

Overcoming → Anger



Parakaletic
COUNSELING

An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression. - Proverbs 29:22.
Write out this verse in your own words. Look up any words you are unsure of and write out their definitions next to the word.

Degrees of Anger



Indignation: simmering anger that is often provoked by an unjust action and you perceive to be justified.



Wrath: this is burning anger that is accompanied by a desire to avenge



Fury: this is a fiery anger that is so fierce it destroys common sense.



Rage: This is a blazing anger that results in a loss of self-control often to the point of extreme violence and even temporary insanity.

Of these four, which is the most common type of anger you experience? Give a concrete example of why you think that.

Misconceptions about Anger:

Is it sinful to be angry? NO. God gives emotions and anger is a God-given emotion. The way you express the emotion of anger is the determining factor if it becomes sin. Ephesians 4:26 tells us to "Be ye angry, and sin not:"

Have you ever thought it was sinful to be angry?

Why or why not?

How can you keep from feeling guilty when you are angry? Remember that your anger is a signal that something is wrong. When your vehicle has a warning light you do not use a hammer and beat the light until it goes off. That light is a warning to propel you to take action. This action is to first stop, value, and do what is needed to affect change.

What "warning lights" of anger do you experience the most often?

Sources of Anger



Hurt

When your heart gets wounded you can respond with anger. Every person has a God-given need to be unconditionally loved and accepted. Hurt reveals that is not always the case. When you experience the hurt of rejection or another emotional pain anger may be the wall you build to be protected from people and pain.

Injustice

An injustice occurs when your rights have been violated. Each person has an inner moral code. This code produces their sense of right and wrong, what is fair and unfair, and how they determine what is just and unjust. When your sense of injustice has occurred against you or others (especially those you love), you may resort to anger. If held on to, this unresolved anger will make a home in your heart.



Fear

When your future or security is threatened you may feel fear that comes out as anger. God has given everyone a need for security. When your circumstances change and you respond with worry, feeling threatened, or anger, you may be responding to fear. It is important to note that a fearful heart reveals that you lack a trust in God's perfect plan for you.

Frustration

You will feel frustrated when your efforts are unsuccessful. You, like everyone, have a God-given need for significance. When your efforts are thwarted or you have personal expectation that are not met, your sense of significance will feel threatened. This could result in frustration over those unmet expectations of yourself or others. Frustration is one of the most common sources of anger.



Of these four sources of anger, which one(s) do you face?

If more than one, which one is the most common one you face?

Give a concrete example of why you chose that one:

The Fruit of Anger:

- Loud, obvious, outward acts of rage and displeasure such as slamming doors, hurling insults, physically attack, etc. (2 Samuel 16:13)
- Quiet, subtle, hidden acts of rage and displeasure such as withdrawing, clamming up in silence, refusing to cooperate. (Luke 15:28)
- It is communicated with facial expressions and body language. (Genesis 4:6)
- Sometimes it is so well hidden it is not expressing with outward manifestation, but with the secret thoughts of cursing and bitterness that is sometimes covered up with seemingly kind words. (Psalm 62:4)
- Some use socially acceptable words that mask sinful anger such as “I’m annoyed,” “I’m irritated,” “I’m fed up,” “I’m hurt,” “I’m aggravated,” or “I’m frustrated.” (Psalm 55:21)
- It can be expressed with words and actions that hurt another but may come off as honorable such as lying, belittling, misrepresenting or exposing hurtful information, (Proverbs 26:23-26)
- Some express their anger in the form of teaching us the “cover” of humor to inflict pain or humiliate on the object of one’s displeasure or disdain. (Proverbs 26:18-19)
- Some anger is expressed with words and actions that are excused away as just “repayment” for other’s sinful words and actions, or used to teach a lesson to someone who had done wrong. (John 8:4-7)
- Some anger is expressed by rallying for a cause that is righteous, campaigning for it with angry passion, and justifying hatefulness and acts of contempts with self-righteous protests. (Luke 15:29-30)

Anger is Rooted in the False Belief or Desire:

When you feel your real or perceived rights have been violated you can easily respond in anger. An angry response always stems from a heart that is having difficulty trusting God for His plan for their life.

