

# ANGER

If you're reading this our guess is that you are curious about what God says about anger. Either you know someone who is angry or are struggling with anger yourself. Hopefully this pamphlet will help you identify what anger is and how to biblically deal with it.

## WHAT IS ANGER?

Simply put, anger is a powerful feeling in response to experiencing something that's "wrong."

Everyone has a personal set of values, beliefs about what is right (and good) and what is wrong (and bad). While many different things can trigger our anger, the root cause is a violation of our values. Anger is the cry of the heart that says, "THAT'S NOT RIGHT!!"

For example, let's say someone punches you in the neck, you may get angry if you value breathing and hate pain. When someone says something mean or offensive, it hurts and to some degree, there is anger. Why? You know your value yourself and you ought to be treated with a measure of dignity and respect.

Many different things can trigger our anger, and it often follows on the heels of pain or sadness. When something you love is taken away from you, the natural response is anger.

## IS ANGER A SIN?

Yes and No.

Anger reveals our values, it shows us what we are truly care about. When you are passionate about something, you deeply VALUE it enough that you get angry when it's taken away, hurt, ruined, etc. Is anger a sin? If you get angry at the things God gets angry about, then no, it's not. When we get angry because of our selfishness, then yes, it is a sin.

Jesus got angry when people tried to unfairly make money from people who wanted to worship God (see Luke 19:46). Note that Jesus didn't get angry when people tortured him and put him on the cross.

For instance, when your waiter doesn't bring your food on time, when the barista makes you the wrong drink at your favorite coffee place, when someone else gets the job, the spot on the team, or asked to the dance. These simple things can cause us anger, but they shouldn't. We should respond to these with patience, grace and

acceptance, not anger. Here is a question to consider: am I angered by the right things?

**THIS IS A GREAT THING ABOUT ANGER:** it reveals who we really are! Anger is either an affirmation we are like God, or it's a new avenue for growth in our lives.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I GET ANGRY?

We all get angry, it's a natural human response. Anger usually "MAKES US" do something stupid that we either regret or rationalize after the fact. How can we break this cycle and develop a measure of self control?

The Bible says, "In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent" (Psalm 4:4).

When we're angry, the first thing to do is **PAUSE** and **SLOW DOWN** (easier said than done, we know) so we don't make a mistake.

The Bible says to "be silent" so we can hear what God has to say. Once we've paused, the next step is to honestly evaluate what it is that made us so angry. After we've identified the trigger, then next question is to ask if God would get angry at the same thing? Once we've made it this far, how we're supposed to respond is usually very clear. We may need to share our anger with a trusted friend, confront the person who made us angry, give the situation over to God, offer the other person forgiveness...or maybe something not on our short little list!

**OF COURSE:** dealing with our anger is not so simple as the few sentences you've just read! The thing to remember is that God can use our anger to teach us more about him.

## GOING DEEPER:

**Read and reflect on, Matt. 21:12-14; Mark 11:16-18; Luke 19:45-47; Ephesians 4:26.**

## THE BIG IDEA:

Bring God into your anger! He's not surprised or afraid of your anger. He understands our pain and wants to be with us in the midst of our anger. We can come to God when we are angry. He can help us slow down and reflect so that we can hear his voice and become more like Jesus.