

Anger

Anger is the most pervasive of all sins. Would you believe that? No one I guess put Anger and sin together. And precisely for that very reason we are so casual about getting angry and using anger almost every hour we are awake. Is it that bad really? What are the perils of getting angry? What does the Bible say about anger? What did our Lord say about anger? How should we respond knowing the truth about anger? Let us explore and understand the plain truth about anger.

I will put up my hand and say that neither am I free from this scourge of anger nor was I the most surprised and repentant after learning about the bad side of anger from the Lords Words. It has truly given me a different perspective to anger. And everyone should also introspect and reflect after reading this chapter I hope. Not an easy task I guess. But not to be taken lightly either. In the eyes and words of our Lord he has equated anger with a sin as bad as Murder. - **“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:21-24**

Remember why we call this book- “ the plain truth”? So don’t judge the above verse differently from the rest of the Bible. Or don’t treat it lightly or dismiss it as a mere warning. These are words directly from Jesus Christ from the Sermon on the Mount. You will be liable to the Hell of Fire. No other warning could have been as stark and as plain as that.

Did you know that God not only equated anger with murder but most other sins we normally repel from without a second thought- **Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:19-21-** So once again one shouldn’t treat anger as some simple human weakness or burst of emotion. It is a Sin. Period. And risks us from not entering the Kingdom of God. Knowing this, has put a completely different perspective on anger.

But why? Why did the Lord say so much and so strongly about anger? Because he knows the ways of Satan and the easy victory he would have over us, using anger as his weapon. God Loves us dearly and his will is to get us closer to him. Anger is one of Satan’s easiest technique to take us far away from God. For, many other evil stems from Anger- hatred, rage, bitterness all of

which traps us in human misery and keeping us away from God. That's why the Bible has many verses on anger. The root of many evils.

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:31-32

And not only that, Satan knows that we literally can sin every day subconsciously through anger. So not only are we erring for the moment but we are collecting a life-long of bitter burden through anger. A truly triumphant approach for Satan. **But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. Romans 2:5.** Anger is not merely one sin, but many sins stored up over a lifetime that will surely and truly keep us away from God. Don't fall prey to this. For we risk losing salvation even as a true believer- **"Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins." Hebrews 10:26**

Rightly so, the Bible cautions us in more than one place, not to get angry-

Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. Psalm 37:8

"You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbour, lest you incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord. Leviticus 19:17-18

Do all things without grumbling or questioning, Philippians 2:14

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4

If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. 1 John 4:20

What are the problems anger gets us into. How do we manifest anger? How do we fight anger? The answer lies in our words. **A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1.** The Bible advises us on how to avoid anger- being a good listener and not to react on the spot is the key to avoiding anger- **Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; James 1:19.** Clearly the Bible has warned us many times to say that anger only leads to trouble- **Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly. Proverbs 14:29.** **Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools. Ecclesiastes 7:9.** **A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back. Proverbs 29:11.**

The Bible goes further and gives us another major guidance- **Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. Proverbs 19:11.** Yes that's the truth- to overlook a mistake is not a sin, but to lose our peace and froth in anger for someone's mistake surely makes us not only a fool but also a sinner. And to make it even more clear the Bible said that our anger cannot make anything right. **For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. James 1:20** And to be more frank anger is one sin we know the consequences of, in our own life time. Don't we? The Bible put it this way- **A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls. Proverbs 25:28.** Surely vexation kills the fool, and jealousy slays the simple. Job 5:2.

Anger blinds us and our thoughts and hence makes us further vulnerable to Satan's attack- **Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. 1 John 2:9-19**

So what truly is the root cause of so much anger in our lives? Anger stems for human passion. From knowing we are powerful and knowing things, knowing right from wrong and wanting more in our lives. And when that passion, control or feeling of righteousness is threatened or heightened it stirs up anger. **What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. James 4:1-2.** It is eventually a desire of some nature...And the answer the Lord says is to ask Him. Ask and it shall be given. All desires in our lives are met by him and through him. Anger in any way does not appeal to him I guess.

And while we reflected on human anger it is also worth noting the wrath of God's anger. Yes the ever loving God also does show his anger.

And when that happens you wouldn't want to be on that side to face his anger. **Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. None was left but the tribe of Judah only. 2 Kings 17:18.** Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him. Nahum 1:6. The lord does give us unlimited mercy though. This is one great mystery that we will only truly know when the day of judgement arrives.so be quick to repent. **For his anger is but for a moment, and his favour is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning. Psalm 30:5.** In fact in this following verse God treats anger as almost an emergency. A sin, we should seek forgiveness for immediately, for I guess he knows very well the consequences. He literally says don't even stop to pray- go and seek forgiveness

for your anger and settle it before you even want to pray. **So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:21-24.** He also says in another verse don't wait for another day to set right a sin of anger- **do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Ephesians 4:26-31.**

Would God give us these guidance and warnings, if anger was not that harmful. Why then do we ignore it? Simple! Our human inference and our judgement that other acts of sin or more "bad" and that we can get away with this one. We have grown to believe that anger is not a sin but merely an emotion. The other consequence of anger is that it directly violates his one and only major commandment-“ **...but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord” Leviticus 19:17-18.** Because anger is never self-limiting or self-destroying in nature. It always grows fuelled by Satan. **For with hearts like an oven they approach their intrigue; all night their anger smoulders; in the morning it blazes like a flaming fire. Hosea 7:6**

But amidst all these warnings God also gave the simple and true way to fight the sin of anger, Love and Forgiveness. **Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8**