



Sunday June 24, 2007 Tempering Your Temper

UNDERSTANDING ANGER

Anger – A Godly Emotion

God gets angry

Exodus 4:14 Numbers 11:1; 12:9; 22:22 Judges 2:14 1 Kings 11:9

In all these (and many other cases) we see that God is angered when man fails to respond to his leading (e.g. Moses) or when man willfully sins and goes into disobedience.

Malachi 3:6 God's nature has not changed over the two Testaments.

God is slow to anger Psalm 145:8

Jesus became angry and yet did not sin Mark 3:5 John 2:14-17

(Also in Matthew 21 and Mark 11)

We see other examples when Jesus spoke sharply "rebuked" His disciples, etc.

Anger is a God-given emotion.

Anger in itself is not wrong. It is what we do with it, that results in something right or wrong. The problem is that when anger is allowed to flow uncontrolled, it causes destruction.

Anger – with a cause

Matthew 5:21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Anger was given by God, as **part of our emotional makeup**, and as **a tool to be used in our relationships** with people.

In our emotional make up anger can be a source of strength for self preservation, self worth, or for carrying out righteousness.

In our relationships anger could be a emotional signal to the other person that something needs to be changed. It can be a positive motivator in giving feedback about how we can live life together more productively.



WHY DO WE LOOSE OUR COOL

1. For some people anger is a lifestyle of choice
They see certain rewards in showing anger, e.g. power, ability to manipulate, intimidation, emotional distance, control, etc.
2. Anger is an emotional reaction that comes when we feel we have been wronged
 - We felt unappreciated
 - We felt taken for granted
By expressing anger most people are standing up for themselves. They are saying that they deserve to be treated correctly.
 - We felt helpless
e.g. the new kid who was being bullied at school.
 - We felt belittled
 - We felt insignificant
Something happens that does not affirm our worth as individuals.

A person who feels angry under such conditions is a person who is exhibiting something positive – a sense of self preservation or self worth. However, the important thing is how this emotion is released and communicated under such circumstances.

The problem is that most of us take something that is positive and turn it into something that is destructive.

3. Anger born out of dependency
 - We depend on people or expect people to behave a certain way. When this does not happen, we feel frustrated and this leads to anger.
 - Feeling unaccepted, Feeling controlled, feeling ignored, Spoiled (every one must give in to me), Selfish (everything must revolve around me),
 - We must learn to be moderately dependent
4. Anger born because one is fighting feelings of inferiority
5. Anger born out of stubbornness
6. Anger born out of guilt. Primarily anger toward self, which then gets released on those closest to you.
7. Anger born out of self-centeredness.
8. Righteous anger
 - When people are willfully unbelieving or disobedient

Two types of anger

Psychiatrists/psychologists refer to two types of anger:

1. Assertive anger – to put forward your ideas in a confident manner, can be a positive trait, demonstrates strong commitment, etc. Jesus' anger in the Temple was assertive because it had a constructive conclusion. The purpose was accomplished. He did not harbor feeling of hatred or bitterness.
2. Aggressive anger – goes too far, puts forward ideas in a rude, insensitive, sometimes abusive way. Little concern about the impact their behavior will have on the recipient.



Some ways people handle anger

Psychiatrists/psychologists tell us that there are three general styles that people handle anger:

1. Repress it – they try to ignore it thinking that it will go away. Repression is a form of denial. It only brings a temporary solution. Anger is pushed into his subconscious mind. It works at that level and comes out in one sudden, unexpected outburst!
2. Express it – this is expressed through words, actions, etc. Depending on how this is (assertive or aggressive) it can be constructive or destructive.
3. Release it – this is anger that is dismissed or let go. This is different from repression. The person has made a conscious anger that anger is no longer needed and willingly drops it.

THE RESULTS OF UNCONTROLLED ANGER

1. Uncontrolled anger can cause a breakdown in relationships.

Proverbs 15:18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

Proverbs 29:22 An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

Proverbs 22:24, 25

24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

25 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

2. Uncontrolled anger affects our testimony
3. Uncontrolled anger affects us
 - The improper handling of anger causes about 95% of psychological depressions. (Paul Meier, Minrith Meier New Life Clinics)

Proverbs 19:19 A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again.

4. Uncontrolled anger affects our relationship with God

TEMPERING YOUR TEMPER

(Keeping Cool, When the heat is on)

1. Learn to be secure inside
 - The way a person handles anger is ultimately a reflection of that person's self-image. It is an offshoot of the way people feel about themselves.
 - Develop a deep understanding of who you are in Christ. This is the ultimate basis for developing a strong sense of self worth.
2. Open up to God's Word and the work of the Holy Spirit
 - God's word changes spirit and soul.



Proverbs 16:32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

Proverbs 19:11 The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.

Memorize Scriptures on controlling anger.

- Temperance (self control) is a fruit of the Spirit.
Galatians 5:22,23
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance (self control): against such there is no law.
- The most satisfying lifestyle is one in which composure prevails. You can choose a lifestyle of calm

3. Eliminate roots of poor character

- Regardless of what we have learned and experienced in our formative years, as adults, we have the ability to unlearn and eliminate roots of poor character.

Galatians 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

1 Timothy 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

It is not that we are to do away with our ability to be angry – rather we are to deal with (a)what causes us to become angry and (b)the ungodly expressions of anger.

- a) **Be tolerant** : Stop being picky or finicky. Stop expecting yourself and others to be perfectionists. Some of the angriest people in the world are perfectionists. This is not to say that we can become "sloppy" in our work and attitude. This is not to say that we must not strive for perfection or excellence. Just understand that it may take a little time to achieve excellence or perfection. Be tolerant when mistakes are made. Focus on the positives.



Proverbs 14:17 He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

Proverbs 14:29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

- b) **Be levelheaded** : understand that others also have a point of view. Yours is not the only way to do a certain thing. Others could have a totally different frame of reference. Be willing to listen. Don't be so self-centered.

James 1:19,20

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

- c) **Have fun** : Laugh often. If we take everything so seriously, we are prone to get angry with those who don't seem to be as serious. We live in a highly competitive world. Compete, but don't make winning as the only thing. Learn to take temporary failures and setbacks in stride.

- d) **Don't overload your schedule** : We tend to become irritable and easily angry, when we are working under pressure.

Psalm 37:7,8

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

- e) **Learn to let go of your rights** : Don't expect every one else to know what is right and do what is right

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

- f) **Choose your battles** : Invest your time, emotion and energy into things that really matter.

4. User your anger responsibly

Ephesians 4:26,27

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

Using your anger positively

Ecclesiastes 7:9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

You can find strength in you're anger and learn to channel it in a positive way.



5. Walk in love

1 Corinthians 13:5 Love is not irritable, does not become angry quickly.

Proverbs 21:14 A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

Maintain the heart of a servant

Reference:

Getting the Best of your anger by Les Carter, 1983

Published by Fleming H. Revell, ISBN 0-8007-8646-7



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