

## GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

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### The Doctrine of Anger

Anger is a mental attitude sin and is used as an anthropopathism related to divine judgment, anger in man is a sin. In God it expresses a change of policy in terms of human frame of reference. As a mental attitude sin, anger expresses antagonism, hatred, exasperation, resentment and irrationality. It can be mental or emotional or both. The Greek word *orge* refers to mental anger, *thumos* refers to emotional anger. In Eph 4:31 both types are related to bitterness, ***Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.***

Anger is a sin which motivates honor code violations like gossip, judging, maligning others. As with most sins, this results in chain sinning. Anger is also a mental attitude reaction. If it is unjustifiable it becomes a reaction of antagonism that makes it a sin, the reaction of irritation, exasperation, and irrationality. Justifiable reaction is never irrational. The Bible distinguishes between mental and emotional anger, if our right lobe is dominating we can react in mental anger (*orge*). If our reaction is from emotional revolt, then it is emotional anger (*thumos*), both are unjustifiable reactions.

#### Results of Anger.

Anger motivates jealousy and cruelty, Prov 27:4, ***Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, But who can stand before jealousy?***

A person can't be angry without being cruel and unfair. Anger is related to stupidity, Eccl 7:9.

***Do not be hasty to be angry in your right lobe; for anger resides in the bosom of fools.***

Satan had anger and it turned his genius into stupidity. No one is ever smart when they are angry, which is why many stupid and embarrassing things are said in anger. Whenever we have to deal with some problem, we must never lose our temper!

Anger is a sin from the old sin nature, Gal 5:19-20, ***Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,***

Anger is never an isolated sin, Prov 29:22, ***An angry person stirs up strife, and a hot tempered person abounds in transgression.***

Anger can destroy a nation, Amos 1:11, ***So decrees the Lord, "For three sins of Edom, even for four, I will not revoke its punishment. Because he pursued his brother with a sword, stifling all compassion, because his anger raged continually and he maintained his anger forever."***

Anger is associated with grieving the Holy Spirit, Eph 4:30-31, ***Stop grieving the Holy Spirit, the God by whom you have been sealed to the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and slander be removed from you, together with all evil.***

Anger is a violation of the royal family honor code, Col 3:8, ***But now you also put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.***

Anger hinders effective prayer, 1 Tim 2:8, ***Therefore, I desire that men in every place pray, lifting up holy hands without anger and without dissension.***

Anger results in self-induced misery, Prov 22:8, ***He who sows iniquity will reap vanity, And the rod of his fury will perish.***

When a person is angry, they fail to interpret history or circumstances correctly, they become frustrated and then angry, which results in self-induced misery.

Anger is the source of chain sinning, Heb 12:15, ***See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;***  
This is hidden, hypocritical anger.

#### **Anger in the New Testament, Eph 4:26.**

The verse is correctly translated, ***Although you may have become angry, in spite of that stop sinning.***

This is quoted from Ps 4:4, which teaches David's righteous indignation at the revolt of his son Absalom, ***Tremble with anger, yet do not sin.***

David was tempted to become angry at Absalom, his son, because he used his personality to start a revolution against his father. If David had continued in his reaction, it would have become anger and sin. But David was able to stop his temptation by utilizing the problem solving device of Occupation with Christ.

Anger is an emotional sin, and therefore it is always irrational. David never became angry at Absalom; he asked the army to spare Absalom in 2 Sam 18:5.

If anger continues and we have bitterness or vindictiveness, our vindictiveness will come out either verbally or as some form of retaliation or revenge. It is possible to respond to unfairness without having sin. We can be angry because of maltreatment or gossip from others, and yet still put the matter in the Lord's hands.

When we are maltreated, we are never to let reaction to maltreatment become sin. If we retaliate, then our reaction becomes anger. Then we will violate the royal family honor code. Never let reaction become sin.

Believer's with arrogant subjectivity look down at others and hide their anger until one day they explode at friends or loved ones, this is a flawed character and a hidden anger instead of an outburst of anger. In Eph 4:26, the believer has already become angry and is warned to stop immediately before he violates the royal family honor code and greater damage is done. Anger is the motivation for many other sins that are violations of the royal family honor code. As an irrational sin of emotion, mental attitude anger expresses antagonism, hatred and resentment. It often expresses itself in slander and even violence and murder.

Two wrongs do not make a right. Anger plus another sin is not right. We cannot build our happiness on someone else's unhappiness, this is exactly what retaliation tries to do. We will never become happy by getting revenge.

To punish someone else by the revenge modus operandi such as verbal sins or violence is synonymous with obstruction of divine punishment and blasphemy toward divine justice. Anger becomes involved with arrogance and opens the gate to all of the manifestations of arrogance and sin.

### **Righteous Indignation.**

There is such a thing as righteous indignation, but it is not anger as an emotion. Rather it is a clear understanding of a bad situation. Righteous indignation is response to unfair treatment by concentration on our relationship with God, while reaction leads to anger and sin. When it says in Mar 10:14 that Jesus became righteously opposed to the disciples when they forbade the children to be brought to Him, it is not anger. It is an understanding of a wrong, and not appreciating it at all. Jesus expressed what might be called righteous indignation in Mat 23:13-36 against the scribes and Pharisees. He wasn't angry, but expressed righteous indignation. Jesus wasn't angry when He said to Peter in Mat 16:23, ***“Get behind me Satan, you [Peter] are a stumbling block to Me. You have not concentrated on the things [doctrines] of God, but on the things of man.”***

Anger is used as an anthropopathism in two phrases that are found many times in the Bible: ***“The anger of the Lord.”*** Num 25:4, 32:14; Deut 29:20; Jud 3:8, 10:7, 2:14, 20; 2 Kgs 24:20; Lam 4:16; Jer 4:8, 25:37, 30:24, 51:45, 52:3; Zeph 2:2-3; Psa 2:5.

***“The wrath of God.”*** 2 Chr 28:11; Ezra 10:14; Ps 78:31; Joh 3:36; Rom 1:18; Eph 5:6; Col 3:6; Rev 14:10, 19, 15:1,7, 16:1, 19:15;.

### **Principles of Anger.**

Anger destroys virtue in the subject. Therefore anger destroys the function of impersonal love and can destroy marriage.

Anger which does not destroy the virtue of the subject is classified as righteous displeasure or righteous indignation, Psa 4:4, ***Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.***

Impersonal love maintains the virtue of the subject, but sinful anger destroys the function of impersonal love. When sinful anger is perpetuated, it becomes the motivation for many sins. Therefore ***“never let the sun set on your anger.”***

"To be angry and sin not" is righteous indignation, but too often righteous indignation is an excuse for the function of legalism.

All unbelievers in their status of spiritual death are said to be in the status quo of ***“wrath.”*** In Rom 9:22 unbelievers all called, "vessels of wrath." In Eph 2:3 unbelievers are said to be, "by nature the children of wrath." The future of the unbeliever is said to be "under the wrath of God" in Joh 3:36.

Like arrogance, anger is a sin that motivates other sins. It is a way of fragmenting our life. Arrogance motivates emotional sins like jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, hatred, implacability, revenge, self-pity. Anger is the other side of the coin with jealousy. Criminal

activity is the function of the arrogant and angry person and anger always adds wrong to wrong, sin to sin. Most people who spend their time in anger have a temporary loss of self-esteem or it is a manifestation that no self-esteem existed in the first place.