

# How To Handle Anger

1-24-10

## Eph 4:26,27,31,32

Anger is not new - as with so many of our emotional problems

It began in the very first family in the Bible

## READ Genesis 4:3-8

Cain's anger was towards God - his wrath fell upon Abel

There are a lot of angry people

We live in an angry generation – an angry society

I think you could say anger put our current president in the White House

And anger will most likely take him out of that same office

It is possible that you are angry and don't even know it

If you drive you will experience the anger that is in people

Now there are people among us who are angry

They aren't angry once in a while – they are always angry

Sometimes that anger is explosive – sometimes it is hidden on the inside

But it is always there

They may not know how angry they are or believe they're angry at all

But they are and those around them know it or at least sense it

**Anger is a feeling of strong antagonism**

**Directed toward something or someone**

## **That we have decided will injure threaten or harm us**

All of us have been angry – all of us will get angry

**Anger is an emotion we are born with**

**And we will experience it until the Lord returns or takes us home**

You will be angry – when it occurs how do you deal with it

Anger can be destructive or it can be a method  
Of releasing within us a creative energy for good

## **Ephesians 4:26,27,31,32 (READ)**

**There are at least three types of anger**

**The hottest type of anger is rage**

Rage is uncontrolled vicious retaliatory anger  
It is anger that takes out its vengeance

**Rage is self-centered it is explosive and it is  
going to be expressed**

It is a dangerous form of anger  
It is open war against people or circumstances that triggered it  
It can be expressed physically but it is most often expressed verbally

**A second and more common type of anger is  
resentment**

Where rage is an outward explosion of our feelings  
Resentment is a suppressed form of anger

If rager is a brush fire then resentment is like  
smoldering wet wood

**Resentment is warfare that is being waged on  
the inside of us**

It is boiling within us and we are holding it in  
It is just as vengeful as rage – just as self-centered

But it is silent and can be even more destructive than rage  
Resentment has been called “frozen rage”  
We hang on to it because we believe we have the right to be angry  
We have been wronged and we resent it so we quietly seek our revenge

## **Both rage and resentment are dangerous forms of anger**

One is turned outward and is explosive  
While the other is caged inwardly and waits for its moment to exact revenge  
Anger so affects the person who has it and those around him that  
Scripture tells us that we should not even associate with an angry person

## **The third type of anger is righteous indignation**

**Righteous indignation is the expression of emotions**

**Against some form of evil**

It is being angry about those things that make God angry  
It is turning our energy against evil to protect or express caring  
We should be indignant about some of the things we see  
For instance we should care about what happens to the unborn  
But even righteous indignation can be misplaced or misdirected

## **We need to be careful that our indignation doesn't lead us into sin**

It is okay to be passionate about wrong being done  
But be careful what you do with that passion

You will only get angry when you care about a situation or some person

In the movie Silverado

The town's sheriff is in the pocket of the corrupt cattle baron

He is directed to rid the town of three men who might prevent the cattle baron from achieving his goals

However there is a wild card

A gunfighter by the name of Paden rode in with these three

They must find some way to keep him out of the equation  
Some way to neutralize him  
The corrupt sheriff makes this statement about him  
Nobody know what Paden is going to care about  
Why did it matter

## **Because what we care about drives our emotions**

And they could use what Paden cared about to direct his activities  
He would never side with them but they might be able to neutralize him and keep him out of the action

## **You see we only get angry when we care about a situation or a person**

How many here have ever been angry at John Kallas  
Raise your hands – nobody  
I could tell you stories of how John angered me  
But you would still not get angry  
You might even laugh at some of the stories – you really just don't care  
How many have been angry with their children or your parents  
Your husband your wife or your friends  
How many have ever been angry with God

## **We get the angriest with those who matter most to us**

Listen carefully - anger is going to be expressed in some form  
Rage and resentment are destructive hostile forms of anger  
Indignation is like gunpowder – it can be used for either good or bad

