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## A BIBLICAL VIEW OF ANGER

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If you fail to deal biblically with anger, increasing disobedience to Scripture is inevitable (*based on Genesis 4:5-8; I Samuel 18:7-9; Psalm 37:8; Proverbs 19:19, 29:22; Ephesians 4:26-27*). However, God's abundant resources and promises enable you to be an overwhelming conqueror as you deal biblically with the problem of anger in your life (*based on John 16:13, 23-24; Romans 8:31-39, esp. vs. 37; I Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 4:31-32; Philippians 1:6, 4:13; II Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:5; I John 3:22*).

### I. Anger of God

- A. While Scripture describes God as angry (*Exodus 4:14, 22:24; Numbers 11:33, 25:4, 32:10-15; Deuteronomy 29:27-28, 32:16, 19-22; Joshua 23:16; I Kings 11:9; II Kings 22:13; Psalm 78:49-50, 90:7; Isaiah 30:27; Daniel 9:16*), He remains holy (*Leviticus 11:45; I Peter 1:16*) and without sin (*Job 34:10; Matthew 5:48; James 1:13*).
- B. God is slow to anger and simultaneously merciful, gracious, compassionate, forgiving, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth (*Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15, 103:8, 145:8; Nahum 1:3*).
- C. God's favor is for a lifetime, but His anger is for a moment (*Psalm 30:5*). He often restrains His anger (*Psalm 78:38*).
- D. God's anger is always directed at rebellion or disobedience to His commands, which are always holy and just (*Deuteronomy 29:14-21, 24-28; Psalm 78:21-22; Lamentations 3:42-43; Zephaniah 2:2-3; Romans 2:5; Hebrews 3:7-11*).

### II. Anger of Jesus

- A. Jesus was angry at the hypocrisy and legalism of the religious leaders while simultaneously grieving over their hardness of heart. In spite of being angry, He healed a man (*Mark 3:5*).
- B. In the first cleansing of the Temple (*John 2:13-16*), Scripture does not teach that Jesus was angry but instead teaches that He was motivated by a divine jealousy (zeal) for His Father's house (*John 2:17*). Afterwards, He answered questions from the religious leaders (*John 2:18-21*). Nor is it recorded in Scripture that Jesus was angry at the second cleansing of the temple (*Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46*). After His actions on this occasion, He healed the sick and responded to questions of the religious leaders (*Matthew 21:14-16; Mark 11:17-18*).

### III. Anger that is not sinful

- A. On extremely rare and exceptional occasions in Scripture, a person devoted to God was recorded as being angry with no accompanying sin (*for example: Exodus 16:20; Leviticus 10:16-20; I Samuel 11:6, 20:34; II Kings 13:19; Nehemiah 5:6; Job 32:2-5*).

- B. Since Scripture states that it is possible for a child of God to be angry and not sin (*Ephesians 4:26-27*), it is possible to do so (*Romans 6:12-13; I Corinthians 10:13; I Peter 1:13-16*).
- C. In order to "be angry and sin not," you must obey God's Word with no exceptions (*II Timothy 3:16-17*) and must completely follow the example of God (*Matthew 5:48; Ephesians 5:1*) and our Lord Jesus Christ (*I Peter 1:14-16, 2:21-22*).

