
Dealing with Anger

WHAT IS ANGER

Anger is an emotion that is part of being human. On a daily basis, we may experience situations that bring hurts, irritations, frustrations, disappointments, and not feeling in control - all are part of the process that precipitates anger. When our expectations, needs, or desires have not been met, anger can be a reaction telling us something is wrong and there needs to be a change.

OUR PHYSICAL RESPONSE TO ANGER

Anger is often accompanied by physical responses such as feeling tense; tightness in the chest, neck, shoulders, or jaw; upset stomach; and pounding heart. Anger that accumulates over time can lead to other medical conditions such as clinical depression, heart disease, headaches, ulcers, hypertension, asthma, back pain, etc.

IS ANGER A SIN?

Anger is not a sin, it is the way in which we handle the emotion produced by the anger that is sinful. Even the Bible states in Ephesians 4:26 that we can be angry with restrictions: *“Be angry and yet do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger.”* However, the Bible goes on to warn us in verse 31 not to let our anger be a stumbling block so that we hurt ourselves or others. The Bible instructs us, *“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, along with all malice; and be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”*

WHAT TO DO WITH ANGER

Some people deal with anger by withdrawing themselves from others as a way to cool down or lashing out to relieve the pressure. However, these types of behaviors can be destructive to relationships. Since anger can be the outcome of an accumulation of pent-up thoughts, frustrations, and feelings, the longer we hold them inside the more destructive the anger can be. By using these steps, YOU can begin more constructively releasing the anger:

1. **RECOGNIZE** that you are angry - Notice when you have a tense body, raised voice, increased heart rate, etc.
2. **SAY** what you think or feel: Use an “I” statement, *“I feel angry because...”*
3. **STOP** yourself **BEFORE** you become out of control. You can:
 - Pray to God
 - Stop the conversation for ten minutes until you are calmed down
 - Count to ten

If you are alone and you become angry, it is recommended that you call a friend, write out your thoughts, or pray out loud. It is very important that you release the negative energy before it accumulates into anger that you cannot control. If you believe you have difficulty with anger, it is important that you decide to start taking steps to control the anger before it takes control of you.