

# ANGER

*God has given us the feeling of anger and it can be a good thing if it is used correctly. It can be used to solve problems quickly and biblically, or it can create more problems.*

## 1. What is Anger?

- a. It is “a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility” (New Oxford American Dictionary).

## 2. Types of Anger

### a. Righteous anger

- i. God expresses righteous anger at sin (Exod 32:10; Ps 7:11; Jer 6:11).
- ii. Christ experienced anger while living on this earth (Mark 3:5; Matt 21:12-13).
- iii. Believers can be righteously angry (Eph 4:26-27).

### b. Sinful anger

- i. Anger is sinful when it is for the wrong reasons or it is dealt with incorrectly. Several roots may be pride, selfishness, or impatience.
- ii. We can see that anger is listed among many sins that we view as horrible (Gal 5:19-21).

## 3. Dealing with Your Own Anger

### a. How **shouldn't** we deal with anger?

- i. Ventilation - exploding, hitting, yelling, throwing things, intense outward displays of anger
- ii. Internalization - clamming up and holding thoughts and emotions inside, dwelling on them rather than dealing with them biblically (causing bitterness or resentment [Heb 12:15])
- iii. Not all solutions that we will hear from others are biblical, such as punching pillows, giving it a “safe” outlet, etc.

### b. How **should** we deal with anger?

- i. Recognize the transforming power of the Gospel (Gal 5:16; Eph 4:31-32)

- ii. Use the “Heart Journal,” which is beneficial for basically any area of sin. (Some of the following ideas are taken from Priolo’s book, “The Heart of Anger”, pg 96.)
  - 1. We must evaluate. Is this righteous or sinful anger?
  - 2. We must identify sinful motives and thoughts, which stem from the heart (Matt 12:34-35; Prov 26:24-26).
  - 3. We must repent for those thoughts and motives or actions surrounding the sinful anger (Prov 28:13; 1 John 1:9).
  - 4. We must change our thinking in reference to what triggers the anger. (Examples: viewing trials as beneficial - Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28,29; Jas 1:2-4; allowing God to judge rather than trying to do it ourselves - Gen 50:19; Rom 12:19)
  - 5. We must replace the sin with righteous thoughts and motives (Eph 2:22-24; Phil 4:8). (Examples: learning to love rather than be angry with others [Gen 5:21; Rom 12:20,21]; slowing down and trying to understand the situation by listening [Jas 1:19-20].)
- iii. Pray and ask the Lord for help and wisdom (Jas 1:5-6).

#### **4. Responding to the Anger of Others**

- a. Be slow to respond (Jas 1:19-20).
- b. Don’t make things worse by responding with anger (Rom 12:19; Prov 20:22).
- c. Be patient (Prov 15:18; 16:32).
- d. Confront biblically (Matt 18:15-17).
- e. Help them go through the “Heart Journal.”

#### **5. Helpful Resources:**

Adams, Jay, *“What to do when Anger Gets the Upper Hand.”* Phillipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1975.

Berg, Jim. *“Basics For Angry Believers.”*

Emler, Michael R. *“Angry Children: Understanding and Helping Your Child Regain Control.”* Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2008.

Miller, Patricia A. *“Quick Scripture Reference for Counseling Women.”* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002.

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

Priolo, Lou. *“The Heart of Anger.”* Amityville: Calvary Press Publishing, 1997.