

"Be Angry and Sin Not"

The purpose of this lesson is to study the Bible teaching about anger.

I. The Relationship between Anger and Sin

A. Bible Examples of Acceptable Anger

Psalms 7:11 – God is angry with the wicked every day.

Exodus 11:4-8 – In Egypt Moses acted as God's spokesman, yet spoke in great anger.

Exodus 32:19-24 – When Moses saw Israel worshiping the calf, his anger became hot.

Numbers 16:15 – When men rebelled against Moses' leadership, he was very angry.

Mark 3:5 – Jesus looked on the Jews in anger, being grieved at their hardness of heart

2 Corinthians 7:11 – When Corinth disciplined a fornicator, Paul praised their indignation.

Ephesians 4:26 – Be angry, and do not sin.

Some anger is justified. But note that every case listed above involves being angry at sin.

[Romans 1:18; 2:5-9; 5:6-11; Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 3:6; John 3:36; etc.; Psalms 119:53; Gen. 31:31; Psalm 2:12; Nehemiah 5:6,7; Mark 10:14 – ASV]

B. The Danger of Anger

James 1:19,20 – The wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Proverbs 14:17 – A quick-tempered man acts foolishly. [Prov. 29:22]

Anger can cause us to "blow up."

Some psychologists encourage people to "vent" their anger.

Proverbs 29:11,20 – A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back.

Ephesians 4:31,32 – Put away anger that is associated with bitterness, clamor ("loud quarreling" – NKJV ftnt), evil speaking, and malice.

Genesis 4:4-8 – Cain's anger led him to kill his brother.

[Col. 3:8ff; 2 Cor. 12:20; Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15:18ff; Prov. 19:11; Rom. 12:17-21; Acts 7:54-60; 19:28; James 3:9-12; 1 Peter 3:9; Matt. 7:12]

Anger can cause us to "clam up."

Ephesians 4:31,32 – Put away anger and wrath, along with bitterness and malice. Instead of putting **away** anger, some people put it **inside** to fester malice.

Ephesians 4:26 – Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. Instead of letting anger build up, we should work constructively to eliminate the cause of anger.

James 1:19 – Be slow to wrath and **slow** to speak (not "**refuse**" to speak).

Leviticus 19:17,18 – Instead of hating our brother and holding a grudge against him, we should love our neighbor and rebuke him: **talk** to him about his wrong.

Note that clamming up is often what leads to blowing up!

[Matt. 5:21-24; 1 Cor. 13:5]

II. Ability to Control Anger

Jesus was angry and was tempted in all points like we are, but He did not sin (Heb. 4:15).

Ephesians 4:26 – Be angry and sin not.

Proverbs 29:11 – A fool vents all his feelings but a wise man holds them back.

Proverbs 16:32; 25:28 – He who rules his spirit is better than one who captures a city.

Other passages refer to this as "self control," (1 Cor. 9:25-27; 2 Peter 1:5-8; Gal. 5:22,23).

1 Corinthians 10:13 – No temptation is beyond our ability to handle.

We can control our anger, when we really want to.

[Gal. 5:20; 2 Tim. 1:7; Psalm 37:8; Prov. 14:29; Philippians 4:13; Psalm 37:5; Eph. 6:10-18; 3:20,21; 2 Cor. 9:8; Josh. 1:5-9.]

III. Bible Principles to Help You Control Your Anger

A. Study the Scriptures and Develop a Plan.

Psalms 119:105 – Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Matthew 4:1-11 – Jesus dealt with Satan’s temptations by quoting Scripture.

List passages about anger, study and memorize them. Then develop a plan of action.

[Joshua 1:8; Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Proverbs 3:5,6; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Ephesians 6:17; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12]

B. Repent and Pray.

Acts 8:22 – To be forgiven, we must repent and pray for forgiveness.

1 Peter 5:7 – Casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.

Luke 6:27,28 – Pray for those who spitefully use us.

[Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:8-10; Matthew 6:13]

C. Discuss the Problem with Other Christians.

James 5:16 – Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. Others can help bear our burden (Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:14).

D. Avoid Hot-Tempered People.

Proverbs 22:24,25 – Make no friendship with an angry man, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul. Associating with people who practice sin tempts you to participate. Associating with those who have overcome the problem helps you overcome it.

[Matthew 6:13; Romans 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 1 Peter 4:3,4; Proverbs 13:20; Exodus 23:2; Psalm 26:5; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11]

E. Think before You Speak or Act.

James 1:19 – Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

Proverbs 29:20 – There is more hope for a fool than for a man hasty in his words.

Proverbs 15:28 – The heart of the righteous studies how to answer.

Proverbs 15:1 – A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Don’t speak to hurt, get even, or antagonize. Stay calm enough to say what is helpful.

F. Work to Solve the Problem that Angered You.

The issue is not **who** angered you, but **what happened** to anger you. Learn to distinguish the act from the person. Hate the sin, but love the sinner.

Use your energy constructively to solve the problem. Wrong responses are: (1) Blowing up and attacking the person who angered you. (2) Blowing up and attacking an innocent bystander. (3) Holding a grudge (clamping up the anger inside yourself). The only proper response is to use your natural energy to **work on the problem**.

Matthew 5:22-24; (Luke 17:3,4) – Talk with those who upset you to be reconciled.

Ephesians 4:26 – Don’t let the sun go down on your wrath.

Ephesians 4:26,29 – Speak what is good for edification. Note: (1) Say what is necessary. If it won’t help solve the problem, don’t say it! (2) Say what edifies and imparts grace to the hearers. Speak to help, not to hurt. [1 Cor. 13:5; Rom. 12:17-21]

James 1:19 – Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. Be willing to listen.

Matthew 7:3-5 – Examine your own conduct. Maybe you have been wrong.

G. Apologize to Those You Have Hurt.

Matthew 5:23,24 – Seek to be reconciled with our brethren.

Luke 17:3,4 – We must say, “I repent” “I was wrong. I am sorry. Please forgive me.”

Have you harmed someone in anger? Are there sins against others you need to make right?