

Releasing Anger Under Control

One of the worst acts of sinful anger found in the Bible is the murder committed by Cain (Genesis 4). After he and his brother Able had both made offerings to God, Cain became extremely angry because God had rejected his offering. Even more so, Cain was furious with Able because God had chosen to receive his. At the site of Cain's offering, God exhorted him to do good. He cautioned Cain to not let anger rule over him. However, Cain refused God's counsel. Instead, Cain deceptively lured Able into the fields and killed him. When God confronted Cain about his awful act of sin, he denied it. Nevertheless, God exposed Cain's sinful anger and justly banished him from his homeland. If Cain had obeyed God in regards to his anger, he would have not sinned against God and Able. Sadly, Cain was marked as the first human being to commit the sin of murder.

Anger, as defined by Dr. Jay Adams in The Christian Counselor's New Testament, is an emotion designed to mobilize force to tear something apart. Adams goes on to explain that anger is not sinful. For instance, the Bible says that God is angry with the wicked every day (Psalm 7:11). Furthermore, the New Testament indicates that Jesus Christ was angry at the Pharisees' sin in Mark 3:5. So then anger cannot be is not a sin. Adams states that its expression may be sinful. He refers to Ephesians 4:26, where it is written, "don't sin by letting anger gain control over you. Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry". So then the Scriptures declare that the sin is born when you let anger gain control of you. As believers we are always to be under the control of the indwelling Holy

Spirit of God. When we let anyone or anything have a higher position in our thoughts, deeds, and words, we sin against God. Thus, when a believer lets his emotion of anger rule over him, he commits sin.

Adams states that there are two ways in which anger is sinful. The first is when anger grows out of pride or hurt feelings. The second is when anger is expressed in sinful ways. Yet there are times when anger is righteous. However when the expression of righteous anger is “blowing up” (ventilation) or “claming up” (internalization), it is a sin. Blowing up is energy wasted and used to tear up others. According to Proverbs 29:11, “a fool gives full vent to anger, but a wise person quietly holds it back.” A person who does not practice releasing anger under control is a fool according to Scripture. Alternatively, a wise person does not hold in his anger. Rather, he “holds it back” and releases it in a meek (self controlled) manner. As for claming up anger or internalization, it is energy wasted and used to tear up self. Instead of these, believers must deal with the anger immediately—before the setting of the sun (Ephesians 4:26).

Leviticus 19:17,18 says “do not nurse hatred in your heart for any of your relatives. Confront your neighbors directly so you will not be held guilty for their crimes. Never seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD”. If person expects to overcome his sinful anger, he must first seek forgiveness from God through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:32). As for believer, they seek forgiveness from others and learn to release their anger under control toward the problem, not the other people (Ephesians 4:29). Jay Adams affirms that Christians must quickly

commit to settling matters over which they become angry. Believers must not allow any concerns to be carried over into the next day with confronting the problem. God promises His children in Philippians 4:8-9 that as they focus their thoughts on releasing their anger under control, His peace will be with them.