

# overcoming anger

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## Scripture shows that anger is quite \_\_\_\_\_

1. The Bible contains the words 'anger', 'angry', 'rage', and 'wrath' over 500 times
2. The Bible makes many strong statements about anger (Ps 37:8; Prov 12:16, 14:17, 15:18, 16:32, 25:28; Ecc 7:9; Eph 4:31; James 1:19, 20)
3. The Bible provides many examples of angry people
  - Cain, in his anger, killed his brother. As a result, he became a vagrant and a wanderer (Gen 4:5-8, 11-12)
  - Simeon and Levi were self-willed men, murdering others in their cruel anger. As a result, their families were scattered (Gen 49:5-7)
  - Saul became angry and tried to kill his oldest son (1 Sam 20:30-33)
  - Naaman became furious and refused to follow a simple command in order to be healed of leprosy. However, when he finally obeyed, he was healed (2 Kings 5:10-14)
  - Uzziah, confronted by the priests for his unfaithfulness to the Lord, became enraged and was struck with leprosy until the day of his death (2 Chron 26:16-23)
  - Jonah was greatly displeased and angry when the Lord showed compassion on Nineveh, and God subsequently rebuked and humbled him (Jonah 4:1-11)
4. The Bible reveals God displaying anger
  - Anger of God (Ex 22:24; Num 12:9; Ps 7:11; Nah 1:2, 3, 6)
  - Anger of Jesus (Matt 21:12-13; Mark 3:5)

## Understanding anger \_\_\_\_\_

1. Anger is a response of the whole person to a negative judgment against a perceived evil
2. Anger is an issue of the heart

3. Anger is natural
  - The capacity to experience anger was a part of man as he came from the hand of the Creator
  - Anger isn't sinful in and of itself – it is possible to be angry in a good way (Ps 4:4; Eph 4:26; Ex 11:8; Neh 5:1–7)
  - The capacity to become angry isn't something that was added as a result of the curse
4. Since the fall of man, sinful anger can be nurtured (Prov 22:24-25; 2 Pet 2:14; Heb 5:14; 1 Tim 4:7)
5. Anger is disguised under many different names
6. Anger has many evil friends
  - It is associated with murder (Gen 4)
  - It is associated with wrath, bitterness, slander and malice (Eph 4:31)
  - It is associated with the works of the flesh (Gal 5:19–21)
  - It is associated with the old self apart from Jesus Christ and is contrary to Scripture (Col 3:8; James 1:19-20)
7. Anger affects the total person
  - Physically – tense muscles, scowl on your face, breath harder and faster
  - Behaviorally – impatient, cold, curt
  - Cognitively – it consumes you, you don't stop thinking about it or stewing over it
  - Socially – avoid groups of people
  - Motivationally – just want to stew or get away and escape
  - Occupationally – just don't want to do your work, you work carelessly, you are aggressive
8. Anger is something we do – the Bible makes it clear that anger isn't something that someone or something else makes us do (Ps 37:8; Eph 4:31)
9. Anger is idolatry – worshiping ourselves not God (Rom 12:19)
10. Anger is mental murder (Matt 5:21, 22)
11. Anger is deceptive, because we believe we have a right to be angry and that everyone should just understand (Heb 3:13)

## Some \_\_\_\_\_ of sinful anger

1. The primary cause are our own selfish desires (Eph 2:3; Ps 51:5; Col 3:8-10; James 4:1-3)

Paul David Tripp – How desires take control of your heart:

Desire → Demand → Need → Expectation → Disappointment → Punishment

“I want” “I must” “I will” “You should” “You didn’t!” “Because you didn’t, I will....”

Ken Sande – The progression of a heart idol:

I desire → I demand → I judge → I punish

2. External influences

- Being deceived or fooled by someone
- Being treated unfairly
- Someone else receives more attention than you
- Not getting what you want
- Wanting to get somewhere in a hurry and being hindered
- Being reprovved or rebuked by others
- Not getting what you think you deserve - “I have a right to this.”

