



Anger – A Choice?

Anger is a subject that is a part of almost every problem that comes up in relationships between human beings. It is often misunderstood by God's people. Is anger wrong? When is it wrong?

Anger often hinders other problems from being solved. Some people go so far in solving a problem and then *blow up* and they have to start all over again. The unreconciled state of believers amongst themselves hinders God's work (Romans 12:3,4; Proverbs 19:19). Anger often is at the heart of conflict in the relationship between husband and wife and is often what hinders good spiritual communication which God would have the couple to use to keep unity in the home with Christ as the Head (Proverbs 22:24; Ephesians 4:22-32). Anger causes many parents to miss their goal with their children. Anger affects the joy and health of individuals (James 5:14-16).

Anger that is perceived as being uncontrolled is probably the most dangerous anger because it is so easily excused. Outside of instruction from God, man comes up with ideas which help one *cope* with a bad situation instead of solve it. Many teach that it is good to vent anger, fight back, get it out, or do one of a list of things instead of hitting someone. Many learn to take their anger out on objects. Many pillows have been *murdered* by individuals who otherwise would express their anger toward a person. Some want peace at any price and refuse to face their problems. Others think it is good to have a fight to clear the air. Constant bickering and yelling amount to constant torture (I Samuel 11:6,7; Psalm 7:11; Mark 3:5; John 2:17; James 1:19,20).

Anger without sin is what Christians believe is possible (Ephesians 4:26). Anger is given by God as **energy intended to help solve problems the way God teaches the believer to solve them**. Believers would do better by following instructions clearly given in the Scriptures: Psalm 37:8, Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. Psalm 119:165, A Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. @ It is acceptable with God to be angry at sin and injustice, but be careful not to take the anger out on individuals.

Anger can become sinful when it is selfishly motivated or when God's plan is thwarted (Romans 8:28,29; I Corinthians 10:31,32; I Peter 2:23). When a person *clams up*, energy is released within the body usually causing irritableness, bitterness, tension, etc. Many physical diseases can result including ulcers and some forms of cancer. Individuals who *clam up* are not good company. They have pity parties and allow problems to come between themselves and others sometimes for a lifetime. They unwittingly are controlled by the very person they dislike by allowing them to control a part of their energy and their life.

Anger expressed when an individual *blows up* is aimed and fired at someone else. Loss of friendships and broken relationships result. Psychiatric circles, group therapy, sensitivity, and encounter groups encourage free verbal and physical expression of one's emotions, particularly of hostility. Individuals are encouraged to take out anger on pillows, beds, sofas, etc. How much better it is for the Christian to **follow God's plan and direct one's energy under the control of the Holy Spirit to solve problems God's way**. The Book of Proverbs is full of verses contrasting the godly versus the ungodly way of handling anger (14:17; 14:29; 15:18; 19:11,19; 22:24,25; 29:11,20,22). Anger which is not sinful is **temporary, controlled, properly motivated, and must not come between the relationship**.

Using Energy From Anger for God's Intended Purposes!

God-given energy from anger should be used to solve problems biblically. God is able to help the Christian use the energy from his anger under the control of the Holy Spirit to be released constructively in attacking the problem rather than destroying oneself or attacking another individual.

Many people believe that they cannot control their anger. Some are successful by doing such things as counting to ten, taking a walk, talking it out, etc. An example of ability to control anger if a person chooses is what happens during an argument if someone important like the pastor calls. Everything is quieted and the person becomes immediately docile and cooperative, even to the point of adding something to an already busy schedule. After the phone is hung up the argument usually continues. This is control exercised by the old nature (Proverbs 19:11).

How much better it is to allow God to control the anger. This is easier said than done. What does it take? **First**, and foremost, **the Christian should be filled with the Holy Spirit by being obedient to the Scriptures** (Ephesians 5:18-21). This includes a **complete surrender, death to self, and a yielding to the Spirit's control** (Romans 12:1,2; Luke 9:23). When the Christian allows God to control the actions, Christ can be honored and glorified in the life.

Anger should not be allowed to linger overnight (Ephesians 4:26). Some allow *many moons* to go down on their anger. God would have the Christian **solve today's problems today** (Matthew 6:33,34). The Christian should **recognize, admit, and confess sins** (Proverbs 28:13; Matthew 7:1-5). The Christian should also **see God in the trial** (Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28,29; James 1:2-4).

The Christian should **make room for God to be the avenger** (Genesis 50:19; Romans 12:19). Often much energy is spent getting revenge. God has a perspective which is not always seen by man and He often chooses to work in different ways. One of these ways He teaches is for the Christian should to **return good for what is thought to be evil** (Genesis 50:21; Romans 12:20,21).

Christians should **use the biblical rules of communicating lovingly** (Proverbs 15:1). **Questions need to be asked without condemning one another**. The Christian should **act to solve whatever part of the problem belongs to him and be part of the solution rather than part of the problem**. Rather than focusing upon what you believe the other person can do, **focus on being what God wants you to be. Focus on the solution rather than the problem**.

Forming new patterns of living like giving to edify others will bring glory to Christ. **Christian love must replace anger.** Being willing to **communicate in a manner which pleases God** is imperative. **Christ should have preeminence in all matters in the Christian's life** (Colossians 1:18).

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