

## Anger

Anger is an emotion we all feel from time to time. Perhaps some of us struggle with this emotion more than others. Anger, like any other emotion, can often lead to action. Sometimes anger-fueled actions can be positive or constructive and, unfortunately, sometimes anger-fueled actions can be negative or destructive. Emotions are human and we all feel them, but to let ourselves be guided by emotion alone, especially as powerful as anger can be, is not how God would have us live. Yes, we will feel emotions daily, but action should be taken after thoughts of the consequences are considered. What will the outcome of my anger be if I do not control it? What will the outcome of my anger be for myself and others if I just do whatever I want? The hymn, "Angry Words" by Horatio R. Palmer, written in 1867, is a wonderful example of the power of anger. While Mr. Palmer's words are not inspired by God, they are powerful. Thankfully, we have the inspired word of God that we can turn to in order to help us deal better with our anger.

## Scriptures

**Psalms 37:8-9** "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth." We cannot let ourselves be ruled by anger. Often that has very bad outcomes, even violence and murder. We should notice when anger is building up inside and not let ourselves take horrible actions because of it. God will not accept our angry actions that are evil no matter why we have taken them. Be careful and thoughtful and don't be guided by blind rage.

**Psalms 103:8** "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." We have the ability to control ourselves, especially when we slow down and think before we act. Rashly acting out in anger prevents us from cooling off and thinking more wisely about what we need to do. Always cool off when we are angry before taking any action, or saying words that might not ever be able to be taken back, no matter how sorry we might be.

**Proverbs 12:16** "A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame." While the Incredible Hulk is a fictional character, he illustrates for us the person that we all know is angry. We don't want to be around them when we know they are angry and sometimes even dangerous. This is not a functional way to live life. If you are angry all the time, find out why and get help if you need to. A life filled with anger is not a life well lived or enjoyed.

**Proverbs 14:17** "He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated." and **Proverbs 14:29** "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." Both of these verses illustrate being slow to anger. Anger can severely cloud our judgment, and quick anger can lead to a failure to gather all the facts. Perhaps gathering ALL the facts will cause us to avoid a misunderstanding. Slow down and understand what is going on, then act in a wise Christian manner, not with fire in your veins.

**Proverbs 15:1** "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." Sometimes returning harsh words with harsh words only leads to more harsh words and not a real solution to the problem. It can certainly be difficult, but to return soft words when angry

ones are fired at you might help calm a troubled situation. De-escalating rather than escalating a situation might let everyone calm down and find a solution before a relationship is destroyed.

**Proverbs 15:18** “A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.”, **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.”, and **Proverbs 19:11** “The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.” We have to learn to rule our emotions and not be led by them. Ruling or controlling emotions such as anger gives us time to think things out and not act rashly. Being ruled by anger or any other emotion is poor self-control and can lead to poor choices in life.

**Proverbs 22:24** “Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go.” Who wants to spend a lot of time around an angry person? Anger can push people away. Is that how you want to live your life?

**Ecclesiastes 7:9** “Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.” I think we can all think of an example of someone acting out in anger and how foolish they can be when they do so. People lashing out in anger are often ashamed of their actions later. Think before acting and let anger cool down and there will probably be much less to regret later.

**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.” The word “Raca” is Arabic and is a term of reproach meaning worthless or useless. Anger can be a blinding force that keeps people from working out their problems. It is better to work with one another to solve a problem than to just let it fester and let anger grow and grow.

**Luke 6:31** “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.” God wants us to be kind to one another and take care of each other. Actions coming from a place of caring are usually more fruitful than those coming from a place of anger. If we can treat each other with respect, how much less violence would there be in the world?

**Romans 12:21** “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” It is easy to get into the habit of returning bad treatment with bad treatment. It is much harder to return bad treatment with kindness. However, the latter has a much greater ability to put out a fire than dumping more coals onto the fire. This can be a major challenge but being angry will eventually eat up a person and make them, and those around them, miserable. Trying to overcome anger with good has a better chance to mend a fence and, more importantly, is pleasing to God.

**Ephesians 4:26** “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” Anger is not sinful. It can easily lead to sin, but anger used properly is not sinful. We can have righteous anger over an injustice or terrible situation and use that anger to do our best to make it better. Case in point, Jesus was angry with the people that were misusing his Father’s temple and threw

them out twice. Once in **John 2:13-17** “And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” and again in **Matthew 21:12-17** “And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearst thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected? And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there. Jesus was angry but did good, not evil. He stopped a wrong from being done and helped others. So, we see anger controlled can lead to positive action that is good and productive and not sinful. Anger does not have to lead to rage-filled sinful actions.

**Ephesians 4:31** “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.” Anger can be a terrible poisonous pill that if we swallow it can lead to misery or even death. Anger can eat one up from the inside and destroy their lives which is why it must be controlled and not allowed to take over our lives.

**Colossians 3:8** “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth” God tells us to get rid of uncontrolled anger in our lives. It might be difficult at times but we can do it, and we must be pleasing to Him.

**James 1:19** “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” This is a wonderful verse that can keep us out of a lot of trouble if we can keep it in our minds. Slow down, listen to the situation, get all the information, and then calmly respond.

**James 1:20** “For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” If we truly want God to count us as righteous then we must get control of our angry feelings or we cannot be His servants.

### Conclusion

It is not sinful to be angry. We will all be angry sometimes. It can be sinful how we deal with our anger. Will we make the choice to deal with our anger in rage and fury and take sinful actions? Will we make the choice to deal with anger by taking control of it and thinking before we act, possibly even using this emotion to help us take positive actions? How we deal with anger IS a choice and we can learn to control it. We have to choose; will our actions be pleasing to God or not? Do you want God to count you as one of His?