Our belief and/or desire always determines our behavior.

Wrong Belief:

“Based on what I think is fair, I feel I have the right to be angry about the disappointments I am facing. I also have the right to stay angry for as long as I feel like it. In addition, I have the right to express my anger in any way that it feels natural to me.”

Write out the wrong belief(s) you have had about your anger:

Right Belief:

Based on the truth that God is sovereign over me I will trust Him with my life. My rights are yielded to Him. I will live with the truth that my human disappointments are now God’s appointments meant to increase my faith and develop Christ’s character in me. I choose to not let my anger control me but I will use my anger to motivate me to do whatever God wants me to do. (1 Peter 1:6-7, 2:23)

Write out a prayer to the Lord detailing the right belief you want to have regarding your anger:

How to Resolve Past Anger:

Unresolved anger is like hidden coals of fire that burn deep wounds in our relationships both with God and others. This powerful emotion is not meant to be sustained for very long and robs our heart of peace. Anger steals contentment. Here are 4 steps to help you resolve your anger:

1 - Realize Your Anger

- Take a moment to willingly admit when you have unresolved anger.
- Take time to ask God to reveal any anger buried in your heart.
- Seek to determine the reason(s) for your past anger.
- Spend a few moments confessing and repenting of your anger to God (Revelation 2:5, Romans 8:8)
- If you need more help, talk about your anger with a counselor.
- Write out Proverbs 21:2

2 - Revisit your Root Feelings

- Did you feel hurt? Circle if it was because you were: rejected, betrayed, unloved, or ignored.
- Did you experience an injustice? Circle if it was because you were: cheated, wronged, maligned, or attacked.
- Did you feel fearful? Circle if it was because you felt: threatened, insecure, out of control, or powerless.
- What kind of frustration did you feel? Circle if it is because you felt: inadequate, inferior, hindered, or controlled.
- Write out Psalm 139:23-24 as a prayer to God.

3 - Release Your Rights

- Spend a few moments confessing and repenting of your anger to God (Revelation 2:5, Romans 8:8)
- Confess that harboring anger in your heart is a sin.
- Relinquish your rights to God (Romans 12:1-2)
- Give your desire to get revenge to the Lord.
- Recognize that you are dead to sin, including the sin of unrighteous anger (Romans 6:4, 6)
- Refuse to hold on to your past hurts. Give them to the Lord.
- Reckon the truth of your death to be sin to be true for you. Willingly accept that Christ saved you to give you victory in every area of your life (Romans 6:11)
- Rest in God's help (Matthew 11:28-30, Colossians 3:1-4)
- Pray that God will work in the life of the one who has wronged you. (Matthew 5:44)
- Choose to grant forgiveness or be willing to offer it if they ask for it.
- Write out Colossians 3:13.

4 - Rejoice in God's Purpose

- Thank God for the ways He will use this trial in your life to bring glory to Himself and to help develop good in your life. (Romans 8:28-29)
- Realize that God will use your resolved past anger for your good and the good of those around you. Study the life of Joseph and see why he could peacefully say that his brothers meant to harm him but God meant to bring about much good in his and other's lives (Genesis 50:20)
- Praise God for His commitment to you. Thank Him that He uses all circumstances to help develop the character of Christ in you. Realize these trials will make you strong, firm, and steadfast in your faith.
- Write out Romans 8:28-29

5 - Restore the Relationship

(when appropriate)

Forgiveness looks at the offense while reconciliation looks at the relationship. Because of this forgiveness is always possible but cannot always be granted. Forgiveness and reconciliation require two parties to enter into an agreement. For this reason it is impossible to forgive those who has died. It is also not possible to enter into forgiveness with those who refuse to repent when the offense is grievous enough to require reconciliation. As Christians we are to forgive as Christ forgives us. Read Ephesians 4:32.

