

ANGER

Help for Overcoming Sinful Anger, Bitterness, Resentment

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Part 3

Anger, like every other emotion, may be a good and useful emotion put to constructive, godly use (Mark 3:5; Psa. 7:11; Eph. 4:26). Or it may be a sinful emotion, which is used in ungodly, harmful, and destructive ways. This study is designed to help you discern between sinful and righteous anger and to aid you in overcoming the sinful expressions of anger which are harmful and destructive.

J. The following is a recommended procedure you should follow if you desire to "put off" the sinful, destructive, unbiblical use of anger and "put on" the biblical, constructive use of anger. When something occurs which might lead to bitterness (clamming up, internalization of anger, resentment, hurt feelings, hostility, a grudge) or an explosion (angry words, verbal abuse, accusations, physical abuse, gossip, slander, retaliation of some sort, blaming, sarcasm, put downs, exaggeration, shouting), you should immediately put the following procedure into practice. You must do this *every time* you are tempted to become sinfully angry. Remember, "there is a way of escape" (I Cor. 10:13), "the fruit of the Spirit is... *self-control*" (Gal. 5:22,23), "God has... given us the Spirit of power, and love and of self discipline" (2 Tim. 1:7). With promises like these from a God who cannot lie, there is no excuse for defeat, and there is every reason for victory. Here, then, is the procedure for victory. When a potentially distressing, fretful circumstance arises:

1. Immediately ask God to help you handle it in a God-honoring, biblical way.
2. Remind yourself that God is sovereign. He could have prevented this circumstance from arising. He can now empower you to face it, and if you face it His way it will serve a positive, constructive purpose.
3. Thank God for the victory He is going to give you and the blessing He is going to bring into your life through this trial.
4. Consider what witness, service, modeling opportunities this situation may provide. Others are watching you, and you can now demonstrate the sufficiency of Christ, the reality and power of Christianity, the tremendous relevance and practicality of the Word of God in a fantastic way. Think of this and expect God to use you.
5. Examine yourself to see if you have done anything to promote the situation. Have you been lazy, irresponsible, stubborn, critical, wasteful, ungrateful, bossy, haughty, overly demanding, a nag, inconsiderate, unwilling to change or give in to other

people, unmerciful, rude, crude, proud, too stern or austere, unfriendly, boastful, deceitful, sloppy, disorganized, jealous or envious, unmannerly, manipulative, suspicious, selfish, morose, solemn, sensitive, negative and pessimistic? Often we sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. With what measure we dish it out we receive it back. Our problems are often the mirror of our own faults. According to the Bible, we roll a stone and it rolls back on us; we dig a pit and then fall into it ourselves; we are taken captive by our own iniquities.