

Overcoming Anger with Grace

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I. Introduction

A. Anger is a problem both in the world and in the church

II. Understanding Anger

A. What is anger?

1. Anger is an emotion.
 - a. “Anger is our whole-personed active response of negative moral judgment against perceived evil.” - Robert Jones
2. All anger seems righteous. (Jas. 1:20, Rom. 12:17-21)
3. Anger has a physical component and is active. (Gen. 4:5, Ex. 32:19-20, Ps. 4:4)

B. Anger is not necessarily sinful. (John 3:36, Rom. 1:18)

1. God gets angry. (Ex. 4:14, 15:8, Num. 25:4, Ps. 7:11, 18:7-8, 2:4-5, 12; Deut. 29:27-28)
2. Jesus was angry. (Mk. 3:5, **10:14**, Mt. 21:12, Jn. 2:13-17)
3. Righteous anger is rare! (Eph. 4:26f, Acts 17:16)

C. When is anger righteous? (From R. Jones, *Uprooting Anger*) (Mk. 3:1-6, Eph. 4:26f)

1. A real sin has taken place. (1 Sam. 11:1-6, Mk. 10:13-16, Acts 17:16, 1 Jn. 3:4)
2. Your concern is for God’s kingdom, not your own. (Jn. 2:13-17, Ps. 119:52-54, 103-104, 127-128, 139:22)
3. Anger is righteously expressed. (Ps. 106:33, Rom. 12:17-21, Gal. 6:1-2)

D. Anger is deceptive and dangerous. (Eph. 4:26-27, Eccl. 7:9, Mt. 5:21f, 1 Sam. 20:30ff, 1 Jn. 3:15, Prov. 11:9, 14:17, 22:24-25, 25:28, 29:8, 11, 22; Gen. 4:6f, Acts 7:54ff, Jn. 8:44)

E. What causes out-of-control anger? (Jas. 1:14f)

1. Explanations of secular psychology – nature and nurture.
2. Scripture deals with most anger as a sin issue. (Mt. 5:21-22, 12:34; Jas. 1:19-20, 4:1ff, Eph. 4:26-27, Col. 3:8, Prov. 14:29, 15:18, 19:19, 22:24, 29:22, 2 Cor. 7:10-11)
3. We become angry because we want something (too much). (Jas. 4:1-4, Isa. 55:1)

F. Many employ unbiblical means of dealing with anger. (**Eph. 4:26-27, Prov. 22:24**)

1. Secular psychology employs anger management to keep anger at bay – expressing, suppressing, calming.
2. The secular methodologies do not address the heart of anger.
3. Sadly, many professing Christians have been negatively influenced by secular psychology. (**Prov. 12:18, 29:11**, 25:28, Eph. 4:29, 31, Jas. 1:19, 4:11-12; Gal. 5:15, Rom. 12:19-21)

III. You Can Overcome Anger by God’s Grace. Address Your Heart with Gospel Truth

- A. The key is what you are saying in your own heart. (Phil. 4:8-9, Prov. 4:23, Mk. 7:21-23)
- B. Five biblical truths to tell yourself when you are getting angry.
1. I want something too much (idolatry). (Jas. 4:1-4, Isa. 55:1-2, Rom. 1:25)
 2. I am not God (Judge). (Jas. 1:19-20, 4:11-12, Gen. 50:19, 1 Pet. 2:23, Mt. 7:1ff, 1 Cor. 4:5, Rom. 12:17-21)
 3. God has been very gracious to me in Christ. (Ex. 34:6, Ps. 103:8, Eph. 4:31-32, Col. 3:13, Mt. 18:22-35, 1 Tim. 1:15-16, Rom. 3:21-26, 5:10, Prov. 19:11, 1 Pet. 4:8)
 4. God is in control and will not give me more than I can bear. (1 Cor. 10:13, Gen. 50:20, Rom. 8:28, Acts 2:23, Ps. 103:19, Jas. 1:2ff, 1 Pet. 1:6-7, Prov. 21:1)
 5. Remember who I am— a new creature in Christ. (Rom. 6:11, 2 Cor. 5:17, 1 Pet. 4:1-6, 1 Cor. 10:13, Gal. 5:13-16, 19-23; Tit.3:3)
- C. Practical ways you can overcome sinful anger by God's grace.
1. God's grace helps you to exercise self-control and patience. (1 Cor. 13:4-5, Jas. 1:19, Tit. 1:7, Prov. 12:16, 14:17, **29**, 16:32, **19:11**, **29:8**, 11; Col. 3:12ff)
 2. God's grace enables you to speak with gentleness and grace. (**Prov. 15:1**, **Eph. 4:29**)
 3. God's grace enables you to lovingly do good to those who wronged you. (**Rom. 12:20**, Mt. 5:43ff, **Gen. 50:21**, 45:7-11; Lk. 6:27-28, Eph. 5:1-2)
 4. God's grace enables you to receive correction, even from those who hurt you. (**Prov. 9:8**, 13:10, 2 Sam. 16:5-13 Mt. 7:1ff)
 5. God's grace helps you to pursue the restoration of those who hurt you. (**Gal. 6:1-2**)
 6. Don't be quarrelsome. (**Prov. 17:14**, **26:20-21**)
 7. Deal with your anger and conflict quickly. (Eph. 4:26-27, Mt. 5:23-24, 7:1ff)
 8. Prepare for temptation. (Prov. 21:5)
 9. Seek God's help through prayer. (Heb. 4:16)
 10. Your anger can motivate you to pursue a biblical solution to problems.

IV. Conclusion

Anger Journal

Fill out for each incident – 2-3 sentences for each question.

Date and time of incident:

1. What were the circumstances when I became angry?
2. What did I say to my own heart – What did I want? (Jas. 4:1-2)
3. What did I say/do when I felt provoked?
4. What is a biblical evaluation of what I said and did?
5. What should I have said to myself when I felt angry?
6. What should I have said and done when I felt provoked?
7. What do I need to do now to make things right?

What provokes me to anger? (Jas. 4:1-2)

I must...

Be respected and appreciated	Be happy
Be comfortable	Be pain free
Be successful	Be safe
Be treated fairly	Be thought of as intelligent and witty
Be free from problems and pressures	Be sexually fulfilled
Be physically fit	Not have others waste my time
Have a life which is free from difficulty	Have a spouse
Have children	Have godly children
Have successful children	Have a well-paying satisfying job
Have a spouse who is affectionate	Have family members who keep the house tidy
Have a spouse who is not late	Have plenty of money
Have people do what I want them to do	Have children who are respectful and obedient
Have children who make me look good	Have the privacy I desire
Have a position of leadership in church	Have fun
Have what I want to eat	Exercise when I want to
Get my own way	Get to go on vacation/travel where I want
Have others conform to my schedule	Not be cut off in traffic