

Put away all anger

Anger can lead to a fiery hell

Matthew 5:22



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"But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell." (Matt 5:22) 'Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.' Eph 4:31

Anger belongs to the natural man

'Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.'

Gal 5:19-21

The basic human anger we have to deal with is mostly to do with pride. Our feelings get hurt and we feel offended. Someone has not treated us in the way we feel we deserve. Someone has taken advantage of us. Someone has offended our sense of what is right and will not repent and seek forgiveness.

Everyone struggles to some degree with anger. It is part of the fallen nature we are putting off in order to put on Christ. However people tend to justify their anger instead of accepting responsibility for their words and actions which violate the law of love. But those who are in Christ are to be different from the ways of the world.

'For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps there will be strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances; I am afraid that

when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced.'

2 Cor 12:20-21

All human anger is sinful when it goes against the teaching of Jesus Christ and His commandment, which say we must love our neighbour as ourselves. All human anger is sinful because all our anger is basically controlling, manipulative, and destructive. Anger eats the heart out of its owner and often evokes a dark reaction from the one it is aimed at. Our words and actions carried out in anger deny the fact that God calls on us to forgive those who offend us. Matt 6:14-15

All anger isn't experienced in the same way

Some anger is in your face and is expressed physically and verbally. It is often called "sudden anger" this anger seems to come from

nowhere. This anger and its verbal abuse may be expressed as furious shouting, threats, ridicule, sarcasm, intense blaming, or cutting criticism. It comes with high emotional forces which are hard to control.

However, all anger not is as obvious, and not as loud, it is not always physical; but all anger is in some way controlling; even if it is the passive type which often goes undetected. Passive aggressive anger is one of the most common ways of expressing anger, it is a way of avoiding been seen as contributing to the confrontation, and often denies feelings of frustration or fury. However passive anger is not always silent, it may sometimes be expressed verbally, as sarcasm, or veiled mockery.

But passive anger is still sinful because it is manipulative; it gets revenge by enforcing isolation on its victim. It often results in being completely withdrawing from involvement

with others concerned so that any reconciliation is impossible. Sometimes these passive aggressive people aren't even aware their actions are aggressive. This withdrawal from involvement in the relationship leaves people feeling confused, while the passive aggressive person is looking "innocent."

However, while they may feel superior because they haven't argued, they still haven't learnt to obey God and seek the reconciliation God requires. (Matt 18:15) In this way all anger fails the test of the Love God requires of us.

1 Cor 13:4-8

Regardless of what form anger takes, all anger is destructive, both to the person who is angry as it burns their soul, and the one it is directed at as it contaminates them as they react to its poison, and all anger tends to increase the possibility of further disorder.

Most of our anger is over trivial issues

Unfortunately, it is an awful truth that most of our anger generated is over trivial things; everyday things, ordinary things. Tiny things become the motivation for abuse, either outwardly and obvious or internally and passive. Trivial issues around the home or at work concerning timing, preferences, or standards often become a weapon which the offended are prepared to use at the cost of loving respect for another person made in the image of God. This abusive anger hides the deeper truth of disrespect, just so we can have control over others; when we are really already out of control ourselves.

Our self righteous anger is the same abuse which the Lord says may very well see us facing the judge in the same way as a murderer. (Matt 5:22) This judgement is true, for anger comes before murder, as anger is its

brother setting up the victim to be treated as if dead, even if not murdered.

Anger is not to continue in the Christian

'Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.' Eph 4:31

In this verse we need to see that "*put away from you*" is a direct command. The putting away is not something we can argue about. God gives us the command, put it away from you. And He doesn't want us to procrastinate about it; we are to do it decisively.

So even in cases of abuse, the principles of forgiveness, mercy, and compassion still apply. *"For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."* Matt 6:14-15

We are never to play God. The God who rules over all will be the one to judge what is required of the offender. "*Vengeance is mine says the Lord.*" (Deut 32:35) Therefore we bow down to His Sovereign authority and lay our cares on Him, only this will enable us to find in Him the everlasting God of all comfort.

2 Cor 1:3-4

Jesus has taught us that even when suffering injustice, the slap, the stolen shirt, the extra mile; there is no place for anger. "*But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.*"

Matt 5:39-42

Even as His disciples were mistreated and abused, they would still have to *love their*

enemies and pray for them. "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Matt 5:43-44

We are to walk with the Lord and rejoice in His presence in the process of persecution. *"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

Matt 5:11-12

Because of His Sovereign authority, God can use every situation where others would make us angry; to fulfil His plan to see us grow up into the image of His Son. *'And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to*

become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.'

