
HEAVENLY FATHER, I confess that anger (depression, fear, intimidation, jealousy), in it's various forms and stages, is a part of my personality. I desire total and complete deliverance from this destructive behavior. Teach me to master it by overcoming it with an opposite action as You have taught us. I will also put away condemnation and pour out my true feelings to You and receive Your Spirit of Righteousness, Peace , and Joy. I pray this in Your Powerful Name. Amen!

APPLICATION

1. Identify one situation that evokes anger (or other destructive emotion) and describe the consequences of taking that anger to its negative end. Now describe the consequences if you were to pray, wait 24 hours, and act proactively.
 - Psalm 4:4 *Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still.*
2. Do you see yourself delivered by the power of the Holy Spirit from the destructive behavior of reactive emotions? Are you willing to develop the discipline of owning your actions without blaming someone else for "causing it?"
 - You are ONE DECISION away from a new life of freedom!
 - Genesis 4:6-7 *And the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you so angry? If you do well and what is acceptable and pleasing to Me, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, and ignore My instruction, sin crouches at your door; its desire is to overpower you, but you must master it."*



MASTERING OUR EMOTIONS

Americans are angry. The country erupted into the worst civil unrest in decades after the death of George Floyd. Anger about police violence and the racism is still running high. Anger has become the dominant emotion in our politics and in our personal lives. Managing or controlling anger does not always work. Mastering our heart when confronted with the opportunity to unleash destructive anger is the key. As the people of God, we MUST learn to master it! Here are ways we express anger...

EXPRESSING ANGER INCORRECTLY

1. Open, Aggressive Anger.
 - This obviously hurts others and causes us to do things we regret. It is expressed in explosive, short fuse, rage, intimidation, blame, yelling and sarcasm, etc.
2. Suppressing Anger.
 - Pretending not to be offended and allowing the build-up of anger can express itself through depression, letting days go by without a word, etc.
 - Like collecting old "S&H Green Stamps," this type of anger eventually "cashes in" when the booklet is filled with stamps.
3. Passive-Aggressive Anger.
 - This expression manipulates others behind the scenes to get its way. It can manifest itself as moodiness, helplessness, procrastination, stubbornness, resentment, pouting, uninvolved when not in charge, complaining about people but avoiding face to face confrontation, etc. This behavior is empowered when we adjust our lives to accommodate it.



BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

The Bible has many examples of people who acted in anger and also reveals the consequences of that behavior.

1. **CAIN** in Genesis 4:3-12 (Open, Aggressive Anger)
 - Cain's inability to deal with his anger against Abel leads to the first recorded murder. This Hebrew phrase personifies sin as a crouching animal ready to pounce for the kill.
 - *What was the consequence?* (Genesis 4:11)
2. **MOSES** in Numbers 20:1-13 (Suppressed Anger)
 - God first told Moses to strike the Rock in Exodus 17:1-7. Then in Numbers 20:1-13, God told Moses to speak to the Rock. But, because Moses had harbored anger against the people for years, he struck the Rock twice, breaking God's type of Christ's redemptive work on the cross.
 - *What was the consequence?* (Numbers 20:12)
3. **KING SAUL** in 1 Samuel 18-27 (Passive-Aggressive Anger)
 - Saul's fierce jealousy and anger against David ruined his life and the lives of those in his family. Jealousy and anger can cause you to hate the person God wants to use.
 - *What was the consequence?* (1 Samuel 18:8-10)

MASTER OUR DESTRUCTIVE EMOTIONS

1. **Identify your feelings** (Genesis 4:6-7; James 5:16). Start by noticing what you're angry about and why. Put into words what's making you upset so you can act rather than react.
 - Ecclesiastes 7:9 *Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.*
2. **View the destructive behavior as any other sin** (1 John 1:7-9). There is forgiveness, cleansing and restoration as we confess (agree with God about the sin), and receive His forgiveness and cleansing.
3. **Learn to pour out your heart to God without condemnation.** David had mastered anger by learning to honestly express his heart to God and receiving God's Spirit of joy (Psalm 51:1-13;

Psalm 62:8; Psalm 142:1-2).

- Because of great family strife over her barrenness, 1 Samuel 1:10-11 says that Hannah was in bitterness of soul. She poured out her heart to the Lord and wept in anguish.
4. **Deal with your anger** (Ephesians 4:29-32). Anger *can* be put away! You really do have the ability to decide to walk away without a fight. This decision is not depended on the other person's decision or attitude.
 - Psalm 4:4 *Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still.*
 - Ephesians 4:26-27 *In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.*
 5. **Pray for your "enemies"** (Matthew 5:43-48). When we pray for others who have hurt and offended us, we take the more mature action of praying *for* them as Jesus and Stephen did in Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60.
 - There may be underlying causes for their outward behavior. Never feel responsible for their reaction or response. You may not be the problem, just an easy target.
 6. **Overcome evil with good** (Romans 12:17-21). Dropping our anger must be carried to the next step: overcoming evil with good. While dropping anger is a very important step, it really only creates a void that must ultimately be filled.
 - Notice how Joseph treated his family and overcame their evil with practical love and acceptance. Genesis 50:19-21 *Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones."*
 7. **Develop healthy friendships with mature people** who can speak into your life to assist you in learning victory. Be accountable to someone trustworthy.
 - Proverbs 27:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; James 5:16