

How to Overcome Anger with Biblical Principles

Anger Has Three Faces: It is expressed primarily in three different ways:

- 1) explosive and blowing up;
- 2) stewing, brewing, or silent indignation; and
- 3) irritability, exasperation or embitterment.

It doesn't take long to figure out that we live in an angry world. Read the headlines on any given day and you see anger on display in politics, movies, TV shows, and sports. Spend any amount of time in any family and you'll see anger expressed almost daily. When a day goes by without conflict, it's a miracle of God. Sadly, the church hasn't exactly been the poster child for pursuing peace and reconciling conflict in a God-glorifying way over the course of church history. Even though Jesus "broke down the dividing wall of hostility... so that we could have peace" ([Ephesians 2:14–16](#)), we still quarrel and fight

It's inevitable—wherever there are relationships, sinful anger will be expressed. By nature, we're all selfish. I'm no exception. Cut me off in traffic, I might have some words for you (with my window up, of course). Do something I perceive as disrespectful, watch out! I may get a little passive aggressive and withdraw from interacting with you because I have a heart of fear. If you "reject me," I get insecure, defensive, and may punish you by holding back.

From the beginning in the garden all the way to the end; man's anger is expressed by rejecting God and pursuing his own way ([Romans 3:10–18](#)). Yet man's anger does not accomplish God's righteous purposes ([James 1:19–20](#)). While God too can be angry, it is never sinful ([Psalm 7:11](#); [John 3:36](#); [Romans 1:18](#)). Actually, compared to the offenses He must suffer, He is very "slow to anger" ([Exodus 34:6](#); [Psalm 103:8](#)).

While anger may be all we can see at times, at the heart of it is a fearful, insecure, unsafe, untrusting heart looking for something from man that only God can satisfy. Learn to love God more with reverent awe and fear because then you'll learn to need people less. Remember that perfect love casts out fear ([1 John 4:18](#)) and that you are perfectly loved by your heavenly Father.

Dangers of living in anger

1. **Anger Hurts Relationships:** You choose who is on the receiving end of your anger because anger is a perceived threat to something you hold valuable.
2. **Anger Put Jesus on the Cross:** Did you know that the anger of man and God's wrath for all our sins culminated onto Jesus when he went to the cross to pay the penalty for sin ([Acts 2:22–24](#))? He satisfied God's wrath and allowed man to express their anger towards him at the same time—man rejecting God and God loving man in the very same event in history. How often do you reject God in your anger by not doing what He calls you to do?

3. **Anger is a Life-dominating Sin:** Just like any other “addiction,” we become enslaved to anger. It temporarily satisfies our sinful desire and flesh, yet we feel guilty and ashamed when we give full vent to it. It’s a vicious cycle of self-destruction. Are you stuck in a vicious cycle of anger? If so, you can be set free ([1 Corinthians 6:9–11](#)).
4. **Anger is an Expression of False Worship:** Like all other “addictions,” anger has false worship at its core. When you express your anger sinfully, ask yourself, “What am I not getting that I really want or that I’m willing to sin to get?” Your answer will reveal what you’re living for in that moment. Something else has captured your heart more than God, and you’re seeking a false refuge; that is idolatry. What’s captured your heart more than God?
5. **Anger affects our ability to think reasonably and rationally.** While I am not immune, I am also certain I’m not alone in my struggle ([1 Corinthians 10:13](#)). Did you know that the anger of man and God’s wrath for all our sins culminated onto Jesus when he went to the cross to pay the penalty for sin ([Acts 2:22–24](#))

What are you really afraid of deep down in the innermost being of your heart?

[Ephesians 4:26](#) says, “Be angry and do not sin.” You express righteous anger by becoming angry about what angers God. Jesus died not only to free you from sinful anger but to enable you to be angry with God not at God. Is your anger expressed righteously or sinfully? How can you tell? Would others say the same?

Remedy: Anger Must Be Surrendered

The only way out is to surrender your anger to God. Do not control or manage it in your flesh. Let the Spirit move you to action or bring you to brokenness. God is the judge, not you or me ([James 4:11–12](#)). Are you ready to step down from the throne of your mini judgment seat and allow God to be God? Remember, “vengeance is mine,” says the Lord ([Romans 12:18–21](#)).

BUT GOD, in his grace, mercy, kindness, patience, and love has made us alive through the death, burial, and [resurrection](#) of his Son, Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 2:4–9](#)). It’s only because of Him that I’m pursuing humility and meekness as a way of life. Know this though, humility and meekness are not weakness! They are strength under control, like a well trained war horse ([Matthew 5:5](#)).

As God’s children, we can all make this journey of change together. Here are some things I have learned over the years in my fight against sinful anger.

Understanding and applying these truths to your own life will help you overcome sinful anger and see sustained fruit.

We have to understand that the blood of Christ is sufficient to cover our sinful anger. No matter what wrath has protruded from your mouth or what you’ve done physically to harm others or yourself, you can be forgiven and walk in newness of life. Anger is a sin, but the death of Christ is payment enough to cover it. If you have died with Christ, you can become

a different person ([Romans 6:5–11](#)). Do you believe and live as if your anger is covered by the blood of Christ or do you act like His blood isn't sufficient? Why or why not?

Are you ready to humble yourself in your broken state and surrender your sinful anger to God? Know that He will give you grace in your time of need ([Isaiah 66:2b](#); [2 Chronicles 16:9](#); [James 4:6](#)). So, if you are ready, repent, ask God and those you have offended to forgive you, and walk in victory over the sinful anger that's held you captive for so long.