

I. A BASIC DEFINITION OF ANGER

- A strong feeling or emotion of displeasure caused by a real or perceived offense, injury, or unmet desire which inclines one to respond (1.) Its essence – a strong feeling or emotion of displeasure (dissatisfied, uneasiness, inward pain) (2.) Its cause – offense, injury, or unmet desire; this can be real or perceived. It ordinarily has an object (people, animals, things) (3.) Its effect – inclination to respond
- Anger is essentially a judgement on something. It weighs the object and finds it wrong, lacking, or displeasing.
- Anger is not a "thing" inside us; we cannot say "my anger got the best of me" or "I can't control my anger", because it is the result of a way of thinking and responding. It is what comes out of the heart.

Question: Is anger sinful? Yes and no.

II. THE TWO-FOLD NATURE OF ANGER

- All the emotions, including concern, fear, happiness, and anger, are God-given emotions to be used for His glory. When an emotion doesn't glorify God, it is sinful.
- 3 words in NT [not strict, but nuanced] (1.) Gk. thumos = explosive anger, boiling agitation (Eph4:31) (2.) Gk. orge = an abiding settled attitude of indignation (Eph4:31) (3.) Gk. parorismos = anger mingled with irritability, exasperation, and embitterment (Eph4:26; Rom10:19; Eph6:4)

A. Righteous Anger

- 1.) **God is angry** (Ps7:11; Rom1:18; John3:36). It is a just and holy anger to what is wrong, offensive, and sinful. It moves Him to righteous deeds.
 - God's anger is frequently expressed as redemptive love. The Gospel exists because of His anger. The cross is a demonstration of just how angry He is against sin.
- 2.) **Jesus was moved by anger** (Mark3:5 10:14 Mt23:2-36 Jn2:14-17)
- 3.) **We are created in God's image**, and are being made into the likeness of Christ, and therefore are to be moved with anger for His glory. Being a Christian is not the neutering of the emotion of anger. (Gen1:26 Rom8:28 Eph4:24)
- 4.) **It is proper righteous when it uses God's standard.** There are times and things at which to be angry, and to not be so is a sin. To not be angry at injustice, abuse, wickedness etc. (Jm4:11-12 Jn7:24)
- 5.) **It is righteous when we respond in the way God wants us to.** We are to be slow to wrath (Prov14:29 Jm1:19-20 Prov16:32)

B. Sinful Anger

- 1.) **It is sinful when we use a wrong standard.** We are angry because of personal offenses, preferences, etc. Most people automatically justify or excuse their anger.
- 2.) **It is sinful when we have a wrong response.** Two sinful responses:
 - **"Blowing up"** – Prov12:16 14:17 14:29 27:4 "Venting" is not an appropriate alternative (pillow punching, aggression, proxy murder). [also see Proverbs in how to deal with an angry person]
 - **"Clamming up"** (Eph4:26-27). It is destructive in this way internally, as well as building up like a pressure cooker. This fosters bitterness (Eph4:31 Heb12:15). Can be seen in its effects, the damage it does physically or verbally.
 - These attacks a person rather than seeking to solve the problem.
 - This can make someone very difficult to live with - Prov21:19.
- 3.) **Anger is often used as a weapon.** A means of coercing, manipulating, and intimidating – an emotional terrorist. Prov18:21
- 4.) **Beware of angry influences** – Prov22:24-25; can learn this growing up, music and movies
- 5.) **Anger becomes a "habit".** that is natural – Prov19:19.

III. A BIBLICAL REMEDY TO SINFUL ANGER

- 1.) **Recognize your personal responsibility to deal with sinful anger.** Don't make excuses (my upbringing, my temperament). Confront it, confess it, apply to God's grace for change. You have the responsibility to exercise self-control (Gal5:23) and to put it away (Col3:8). You CAN do so if you have the Holy Spirit.
- 2.) **Identify personal idols that provoke sinful anger.** What are your motivations? Not getting what you want. Wanting good things, but being angry for not getting them (indicated by a willingness to sin).
- 3.) **Cultivate righteous anger** (Ps97:10 Pr8:13 Amos5:15 2Pet2:8 - Lot)
- 4.) **Meditate on the Scriptures warning against anger** (Jm1:19-20 Eph4:31)
- 5.) **Replace sinful anger with love** (Mt5:44) **and good** (Rom12:21)
- 6.) **Trust in the wrath of God**, who will settle all things in the end (Rom12:19). Don't try to play God.
- 7.) **Develop a specific plan** to replace sinful anger with godly motives, thoughts, words, and actions. Don't just "hope" things will get better. Recognize there will always be such provocations in a fallen world. See them as opportunities for God to cultivate in you right thinking and actions.