/interpretation.

1. What does this person want so badly? *Jas 4:1ff* (see attachment)

2. Is physical abuse taking place? Is anyone in danger?

B. Homework for those who give in to anger.

1. Repent of anger. Abandon your rights. *Phil 2:3-8; Mark 10:42-45; John 13:1-17*

2. Create note cards for what you need to tell yourself when you are angry.

3. Make a plan for dealing with anger. *Prov 27:12*

4. Keep an anger journal (see attachment).

5. Meditate upon and memorize key texts.

6. Reading.

Conclusion: Propitiation



Books

Adams, Jay, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*.

Harvey, Dave, *When Sinners Say I Do*.

Jones, Robert D., *Uprooting Anger*.

Mack, Wayne, *Anger and Stress Management God's Way*.

Mack, Wayne, *Homework Manual for Biblical Living*. "Anger Homework."

Priolo, Lou, *Getting a Grip*.

Priolo, Lou, *The Heart of Anger*.

Tripp, Paul, *War of Words*.



Booklets

Adams, Jay, *What to Do When Anger Gets the Upper Hand*.

Jones, Robert D., *Angry at God: Bring Him Your Doubts and Questions*.

Newheiser, Jim, *Help! Someone I Love has been Abused*.

Powlison, David, *Anger: Escaping the Maze*.



Audios

Mack, Wayne. "Counseling Angry People."

Maxham, Tom. "Drawing Out Idols of the Heart."

Newheiser, Jim. "Who is a Murderer? Matt 5:21-16."

Tripp, Paul. "War of Words."



Supplemental Resources

Newheiser, Jim. "What Provokes Me to Anger?"

Priolo, Lou. "Anger 'Hot Button' List."

"Anger Journal/Heart Journal."