

- Two types of anger are shown in the Bible
- The lives of Jesus, David, Cain, Moses, and Jonah show us both types of anger

How we handle anger will determine how good our relationships with others are and the degree of contentment we experience. Anger has the potential to destroy good communication and can tear apart our relationships with people. The Bible says a lot about anger and gives us direction on how to deal with our anger.

Not all anger is sinful. God created us with the ability to be angry for a purpose. Anger motivates us to take action when we see something that is wrong and to try to solve the problem. We often call anger that is not sinful "righteous indignation". One important thing about righteous indignation is the focus of the anger is about those things that also anger God. For example, Galatians 5: 19-21 gives us a list of things that offend God: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strike, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings: of the which I tell you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God". Many practices that anger us today such as abortion, child abuse, pornography, and homosexual behavior could be found in this list. Someone responding to sin with righteous indignation will not use sinful behavior themselves in their response.

Question #1: Read 2Samuel 11: 1-24; 2Samuel 12: 1-14 for context.

A. Read 2Samuel 12: 3-6. How is David's anger an example of righteous indignation?

B. Can you think of a time when you have felt righteous indignation?

Question #2: Read Matthew 21:12-14; Mark 3:5. In both these examples Jesus is showing anger. How was his anger an example of righteous indignation?

(1) Matthew 21:12-14

(2) Mark 3:5

However, when our anger is not motivated by righteous indignation it becomes sinful. Most of us would agree that at the root of sinful anger we will find pride. As sinners we often try so hard to avoid seeing pride in ourselves don't we?

Question #3: Read Proverbs 16:18; Proverbs 16:32. What can we learn about pride and anger from these two proverbs?

How do we handle anger that is directed at us? First, stop and pray, asking God for his wisdom and the ability to understand. Perhaps they have a good reason even though they may not be saying it well. Try to stay calm and listen before defending yourself. Try to talk it over with them if they are willing. If not, let it rest. When the time is right rely on God to work it out. If they are so angry that they are losing control, perhaps it is best to pray and walk away. This will prevent you from responding in sin and maybe saying things you wish you hadn't later on. God will lead you when it's a better time. Continue to pray about the situation.

Question #4: How will following these scriptures help you in angry situations?

(1) Ephesians 4:2:

(2) Philippians 2:3:

(3) Proverbs 10:12:

(4) Proverbs 14:29:

(5) Proverbs 15:1:

Question #5: Read Romans 8:28-29, slowly. Reflect on times when someone has directed their anger at you; whether or not you believe their anger was right. Now consider how Romans 8:28-29 may have been used to conform you into the image of his Son in those situations. How will understanding this help you?

Question #6: Read Romans 12: 17-19. What do you learn that will help you deal with those situations where you are abused by evil actions? Or when you see abuse to others caused by evil actions?

Let's look at some examples of men who became angry in the Bible. Consider their anger and the situation and decide how you would have reacted. Also, think about each example and decide if their anger was "righteous indignation" or sinful anger. (As you think about each example also consider how you would have responded and make a mental note of this.)

Question #7: Read Genesis 4: 1-13 for context.

- (1) Who was angry?
- (2) Who were they angry at?
- (3) Why were they angry?
- (4) Was their anger righteous indignation or sinful anger?

Question #8: Read Exodus 32: 15-20

- (1) Who was angry?
- (2) Who were they angry at?
- (3) Why were they angry?
- (4) Was their anger righteous indignation or sinful anger?

Question #9: Read Numbers 20: 1-12

- (1) Why do you think Moses was angry?

- (2) Who was he angry at?

- (3) Was his anger righteous indignation or sinful anger?

- (4) How did the LORD respond to Moses and Aaron? See verse 12.

- (5) Slowly read Numbers 20:8, 11 looking for differences in how the rock would give forth water.
 - a. Did Moses obey the LORD so that the rock would give them water?

 - b. How do you think this contributed to what the LORD told Moses in verse 12?

Question #10: Read Jonah chapters 1-4.

- (1) Read Jonah 4:1-11.
 - a. Who was angry?

 - b. Who were they angry at?

 - c. Why were they angry?

 - d. Was their anger righteousness indignation or sinful anger?

Prayer challenge: Go over this lesson and ask God to show you areas for growth in dealing with anger. Write down some scripture verses covered in this lesson that will help you.