

To Be or Not To Be . . . Angry

Have you ever known anyone who was never angry?

If so, you have either not known that person very long, or you have found a truly remarkable individual. Anger is a natural human response.

Most often the Bible describes the anger of man as evil, something to avoid. Yet it is true that God was sometimes angry. Jesus was also angry. Still yet, these examples of anger do not justify the anger of man.

Paul taught, "Be angry and do not sin."
(Ephesians 4:26)

We should not think that Paul promoted anger, but rather that he encouraged Christians to deal with their anger before it became sin. The remainder of the verse says, "do not let the sun go down on your anger." The simple point is: Do not allow your anger to go unresolved. 'Unresolved' anger is sin.

God's anger is always just. It is right for God to be angry at a nation, a city, or an individual who opposes him or who harms his people. God is pure and holy. To oppose God, even in disbelief, opposes all that is good and true. Jesus was angry, but His anger was based on His zeal for God and for the temple of God. So, is it possible for us to be angry like God? Like Jesus?

When children are disobedient and show dishonor, is parental anger justified?

If that anger is grounded on biblical teaching and is not merely a selfish or impulsive response, "Yes," that anger is justified and should be followed by appropriate discipline and instruction.

When a co-worker or acquaintance uses God's name in profanity, when or the government 'legalizes' sin, is my anger justified?

If motivated by true zeal for the name of God and his principles; if it is not motivated by a

pious, holier-than-thou attitude, "Yes," that anger is justified.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus described anger much differently than the two examples above. Jesus warned against anger that devalued another human being. Anger that devalues others is never justified. God loves every man, woman, and child ever born. Anger that devalues another person opposes God's love and minimizes the loving sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. That anger must be dealt with *before the sun goes down!*

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