Christ's Forgiveness:

When Christ forgave us, He was thorough. While there are times when God chooses to overlook our petty human failures and forgive us (Psalm 103:13-14, 130:3-4), many times forgiveness requires our humble request. Forgiveness has two parts - the one who grants forgiveness and the one who is forgiven. That is why it impossible to forgive one who has died because they cannot ask or receive it. We must be diligent to forgive and seek forgiveness while there is time. There are four aspects of Christ's forgiveness, that once we have experienced are able to freely give to others:

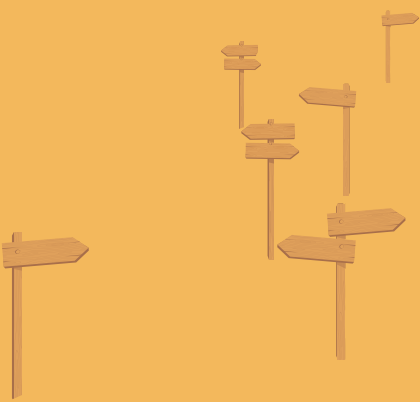
1. **Choose not to dwell on the incident:** And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. - Hebrews 10:17
2. **Choose to not bring up the incident again to use it against the other person:** As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. - Psalm 103:12
3. **Choose not to talk about the incident with others.** He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.
4. **Choose to not let this incident stand between you and the one you are forgiving. Instead, choose to lavish love on the offending party to assure them they are forgiven.** And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. - Revelation 21:1

There are exceptions to these aspects. If there has been an offense that is criminal there will be a need to alert authorities and possibly even give your testimony to officials. In addition, there are certain crimes that after committed, in order to maintain no appearance of evil, there must be a limited amount of access to the victim, if any to protect the innocent and prevent the offender from being able to repeat their crimes. In addition, there cannot be reconciliation until there is a truly a change of heart by the offender (2 Corinthians 5:20). There can always be a decision made to forgive or be ready to grant forgiveness once it is requested.

What does it mean that Christ has forgiven you?

Who is it that you need to forgive?

What steps will you take to forgive?



Releasing “Present Anger” Constructively

It has been said that anger is only one letter away from the word “danger.” These eight steps are guideposts to help you down the path of peace. As you travel this path you will find yourself on the Road of Transformation that has fertile ground for new growth at every turn. At each stop, ask God to help make these principles part of your life to avoid future anger.

1 – Acknowledge Your Anger

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. - Proverbs 28:13 What does this verse mean?

- Be willing to admit you are angry.
- Be aware when you feel angry.
- Ask God to make you aware of when you are suppressing or repressing your anger because of fear.
- Be willing to take responsibility for any inappropriate expressions of anger.

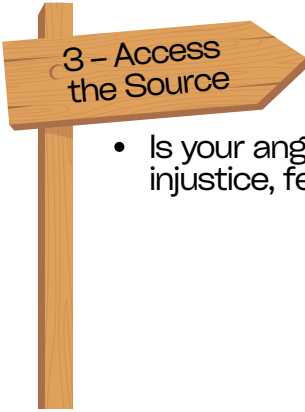
Write out a prayer asking God to help you see where you have been angry:

2 – Analyze Your Style

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. - Psalm 139:23-24

- How often do you feel angry?
- How do you know when you are angry?
- How do others know when you are angry?
- How do you release your anger?

Write out Psalm 139:23-24 as a prayer to God:

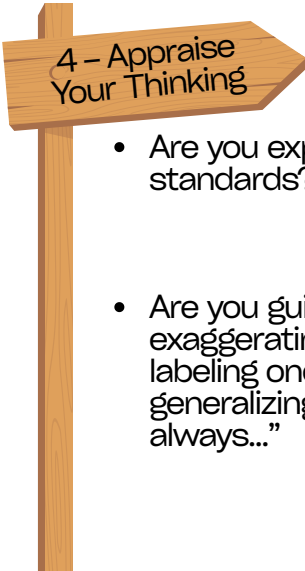


3 – Access the Source

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. - Psalm 51:6

- Is your anger stemming from hurt, injustice, fear, or frustration?

