

Anger And Its Management

I. Definitions.

- A. anger: The active feeling provoked against the agent; passion, rage; wrath, ire, hot displeasure.
- B. angry: Of persons: actively affected against the agent or cause of trouble; feeling or showing resentment; enraged, wrathful, irate.
- C. rage: Madness; insanity; a fit or access of mania. *Obs. exc. poet.* 2. Violent anger, furious passion, usually as manifested in looks, words or action; a fit or access of such anger; angry disposition.
- D. wrath: Vehement or violent anger; intense exasperation or resentment; deep indignation.
- E. fury: Fierce passion, disorder or tumult of mind approaching madness; esp. wild anger, frenzied rage; also, a fit or access of such passion.
- F. fierce: Of formidably violent and intractable temper, like a wild beast; vehement and merciless in anger or hostility.

II. There is a time and place for anger.

- A. God Himself expresses anger. **DEU 9:7-8; PSA 7:11; 2:4-5; 78:38.**
- B. Christ expresses anger. **MAR 3:5; REV 6:16.**
- C. We may be angry within limitations. It is a useful power. **PRO 25:23.**
 - 1. Anger should be governed. **EPH 4:26; PSA 37:8.**
 - 2. Anger against others without cause is wrong. **MAT 5:22.**
 - 3. Anger which drives one to defy God is wrong. **PSA 106:30-33.**
 - 4. Anger over minor injuries may invite Christ's rebuke. **LUK 9:51-56.**
 - 5. Inappropriate anger is to be put away from us in view of a higher calling. **EPH 4:31-32.**

III. That there is a time and a place for anger does not imply that it should be the defining part of our character, the default reaction to whatever displeases us.

- A. There is a time and place for many other uncomfortable or negative words and actions, such as rebuke (**LEV 19:17**), mockery (**1KI 18:27**), judgment (**ISA 59:14-15**), etc.
 - 1. Yet it would be wrong to rebuke the righteous, mock the handicapped, or forget that mercy rejoices against judgment where possible. **JAM 2:13.**
 - 2. That God Himself may rebuke, mock or judge and even condone or expect us to do so in season is not a justification for not governing our exercise of such traits.
 - 3. NOTE: It is a tendency of our nature to seek divine authority for our weaknesses and errors to justify ourselves rather than justify God Who teaches us to exercise not only negative impulses in season but also discernment, restraint, moderation, temperance, etc.
 - 4. Be wary of an untempered spirit masquerading as righteous zeal for the Lord. **2KI 10:16, 29-31; LUK 9:51-56.**
- B. We are warned about angry men, men who are basically defined by wrath. **PRO 15:18; 21:24; 29:22; 22:24-25; 21:19.**
 - 1. (**PRO 12:16**) A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.
 - 2. Like it or not, we will have a reputation in this world: we will be known by our fruits. **MAT 7:20; PRO 20:11; LUK 6:45.**
 - 3. "When people show you what they are, believe them." (Maya Angelou)
 - 4. When we show ourselves *friendly* rather than *fretful*, our chances of maintaining positive companionship improve. **PRO 18:24.**

- IV. Jesus Christ is the perfect man, the ultimate model of a well-governed, self-governed, devoted servant of God. **EPH 4:13.**
- A. Yes, He demonstrated anger *sometimes*.
1. He overturned tables in the temple *twice*, meditatively, not rashly. **JOH 2:13-15.**
 2. He was angry at hard-hearted hypocrites who draped their corruption in piety. **MAR 3:5-6.**
 3. He *once* cursed a fig tree. **MAR 11:21.**
- B. But He was widely known for doing good, suffering long with His wayward children, having compassion on the ignorant, meek and gentle. Wrath was certainly not His default response to everything contrary to His way of thinking. **2CO 10:1; 1TI 1:16; HEB 5:1-2.**
- C. Sinners regularly tried to provoke Him to speak unadvisedly with His lips (as Moses did) but He never yielded to their temptations. **LUK 11:53-54.**
- D. He Whose Spirit inspired Paul's writings was "...not easily provoked..." (**1CO 13:5**).
- E. If ever there was a man who had cause to be angry with God and sinners, it was Jesus. Nobody ever suffered injustice as He did.
1. His reward for utter faithfulness was an unjust death and abandonment by the Father. **MAT 27:46.**
 2. He was threatened and reviled by sinners but never responded in kind, leaving us an example of suffering patiently. **1PE 2:20-25.**
- F. It is true that Satan had nothing in Him (**JOH 14:30**) but the same could be said about Adam before he yielded to temptation. Adam yielded. Christ didn't.
1. Christ has given us His Spirit to indwell us, and He is greater than our flesh and this world. **1JO 4:4.**
 2. Christ has given us the word of His Spirit to convict us, correct us, guide us, improve us, revive us, refresh us and comfort us so that we by faith may have the greatest victory over this world and all the frustrations it represents to us. **1JO 5:4.**
 3. There are basically four deceptions to avoid in overcoming character flaws:
 - a. Victory is impossible.
 - b. Victory is unnecessary.
 - c. Victory is damaging to my self-image.
 - d. Victory in increments is worthless.
 4. Much of our success as believers is owing to a reasonable assessment of this fallen world, our own flaws, and the fact that we are not God Whose will is absolute.