

From Zero to Anger

Anger Definition:

Anger or **wrath** is an intense emotional state. It involves a strong uncomfortable and hostile response to a perceived provocation, hurt or threat.

Physical manifestations often include - increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, and increased levels of adrenaline and noradrenaline. Some view anger as an emotion which triggers part of the fight or flight brain response. Anger is used as a protective mechanism to cover up fear, hurt or sadness.

- Common Triggers of Human Anger:
 - * Dealing with a bad boss
 - * Neighbor disputes
 - * Having and dealing with disobedient kids
 - * Suffering through ANY recurring problem
 - * Spousal/Marital problems at home
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- Is Anger itself a Sin?

The Bible has an impressive list of those we know who displayed anger. Amongst those were:

- * Cain, who slew his brother Abel
 - * Lamech, who bragged of slaying two young men
 - * Sampson, who burned with anger, the result of his riddle
 - * One Jewish official who angered about the way Jesus spoke to the high priest
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But God's word clearly demonstrates that anger alone is NOT a sin:

Eph 4:26 BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity

So, we have biblical permission to BE ANGRY, yet...the danger is it (anger) -- is a slippery slope filled with negative connotations, often associated with unwelcomed, painful outcomes, desires and emotions, like hatred, lust, greed, jealousy, and human failure

What exactly does it mean “to BE YE ANGRY, yet sin not”?

Example 1: Anger on Steroids - Amnon and Tamar:

2Sa 13:1 Now it was after this that Absalom the son of David had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and Amnon the son of David loved her. 2 Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill, for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything to her. 3 But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother; and Jonadab was a very shrewd man.

4 He said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so depressed morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Then Amnon said to him, "I am in love with Tamar, the sister of my brother Absalom."

2 Sam 13: Amnon and Tamar:

Sa 13:5 Jonadab then said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill; when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and give me some food to eat, and let her prepare the food in my sight, that I may see it and eat from her hand.'"

2Sa 13:6 So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand."

2Sa 13:7 Then David sent to the house for Tamar, saying, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him."

2 Sam 13: Amnon and Tamar:

...Sa 13:14 However, he would not listen to her; since he was stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her. 15 Then Amnon **hated her with a very great hatred**; for the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, "Get up, go away!" 16 But she said to him, "No, because this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you have done to me!" Yet he would not listen to her.

Tamar's brother Absalom harbored a different kind of anger:

2Sa 13:20 Then Absalom her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now keep silent, my sister, he is your brother; do not take this matter to heart." So Tamar remained and was desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

21 Now when King David heard of all these matters, he was very angry. 22 But Absalom did not speak to Amnon either good or bad; for Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar... 2Sa 13:28 Absalom commanded his servants, saying, "See now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon,' then put him to death. Do not fear; have not I myself commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant."

Example 2: Anger not leading to sin:

Acts 15:36 after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the lord, and see how they are." 37 Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. 38 But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. 39 **And there occurred such a sharp disagreement** that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. 40 But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of The Lord. 41 And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Paul later thinks better of John Mark! (2 Tim 4):

2Ti 4:9 Make every effort to come to me soon; 10 for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

Of course, no account of biblical anger would be complete without recounting the apparent anger of Jesus:

Joh 2:13 The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. 15 And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; 16 and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business." 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."

Also, Jesus angrily lashed out at the scribes and Pharisees because of their false teachings:

Mat 23:13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.14 ["Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater condemnation.] 15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

Even though Jesus was capable of getting angry, it was not his standard modus operandi. His Disciples could not say, “Oh here we go again, we’re going to see Jesus blow his stack when he hears this!”

Can anyone say this about you?

Pro 14:17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of evil devices is hated.

Pro 12:16 A fool's anger is known at once, But a prudent man conceals dishonor.

“Passion is folly: A fool is known by his anger (so some read it); not but that a wise man may be angry when there is just cause for it, but then he has his anger under check and direction, is lord of his anger, whereas a fool's anger lords it over him. He that, when he is provoked, breaks out into indecent expressions, in words or behavior, whose passion alters his countenance, makes him outrageous, and leads him to forget himself, Nabal certainly is his name and folly is with him.” – M.H.

The Take Home:

Jas 1:19 This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;
20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.

Jas 1:21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.