IV. Sinful anger

- A. Scripture teaches that the anger of man cannot achieve the righteousness of God (*James 1:20*). Your anger, whether explosive in expression or settled as a disposition, is to be decisively put off if you are to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (*Ephesians 4:31; Colossians 3:8, 10*). MEMORY VSS.
- B. Outbursts of anger are part of the deeds of the flesh (*Galatians 5:19-21*) and are characteristic of a fool (*Proverbs 29:11*). Besides showing a lack of the fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22-23*), a person with a quick temper abounds in transgressions (*Proverbs 29:22*) and is not fit to assume church leadership responsibilities (*Titus 1:7*). PROBABLY IN WOMEN ALSO.
- C. Anger is a prelude to and is often compounded by further sins (*Genesis 4:5-8, 49:6; I Samuel 20:30-33; Psalm 37:8; Matthew 2:16*), is devastating (*Proverbs 27:4*), and is associated with both strife (*Proverbs 15:18, 29:22, 30:33*) and foolishness (*Proverbs 14:29, 29:11; Ecclesiastes 7:9*).   
 *often lead to murder.*
- D. Anger with a brother (fellow-saint) is condemned by our Lord (*Matthew 5:22*) and shows a lack of biblical love (*I Corinthians 13:4-8a*). 5:7
- E. Anger demonstrates a lack of trust in God's sovereignty (*Psalm 37:1-11, esp. vss. 7-9*) and may also indicate a failure to follow the Lord Jesus Christ (based on *I Peter 2:19-24*).
- F. A person with great anger will continually be in difficulty (*Proverbs 19:19, 29:22*), will wrongly influence others, and should be avoided (*Proverbs 22:24-25*).
- G. Your anger is sinful when you:
  1. Are quick-tempered or have angry outbursts (*Galatians 5:20; Ephesians 4:31; James 1:19*).
  2. Become angry and are not merciful, compassionate, and forgiving (*Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15; Ephesians 4:32*). NOT HOW @ vs.
  3. Seek vengeance or retaliation against another (*Romans 12:17-19; Hebrews 10:30*).
  4. Violate biblical love in your anger (*I Corinthians 13:4-8; I Peter 4:8*).
  5. Fail to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in your thoughts, words, or actions: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (*Galatians 5:22-23*).
  6. Use words that are not edifying (*Matthew 12:36-37; Ephesians 4:29; I Peter 3:10*).
  7. Respond angrily in order to "protect your rights" or "get your own way" (*Luke 9:23; II Corinthians 5:15; I Peter 2:21-23*).

8. Have an abiding (continuing) anger against another (*Matthew 5:21-22*) or let the sun go down on your anger (*i.e.*, fail to deal with your anger in a biblical manner but harbor it instead) (*Ephesians 4:26*).
  9. Respond to anger in a manner that does not please the Lord (*II Corinthians 5:9; Colossians 1:10*) or bring honor to His Name (*I Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17; I Peter 1:6-7*).
  10. Become angry and neglect to rejoice, to pray, or to give thanks in the very situation in which you find yourself (*I Thessalonians 5:16-18*).
- H. You also sin if you respond angrily in areas where Scripture has already told you how to act. For example, with regard to:
1. An enemy, you must look for and meet his needs (*Romans 12:20*) and show love to him (*Luke 6:35*);
  2. The civic authorities, you are to obey them and give to them what is due (*Romans 13:1-8; I Peter 2:13-15*), unless their demands contradict God's Word and would force you to sin (*Acts 4:19-20, 5:29*);
  3. An unreasonable supervisor, you are to submit (*I Peter 2:18*), except when doing so would cause you to disobey Scripture (*Genesis 39:7-9*);
  4. Your circumstances, you are to trust God and be content (*Ecclesiastes 7:14; Romans 8:28-29; Philippians 4:11-13; I Timothy 6:6-8*);
  5. Your trials, you are to cooperate with God and respond joyfully as He develops Christlike character in your life (*Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4*);
  6. Unjust treatment, you are patiently to endure and thus find favor with God (*I Peter 2:19-20*);
  7. Fellow-believers who are caught in sin, you are to restore them in gentleness (*Galatians 6:1*) and not regard them as enemies (*II Thessalonians 3:15*);
  8. Your parents (while they are in biblical authority over you), you are to obey them in a manner that pleases the Lord (*Ephesians 6:1; Colossians 3:20*);
  9. Your children, you are not to provoke them to wrath but are to teach them with the discipline and instruction of the Lord (*Ephesians 6:4*);
  10. Husbands and wives, each is to submit to one another (*Ephesians 5:21*) and to love each other in a consistently biblical manner (*I Corinthians 13:4-8; Ephesians 5:25; Titus 2:4*); and
  11. Scripturally qualified church leaders, you are to obey them (*Hebrews 13:17*) and to esteem them highly in love (*I Thessalonians 5:12-13*).