3. Internal influences

- Lack of self-control (Prov 25:28)
- Jealousy and envy (Prov 6:34)
- Lack of knowledge or ignorance (Prov 19:11)
- Habituated internal response patterns (Prov 22:24)
- Pride (Prov 13:10)
- Churning and fretting (Prov 30:33)
- Collecting and retaining offenses (Eph 4:26)
- Selfish ambition, greed, selfishness, idolatry or own desires, covetousness (James 3:13-4:2)

## Some \_\_\_\_\_ of sinful anger

1. Cain was disrespectful to God, lied, and killed his brother (Gen 4:1-11)
2. Foolish actions, unreasonable behavior and evil devices and schemes (Prov 14:17)
3. Attempts at getting even, people back (Rom 12:17-19)
4. Quarrelling and fighting (James 4:1-3; Prov 15:18)
5. Bitterness (harshness), clamor (being noisy, shouting, arguing), slander (gossip, saying bad things about another person), malice (holding grudges, being spiteful, wanting to hurt, being vicious, hateful and cruel) (Eph 4:31)

## Some \_\_\_\_\_ of sinful anger

1. Shame to self and others (Prov 12:16)
2. Disrespect and hatred of others (Prov 14:17)
3. People will lose confidence in you and think of you as foolish (Prov 14:29)
4. Others will fear and be intimidated by you (Prov 16:14)
5. People will avoid you (Prov 19:12)
6. People won't want to be with you (Prov 21:9, 19)
7. You will be a bad influence on others (Prov 22:24-25)
8. The cause of the Church of Christ will be dishonored; you will give the devil an open door for hurting you and others (Eph 4:25-27)
9. You will be responsible for promoting unrighteousness and your usefulness in furthering God's righteous cause will be hindered (James 1:19-20)

## How to \_\_\_\_\_ sinful anger

1. Before anger hits again:
  - Confess your past sins of anger to God and others who have been aware of it. Explain your intentions in the future and ask forgiveness (Ps 51:1-4; Matt 5:23-24).
  - Ask God to work in this area of your life and help you to put forth full effort towards change (2 Cor 9:8)

- Come up with the right thoughts to combat the wrong ones you typically have. Write them out. Use Scripture or scriptural concepts in your new thoughts. Include thankfulness in your new thoughts. Remember what you really deserve is God's wrath and spiritual death. Put your new thoughts in prayer form whenever you can (Rom 12:2).
  - Memorize some verses on anger and some verses on gentleness, patience, forgiveness or humbleness (Eph 4:23).
  - Since anger always involves pride, selfishness or both, seek to put on loving and humble thoughts and actions daily. Make a list of times and ways you can show love and humbleness (John 13:35; 1 Cor 13:4-7; 1 Pet 5:5).
  - Determine what godly desires and goals you should be fixed on in situations you typically become angry (Ps 40:8; 1 Cor 10:31).
  - Do a study on the patience and long suffering of God towards you (Num 14:18; Ps 145:8, e.g. look in MacArthur's Topical Bible under God's patience, longsuffering, and grace).
  - Be alert, ready to exercise self-control and change your thinking. Watch out for the situations and thoughts you have discovered. Make a concise list of each one (1 Pet 1:13).
  - Ask others to hold you accountable for your anger (Gal 6:1-2; Heb 10:24-25).
  - Do not associate with angry individuals unless they are seeking to change as well (Prov 22:24).
2. At the time you are tempted to become angry or are beginning to become angry:
- Pray for God's help (Heb 4:16).
  - Put off being angry (Prov 14:17):
    - Ask yourself "What is it I am wanting so badly?" Let go of it as something you must have.
    - Ask yourself "What am I thinking that is wrong?"
  - Put on gentleness, patience, and humility (Prov 16:32; James 1:19):
    - Ask yourself, "What should I be thinking?" Use your new thoughts and Scripture.
    - Ask yourself, "What is the right goal?"
    - Ask yourself, "How can I be patient and think of others?"
    - Ask yourself, "What do God and others want?" and "How can I serve?"
    - Ask yourself, "Is there something right that I should do about the problem or issue?" (Address someone's sin in the right way, plan a solution, get counsel, etc. Attack the problem not people.)

3. If you fail and become sinfully angry:

- Ask yourself, “How did I sin?” Be specific.
- Ask yourself, “If I had this to do over again, what would I think and do?”
- Take care of your sin of anger as soon as possible (Eph 4:26).
- Confess and ask forgiveness of God and anyone else who may have been aware of your sinful anger. Be specific about how you were sinfully angry: wrong thinking, wrong actions, lack of love, etc. (Ps 32:5; James 5:16).
- Tell God and others what you plan to do in the future instead (Ps 119:59-60).
- Be on guard once again (1 Pet 5:8).