

JesusOnline Equip

Ministry Resources Hub

Anger

A free resource from JesusOnline Ministries.

Read or share online: app.jesonline.com/post/22010-211-anger

JesusOnline Equip · Ministry Resources Hub · equip.jesonline.com

Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

Anger

As we think about being connected to other people in the body of Christ, it's good to stop and consider the topic of anger. What? Anger? Why? Because angry people are hard to get along with ... and they disrupt life in the body of Christ! Christian psychologist Henry Brandt spent nearly his entire professional career talking to Christians about letting God take care of their anger!

When was the last time you saw or experienced the result of someone's anger ... on the road, at the store, in your family, with a friend? Believe it or not, the one emotion that plagues everyone is ... anger. People seldom admit to actually being angry. Instead, they say, "I lost my temper," or "I was out of control" or "That person really annoyed me." Curious expressions, aren't they? Rarely does anyone say, "I was really ticked off and I sinned"? *Sin*? Really? Yes, really. The truth is that rarely is our anger in and of itself a sin ... but how we handle it often leads to sinful behavior. The one emotion that plagues everyone is ... anger. No matter how you express it, anger is still anger ... and it is a problem if you don't deal with it in an appropriate way.

Q. Think about it for a minute, what is it that causes you to be angry?

Q. What does your anger usually look like?

Q. In what ways has (or does) your anger result in hurting other people?

In his book entitled *Heart of the Problem*, Dr. Henry Brandt wrote, "I have never found anger to be a positive factor in problem-solving. I have never found anger to be righteous. It is always a hindrance to intelligent straight thinking and rational behavior. In an instant, anger can change a person from being satisfied, cheerful, and relaxed to being dissatisfied, unhappy, and tense. There is universal agreement that unrestrained anger can destroy us."

The things that make you angry are situations and people that are outside of you that cause something inside of you to react.

You can only correct what is wrong with your spirit by accessing God's power. Anger is defined as "an emotional reaction of extreme displeasure and/or antagonism." Other words we might use to describe anger are: annoyance, irritation, antagonism, resentment, and indignation. Anger is expressed in many ways. It can be murderous rage or mild inner annoyance and irritation. You may not lose your temper and

throw things, but you get terribly “irritated” about a lot of things. Many of us nurture our anger into something else: either a physical action or verbal assault that is hurtful, bitter, or a plan for revenge ... you name it!

Q. When is the last time you were angry about something or with someone?

Q. What are you angry about today?

What does a mean, angry, hostile Christian look like? Well, let’s take a look at the guy who walks into the office on Friday morning. His face is smiling and calm. However, as is the case with most people, he can usually control the way his face looks, but he can’t control his spirit. This guy is saying to himself, “My boss makes me mad, my wife drives me crazy, my kids annoy me, and my coworkers are idiots.” Where is this person supposed to go to find peace when he has all these people aggravating him all the time? He is angry and his anger is causing him to focus on many negative things. Throughout the morning he begins to interact in negative ways with all of these people. He sighs, he shouts, he rolls his eyes, he is sarcastic.

Your joy, happiness, and contentment do not depend on the behavior of other people. When you insist on life being the way you want it, all sorts of things will disturb you.

Q. How do you typically handle your anger?

Q. Does your behavior honor God?

If you really look at your anger, you will find that when you are angry, irritated, and frustrated it is because something has not gone your way. But, and here’s the problem, the things that make you angry are situations and people that are *outside* of you; and they are causing something *inside* of you to react. The problem is not really what is making you angry, but how you are responding to it. The problem is your spirit. And you can only correct what is wrong with your spirit by accessing God’s power.

Henry Brandt says that many people try to *cope* with their anger... but what they need is a *cure*! Angry reactions are triggered by anything that causes us to be annoyed, disgruntled, upset, uncomfortable, bitter, or envious. Contention, disagreement, discord, hostility, temper tantrums, rage, screaming, arguing, and anger are all words describing a fundamental response we exhibit when we don’t

get our own way! Strife, wrangling, arguing, and shouting are often the result. Nearly everyone thinks that their anger is a justifiable response to the way they were treated. God's Word teaches us to get rid of our anger.

Q. What are the triggers for your anger?

Q. When is the last time you blamed someone else for your reaction?

In Colossians 3:8, the Bible tells us to "put off all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, abusive language from your mouth."

When you insist on life being the way *you* want it, all sorts of things will disturb you. The fact remains that each one of us needs to learn how to deal with our personal anger. Society's solutions include "ignoring it," "sharing" (or more accurately blasting) people with it so that we will feel better, hiding it, or finding a way to "control it." All of these solutions are actually asking us to simply "live with" the anger.

But as Henry Brandt points out in nearly all of his books, the Bible has another approach altogether. God's Word teaches us to get rid of our anger. Carefully study these verses:

"For human anger does not accomplish God's righteousness." —James 1:20

"A person who has a quick temper will do foolish things, and a person with crafty schemes will be hated." —Proverbs 14:17

"Scornful people inflame a city, but those who are wise turn away wrath." —Proverbs 29:8

"A fool lets fly with all his temper, but a wise person keeps it back." —Proverbs 29:11

"An angry person stirs up dissension, and a wrathful person is abounding in transgression." —Proverbs 29:22

"Do not be angry and frustrated! Do not fret! That only leads to trouble!" —Psalm 37:8

"Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on the cause of your anger. Do not give the devil an opportunity." —Ephesians 4:26-27

So how do we get rid of our anger? You cannot have a peaceful heart when you are allowing a number of things to “trigger” your emotions. Can you be “filled with the Spirit” when you are angry? Are you going to settle for being an angry person and justify it by saying, “That’s just the way I am?” You need to allow the Holy Spirit to rid you of your anger.

The idea here is not to learn to control, stuff or channel your anger into meaningful activity. Acknowledge your anger and let God deal with it. Now is the time to talk to God and acknowledge the anger you have become aware of and want to release. Forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against. Thank God for forgiving your sin of anger. Ask Him to bless the ones you are angry with and to love them through you. You will have a huge load lifted from your shoulders!

Application

Take a notepad and pencil with you and for twenty-four hours list everything that “triggers” your anger ... in any form. Then take some time to evaluate what you have been angry about. You will be surprised! Talk to God about it. Ask the Holy Spirit to change you *from the inside*. Let God direct your emotional responses to your circumstances. Keep a record of how God is working in your life in this area.