**Now regardless of the reason we have for being angry**

**We are to forgive those who hurt us**

**What is the source of anger**

**One of the primary reasons we get angry is we don't get our way**

We are egocentric people and we want what we want when we want it

Egocentric is just another way of saying we are self-centered

It is part of our human nature – it is what the Bible calls the flesh

We were born that way

If you need proof just watch a child who is not getting what he wants

Or take something from him and see what happens

**Sometimes we get angry because of physical or emotional pain**

When I don't feel well I become crabby

Sometimes people are not sure why they are angry – but they are

Anger can be the result of pain or grief or suffering

It can come from emotional abuse from someone close to us

**Anger can come from the loss of someone or something dear to us**

The loss of a loved one – the loss of a job – a friend whose deserted us

All of these have the potential for causing anger

**A person can become angry because of rejection**

I remember a job interview I had and as I left the manager's office, I could hear him crumple my application, throw it into the trash and say "flush"

I was definitely rejected and I was definitely angry

If we feel someone has taken advantage of us - broken a trust  
Or gossiped about us -  
When we feel demeaned physically economically  
Emotionally or intellectually – we get angry

## **What kind of effect does anger have on us**

Are you an angry person  
Did something occur to you which caused this anger  
Are you angry over past grievances  
And you are still carrying it with you  
It may be buried so deep it rarely rears its head  
Or it may pop up every day  
It may show itself in your life by bitterness or depression  
Some people admit their anger – some don't  
Have you ever heard these statements  
I don't get angry; I get even – I blow up and then I forget it  
I'm angry but if you were in my shoes you would be angry also  
I have a short fuse – that's just the way I am

## **God didn't make anybody with a short fuse**

People with short fuses are people seething with rage  
And they can blow up at a moment's notice  
Anger is not something to brag about or even accept  
It takes a toll on your life

## **Anger can affect you physically**

Your voice changes – your heart rate increases  
Breathing becomes ragged – adrenalin begins to flow  
Your whole body feels the effects of anger  
And over time this will begin to affect your health  
Strokes – heart attacks – ulcers all can be caused by anger  
To willfully hold onto anger is to sabotage your own life

## **Anger affects you emotionally**

Overeating can be a sign of suppressed anger

Depression alcoholism drugs affairs all can be a response to anger

Bitterness is anger held onto for a long time

## **Anger coming out of us or dwelling within us is a choice we make**

That is why the Bible says – Be angry and sin not

But if you are living with rage or resentment

You are sinning and you will destroy yourself

## **Anger will affect your friendships**

Unresolved anger turns into bitterness

And a bitter person says very few kind words to anyone

Believe me people shy away from those who are bitter

We do not need the emotional energy drain

That it takes to associate with an angry person

Even those we love can drive us away if they are filled with bitterness

## **Then most importantly anger will separate you from God**

It is not possible to walk in the Spirit and be angry

To walk in the Spirit is to display the fruit of the Spirit

And anger is not a fruit of the Spirit it is one of the deeds of the flesh

Gal 5 – The deeds of the flesh are strife, outbursts of anger, quarrels, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control

We cannot be pleased with God and harbor anger

We cannot please God and harbor anger

# **How is anger expressed**

## **One of the ways anger expresses itself is in depression**

Many depressed people are actually filled with resentment

Resentment is seething anger over what has happened in the past

And when that anger lasts over a period of time

It begins to destroy our emotions and reveals itself as bitterness or depression

## **Angry people can become excessive**

We try to burn off our anger by doing and we do too much

Shopaholics – alcoholics - addicts – moral lapses – even workaholics

All describe people who feel good while they are doing it

But can be filled with remorse when it is over

## **Angry people often respond with hostility**

We live in a hostile society – children angry with parents

Parents abusing their children

We live in a society where women and children are no longer safe

We have a distorted perverted nation because we are an angry nation

## **Angry people feel like they are underappreciated**

They look for words or actions that confirm others don't value them

And I assure you they can always find them

Are you harboring anger over past grievances

Let me tell you – if you are you are not alone

But maybe today is the day God has set aside for you to deal with it

# **So how do we deal with our anger**

## **READ Eph 4:26,32**

The first part of the answer is going to sound a whole lot like last week  
When we looked at fear