Write out a prayer of surrender to the Lord:

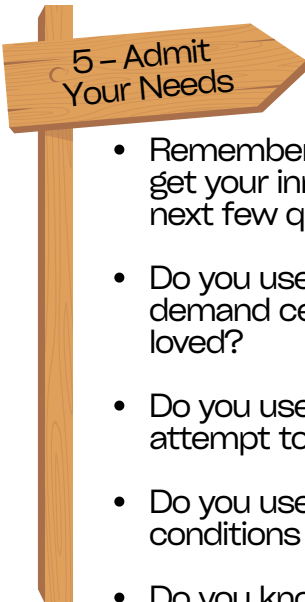


4 – Appraise Your Thinking

A wicked man hardeneth his face: but as for the upright, he directeth his way. - Proverbs 21:29

- Are you expecting others to meet your standards?
- Are you guilty of distorted thinking, e.g. exaggerating the situation, assuming the worst, labeling one action based on other actions, generalizing by saying “you never...” or “you always...”

Identify your wrong thinking and replace it with Biblical principles:



5 – Admit Your Needs

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. - Philippians 4:19

- Remember anger is often used as a tactic to get your inner needs met. Be honest with the next few questions:
- Do you use anger as a manipulative ploy to demand certain “musts” in an attempt to feel loved?
- Do you use explosive anger to get your way in an attempt to feel significant?
- Do you use controlling anger, insisting on certain conditions in order to feel secure?
- Do you know that only Christ can ultimately meet all your needs?

From this list, write out a prayer of repentance and confession:

6 – Abandon Your Demands

The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. - Jeremiah 31:3

- Remember that no one can meet your inner needs for love, significance, or security.
- Instead of demanding others attempt to meet those needs, learn to look to the Lord for help to meet those needs.

Write out a prayer to God thanking Him for meeting these needs:

Read Philippians 2:2-8

7 – Altar Your Attitudes

- Have the goal to have the mind of Christ.
- Do not think of yourself first but instead put the other person's needs, wants, and desires ahead of your own.
- Do not emphasize your position or rights.
- Speak and act with a humble spirit.
- Be willing to put aside your own desires.

Write out a prayer thanking God for exchanging your mind for His mind:

8 – Address Your Anger

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. - Galatians 2:20

- Is your anger really justified?
- What is the appropriate response?
- How important is this issue?
- Should you acknowledge your anger only to God?
- Depend on the Holy Spirit to guide you.
- Attack the problem, NEVER the person.
- Don't bring up past grievances.
- Don't assume the other person is wrong. Be willing to listen to feedback.
- Don't expect instant understanding. The other person needs you to be patient and respond with gentleness.

Demonstrate the grace of God by saying the following to yourself:

- I have exchanged my anger for Christ's love.
- Because the Holy Spirit controls me, anger no longer does.
- I am dead to sin and alive to Christ.
- I will let Christ forgive through me.
- I will let Christ love through me.
- I will let Christ reveal truth through me.

The Quick Answer to Anger

When you face a feeling of anger, ask, "Can I change this situation?" If you can, then take the necessary steps to change it. If you cannot change it, surrender it to God, trusting Him to work in your life.

Scripture Prayer Project:

Write out these verses as a prayer to the Lord. In addition to this, consider using these verses and the other ones contained in the handout for your scripture memory.

James 1:19-20

Proverbs 29:22

Proverbs 29:11

Proverbs 15:1, 18,

Proverbs 22:24

Proverbs 19:19

Ephesians 4:26-27

Ecclesiastes 7:9

Psalms 4:4