

Should I Get Angry?

Anger can be good when it motivates you and gives you the strength and energy to overcome fear and stand up to injustice or wickedness. When your family or your country is attacked anger can motivate you to strong and decisive action in their defense. Like dynamite, anger can be used for good, but it is so powerful that it must be handled carefully or it can do terrible damage. Here are a number of Bible verses on anger and how we should deal with it.

A wise man is slow to anger and once he does become angry, he still keeps himself under control.

Proverbs 16:32 One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty; one who rules his spirit, than he who takes a city.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool vents all of his anger, but a wise man brings himself under control.

Controlled anger can do good, like irrigation water channeled through canals to bring life to dry desert land. While we were living in Arizona heavy rain in the mountains caused them to open the dams so they wouldn't burst. A 20 foot high wall of water came down the Salt river sweeping away everything in its path, cars, houses, bridges, everything. Uncontrolled anger can do terrible damage like a torrential flood or a tsunami.

Proverbs 17:14 The beginning of strife is like breaching a dam, therefore stop contention before quarreling breaks out.

Uncontrolled anger can cause you to hurt those you love the most. Sticks, stones, and words can and do hurt. Relationships can be destroyed by a single angry word. The tongue is like a sword that can punch holes in people's egos and destroy their self-image. Do you use your tongue to build others up and heal or to tear them down?

Proverbs 12:18 There is one who speaks rashly like the piercing of a sword, but the tongue of the wise heals.

Our speech should be to build up others, not tear them down. We are all God's children. If someone abuses or is cruel to one of my kids physically or verbally I get angry, justifiably angry. Do you want to take the chance of making God angry by picking on one of his kids?

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for building up as the need may be, that it may give grace to

those who hear. Don't grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Matthew 18:6-7 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for him that a huge millstone should be hung around his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of occasions of stumbling! For it must be that the occasions come, but woe to that person through whom the occasion comes!

Some anger is justifiable, anger aroused by injustice or wrong. Some anger is not justifiable, either causeless or although having a real cause, the anger is transferred to some innocent party. The one acting in anger "takes out" his anger on some innocent person. It is not a sin to be angry, Jesus got angry, yet he led a sinless life. In Mark we read how his anger, righteous anger, was aroused by injustice, by the hard hearts of his adversaries.

Mark 3:1-6 He entered again into the synagogue, and there was a man there who had his hand withered. They watched him, whether he would heal him on the Sabbath day, that they might accuse him. He said to the man who had his hand withered, 'Stand up.' He said to them, 'Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? To save a life, or to kill?' But they were silent. When he had looked around at them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their hearts, he said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was restored as healthy as the other.

Paul's gave good advice to the Ephesians. The key is that when we do become angry, we must remember to control our anger and not sin.

Ephesians 4:25-27 Therefore, putting away falsehood, speak truth each one with his neighbor. For we are members of one another. Be angry, and don't sin. Don't let the sun go down on your wrath, neither give place to the devil.

If we allow anger or its cousin, hatred, to take over our hearts and to control our thinking, it can lead us to do awful things. The Lord told Cain that he must "rule over" his anger, that he must control it.

Genesis 4:4-7 Abel also brought some of the firstborn of his flock and of its fat. The LORD respected Abel and his offering, but he didn't respect Cain and his offering. Cain was very angry, and the expression on his face fell. The LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? Why has the expression of your face fallen? If you do well, will it not be lifted up? If you don't do well, sin crouches at the door. Its desire is for you, but you are to rule over it.'

Anger and hatred led Cain to kill Abel. Christians are commanded to love one another and even to love our enemies. We read in 1 John that we must not hate and that hatred leads to murder.

1 John 3:14-15 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. He who doesn't love his brother remains in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.

A wise man is slow to anger and willing to overlook offenses. Don't go around with a chip on your shoulder, looking for a fight, you may find one. Christ told us to turn the other cheek. Proverbs says that it is good to overlook an offense. Treat others with respect and kindness. Remember, God loves the people that offended you.

Proverbs 19:11 The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger. It is his glory to overlook an offense.

Ecclesiastes 7:9 Don't be hasty in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools.

Anger is so dangerous that we are advised to avoid hot tempered people.

Proverbs 22:24-25 Don't befriend a hot-tempered man, and don't associate with one who harbors anger: lest you learn his ways, and ensnare your soul.

Instead of going around looking for trouble, why not go around helping snuff it out? Become a peacemaker not a troublemaker.

Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Christ clearly warns us about anger that is not justified.

Matthew 5:21-22a You have heard that it was said to the ancient ones, 'You shall not murder;' and 'Whoever shall murder shall be in danger of the judgment.' But I tell you, that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; ---

In his description of the works of the flesh, Paul tells the Galatians to avoid outbursts of anger. If you are a person who blows up frequently, be careful, are you really a Christian?

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are obvious, which are:

adultery, sexual immorality, uncleanness, lustfulness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousies, outbursts of anger, rivalries, divisions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these; of which I forewarn you, even as I also forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

James warns us to be very careful of anger, all of us need to be quick to listen and slow to get angry, man's anger doesn't lead to righteousness, but to sin.

James 1:19-20 So, then, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for the anger of man doesn't produce the righteousness of God.

Instead of being bitter and angry and always looking for ways to put people down, we need to be kind and forgiving.

Ephesians 4:30-32 Don't grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outcry, and slander, be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God also in Christ forgave you.

Instead of being angry we must be forgiving. We need to have forgiveness engraved on our hearts, to adopt it as our life style. Just as Christ has forgiven us, we need to forgive those who have offended us.

Colossians 3:12-13 Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, humility, and perseverance; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, if any man has a complaint against any; even as Christ forgave you, so you also do.

If you are a habitually angry person or when you are tempted to get angry, pray and ask God for help to control your anger. You can ask God for help with all of your problems.

1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you.

Make God your choice!