## **To deal with anger you must first admit you have it**

Confess it to yourself and more importantly confess it to God  
When anger comes like a lightning flash - before it erupts - confess it  
If you tend to resent others - confess it  
Have a conversation with God and admit you have a problem  
It is a problem you need God's help to overcome

## **Then identify the source of your anger**

Like I said this is going to sound a lot like last week  
Has there been someone who hurt you deeply  
Did a name just flash into your mind  
I'm guessing that for many of you it did  
If you don't identify the source of your anger you'll get revenge on someone  
But your rage or resentment will be directed towards those closest to you

## **Step number three is do not sin**

Angry feelings are not sin  
However they can quickly lead us to sin as we express that anger  
Anger is a temptation  
You will have feelings of anger – it is what you do with it that matters  
As a child of God you are not a slave to your emotions  
You have the Holy Spirit to empower you to rise above anger  
Having the Holy Spirit means you have the power to respond with grace  
Ask the Spirit to help you when the feelings of anger come

## **Fourth – deal with your anger quickly**

Do not go to bed angry is a command of Scripture

Many people who are divorced today would still be together

If they had practiced that simple principle

It doesn't get better if you sleep on it – it just submerges

And later it pops up stronger than it was before

There is another reason for dealing with anger quickly

## **Living with anger gives Satan a foothold into your life**

Satan loves angry people – they are easy marks and ready tools for his use

Sometimes we delay in addressing our anger because we like being angry

There can be something satisfying in knowing we are the wronged one

## **Fifth – To overcome anger you must forgive the one who angered you**

No matter the circumstances – no matter how wronged you were

## **The only way to deal with anger is to forgive**

Not just forgive when they confess and repent – that may never happen

They may not even realize that they hurt you – may not care – may be dead

Forgiveness is the choice you must make to free yourself from pain`

## **Someone has said that the greatest expression of love is forgiveness**

Is there someone you have not forgiven

Is there someone who hurt you and you feel you have a right to be angry

# **Forgiveness means you release this person from what he has done**

You no longer hold it against him or her  
And your relationship with them is right  
But if you do hold it against them  
You will act in some way perhaps some subtle way to reject them  
And whether you know it or not it is affecting your relationship with others  
Now you might be thinking that you cannot forgive someone  
They hurt you too bad – it is not possible to forgive them

# **But every single believer has the power within themselves to forgive**

The same God who has forgiven you  
Is the same indwelling God who has given you the power to forgive others  
And He has commanded you to do it

**Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another**

**How should you forgive – just as God, in Christ Jesus has forgiven you**

In today's text Paul says put away all bitterness and wrath  
Notice that I am talking about choices  
Choose to forgive – choose to put away bitterness and anger  
If we walk in the flesh we are unable to forgive – can't even choose it as an option  
We can only forgive those who hurt us deeply as we walk in the Spirit  
Is there anybody against whom you are still holding a grudge  
Maybe even from childhood – forgive them  
You cannot completely give yourself to God with unforgiveness in your heart

# **You cannot live the abundant life with unresolved anger**

That is how important forgiveness is  
You are hindering God's blessing in your life  
You are unable to abandon yourself and live in the Spirit  
**If you do not forgive others what they have done to you**

**You will be missing the fullness of what God has for you**

An unforgiving spirit cancels all of that

Now you need to make a decision

Is the offense you suffered and maybe even suffered repeatedly

Worth harming your health and emotions over

Is it worth losing the completeness God's plan for you

The bottom line is – you cannot be right with God without forgiving others

Some of us are carrying grudges that go all the way back to our childhood

Some of us are carrying hurts that happened just a short time ago

Maybe your parents hurt you

Maybe your best friend betrayed you

Regardless when the pain occurred – no matter who caused it

It is time to let it go

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you – Eph 4:32