Rom 8:28-29

So when someone does something to cause us to be angry we can thank God; for God is using that situation to teach us we don't love enough. He is calling on us to repent of our anger and produce the righteous fruit consistent with repentance.

Matt 3:8

'Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.'

Col 2:6-7

'Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of YOU WITH HIS NEIGHBOUR, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.'

Eph 4:25-26

Our first obligation is to obey our Lord

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” John 14:15

‘The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’ 1 John 2:4

We need to be set free from our anger by following Him in obedience; continuing in His word is the same as obeying all He has commanded us. Therefore we must accept it is impossible to love God and follow Jesus Christ if we are angry. For how can we say we obey Him if we are unwilling to love our brother? (Matt 22:39) The Lord gives us more understanding on how we are to love others when He said to His disciples: *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will*

know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

This love God calls on us to show in place of anger, even to our enemies, is not just a sweet emotion, or a casual nod to acceptance. This love God required takes our total submission under the governance of the Holy Spirit in order to bear fruit, for it is impossible for natural man to love as God intended. *'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.'* Gal 5:22-23

Consequently we need to ask, where can there be a place for anger to remain in this love of God who died for the sins of the world. How can we say we are angry with others and deny them this love God mercifully poured out on us? Even while God might have been angry with us, He went on loving us even unto death on a cross. Doesn't our Lord teach us;

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."
Matt 5:7

Because of God's great love for us, He has poured out His Spirit's love to enable us to love in a meaningful way. And this is His kind of love; *'Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.'*
1 Cor 13:4-8

Since we are often inclined to misunderstand God's ways, God's Word contains principles regarding how to handle anger in a godly manner, and how to overcome sinful anger.

The Bible says a lot about anger

From the instruction we received in the Bible we must accept that all anger is not always sin. The Bible approves of what is called “righteous indignation.” God is angry, (Psalm 7:11; Mark 3:5) Anger is also God-given energy intended to help us solve the problems of dealing with sin. Nathan the prophet sharing an injustice with David. *Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.” Nathan then said to David, “You are the man!* (2 Samuel 12:5-7) Then there was Jesus' anger over how some of the Jews had defiled worship at God's temple in Jerusalem. John 2:13-18

In order for us to see God's righteous anger is not like that of fallen man, we must see that

neither of the examples of righteous anger involved self-defence, but a defence of others or of a God given principle to live by.

How should we see our anger?

We need to know our anger is sinful when it is motivated by pride. (James 1:20) Our anger is sinful when it distorts God's purposes. (1 Cor 10:31) And our anger is sinful when it is allowed to linger longer. Eph 4:26-27

In every situation believers are reminded they need to deal with their anger quickly and obediently. *BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.* Eph 4:22-27

From our own experience, we can see even good people will hurt us; and we them. This is because none of us have put on the life of Christ to the extent that we only live under the control of the Spirit according to our re-born divine nature.

All of us are still putting off the old man and putting on the new. So all of us will cause others pain and distress, even without knowing what we have done sometimes. So all of us need to be quick to go to our brother and be reconciled. *“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.”* Matt 18:15

While the majority of our anger is not righteous; one of the first things people want to argue for is a way of justifying their anger. Then the teaching of Jesus seems to be often overlooked. If we follow Him who gave up His rights as God in heaven, how can we require others to comply with our petty demands to do things our way?

Dealing with anger God's way

We can begin by admitting our anger, and accept our wrong handling of anger as sin, so we stand before God and say so. *If we confess*

our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.'

1 John 1:9

God is sovereign over every situation and every person in our life. (Rom 8:28-29) Nothing happens to us that He does not cause or allow. Although God does allow awful things to happen, He is always faithful to use them for the good of His people.

We can deal with anger biblically by making room for God's wrath. This is especially important in cases of injustice, when "evil" men abuse "innocent" people. The Bible tells us never to play God. (Rom12:19) God is righteous and just, and we can trust Him who knows all and sees all to act justly Gen 18:25

We can overcome anger by returning good deeds for evil. (Rom 12:21) We can change our

feelings toward another by changing how we choose to act toward them.

We must treat others the way we would like to be treated. It is not enough just to put away our anger; we must act in a way which is consistent with our new life in Christ. *'Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.'*

Eph 4:32

The Lord isn't expecting us to be like little robots; instead He requires we have a new heart because there has been a change in our condition because we are born again. Our inner nature is changed and directed by the Spirit of God to love others as we have been loved. We must always take responsibility for resolving our problems. *'According to the power that works within us.'* (Eph 3:20) *'If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.'*

Rom 12:18

Living Water Resources

Come to the River

Compiled by

Robert C May

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cometotheriver@optusnet.com.au