#### V. Anger and the inner man

- A. Since your heart is revealed by your thoughts, words, and actions (*Matthew 12:34-35, 15:18-20; Mark 7:20-23; Luke 6:45*), sinful anger reveals that you are living to please yourself (*based on II Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 5:16-21; Colossians 1:10*).
- B. One who is slow to anger has great understanding (*Proverbs 14:29*), is better than the mighty (*Proverbs 16:32*), is able to pacify contention (*Proverbs 15:18*), and is obedient to God's Word (*James 1:19-20*).
- C. One who is wise turns away anger (*Proverbs 29:8*) and holds back his anger (*Proverbs 29:11*).

- D. One often reveals his failure to deal biblically with his own anger by judging others for this same sin (*Romans 2:1*).
- E. One who becomes angry quickly shows himself to be a fool (*Proverbs 14:17, 29:11; Ecclesiastes 7:9*).

## VI. Conclusions about anger

- A. It is possible for you to be angry and not sin (*I Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 4:26*). However, sinful anger violates Scripture (*James 4:17*), doesn't conform to the character of Christ (*part of which is described in I Corinthians 13:4-8a, Galatians 5:22-23, and I Peter 2:20-25*), is noticed by its outbursts (*Galatians 5:20; James 1:19-20*), and often is allowed to remain into the future (*Ephesians 4:26-27*).
- B. Following the example of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, anger is righteous only if it is aroused by specific violations of God's Word and remains righteous only if it is acted upon with a spirit of compassion (*Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15, 103:8-14; Mark 3:5*).
- C. Because of the ever-present temptation to live for self rather than to live for God (*Luke 9:23; Romans 7:14-25; Galatians 5:16-17*), you must obey God's Word (*Psalm 119:165; II Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12*), pray habitually (*Luke 18:1; I Thessalonians 5:17; James 1:5*), constantly depend on God's Spirit (*John 14:16, 16:13*), and consistently do the Word (*James 1:22-25*) in order to deal biblically with anger (*based on Romans 12:2; Hebrews 5:14*).
- D. You are not to allow anger to get the upper hand and gain control of your mind or conduct, since Satan uses this as an opportunity to affect your life (*Ephesians 4:27*). You must live in a manner to please the Lord no matter how you feel (*based on II Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 5:17; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 1:10*).
- E. Your deeds (thoughts, words, actions) reveal whether you are living to please yourself or living to please God (*Mark 7:20-23; Luke 9:23; Romans 6:12-13, 17-18*). If you are focused on self and become angry, you run the risk of:
  - 1. Carrying out fleshly desires instead of being led by the Holy Spirit (*Galatians 5:16-17*);
  - 2. Having your prayer life hindered (*Psalm 66:18; I John 3:22*);
  - 3. Damaging your relationships with others (*Romans 12:18*) by becoming judgmental and placing a stumbling block in their paths (*Romans 14:13*);
  - 4. Being unwilling to overlook others' transgressions (*Proverbs 19:11*) or to forgive them (*Ephesians 4:31-32*);
  - 5. Thinking unbiblically (*II Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:2*) and using words that do not edify (*Ephesians 4:29*);
  - 6. Returning evil instead of giving blessings (*Romans 12:17-21; I Peter 3:8-9*) and stirring up more anger and strife (*Proverbs 15:1, 29:22*);
  - 7. Impairing your own judgment (*Hebrews 5:14; James 1:22*);
  - 8. Falling into foolish mistakes (*Proverbs 14:29, 19:19; Ecclesiastes 7:9*) and becoming unfit for spiritual leadership (*Titus 1:7*);
  - 9. Judging others in the area of your own sin (*Romans 2:1*); and
  - 10. Failing to love others biblically (*I Corinthians 13:4-5*).