

A STUDY GUIDE FOR THE BOOK

UPROOTING ANGER:
Biblical Help for a Common Problem

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Chapter 1: What is Anger?

1. A working definition for anger is _____
_____.

2. This definition embeds several key ideas. What are they?

One: Our anger is an _____.

This means:

Two: Our anger is a _____ - _____ active response.

This means:

Three: Our anger is a _____ something.

This means:

Four: Our anger, in essence, involves a _____ that we make.

This means:

Five: Our anger involves a judgment against _____ evil.

This means:

3. How did the Puritan pastor Richard Baxter describe anger?

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4. What are the three categories of anger given by the author?

One: _____ anger.

List one O. T. and One N. T. verse that illustrates His anger:

Two: _____ anger.

What scripture passage shows a human with righteous anger?

Three: _____ anger.

5. What are two passages that show the subtleties of our evil, deceitful desires?

6. Read the following passages that contain sinful human anger: state who is angry and give a possible motive for their anger.

Gen 4:1-8:

Gen 27:

Gen 39:11-19

7. What is our working definition for anger as stated by the author? _____

_____.

CHAPTER 2: Is Your Anger Really Righteous?

“We begin this lesson by making a humble observation: most human anger is sinful....The most frequent Old Testament term for “anger” is “aph.” It denotes human anger forty-seven times. At least forty-two of them – eighty-nine percent – indicate sinful anger.” However, all too often we would be the first to say that our anger is of the righteous type. It is so easy to deceive our selves. But the Bible knows better.

1. Look up the following two verses and put them in your own words:

Jeremiah 17:9

Ephesians 4:22

2. In the book of Jonah we find a classic example of this self deception.

- How many times did God ask Jonah if he thought he had a right to be angry? _____
- What was Jonah’s answer? _____
- How did God see his anger – was it right therefore righteous? _____

3. How can we know if our anger is righteous? There are three criteria for determining if anger is righteous. They are:

One: Righteous anger reacts against actual sin. Write the first sentence following this headline. (p. 29)

Two: Righteous anger focuses on God and His kingdom, rights, and concerns, not on me and my kingdom, rights and concerns. Write in the first two lines that follow this headline. (p. 29)

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Three: Righteous anger is accompanied by other godly qualities and expresses itself in godly ways. List what it does and does not do as contained in the paragraph below this heading. (p.29)

4. Pick one of the three examples given on pages 31-34, concerning Jesus and righteous anger and note how they meet each of the three criteria mentioned above.

Chosen incident (scripture passage) _____

Criteria 1: _____

Criteria 2: _____

Criteria 3: _____

5. Read the section entitled “Assessing our own Anger” and explain any insights that you found helpful or new.

CHAPTER 3: Getting to the Heart of the Matter

One blows the other clams. These are the two extremes when it comes to expressing anger. The one who blows vents his anger in a tirade of ranting and raving, maybe even expressing his anger in physical gestures or actions. The one who clams express their anger internally by simmering and stewing. The external signs are less impressive yet unmistakable: pouting, giving the cold shoulder, and even crying. How can we learn to handle our sinful anger? As biblical Christians we know that mere behavioral modification is not enough. Jesus had plenty to say about whitewashed tombs filled with dead bones.

The key is to deal with the roots of anger. The world takes anger and blames it on someone or something else. Yet any of the provocations that might be sighted are not the problem. Man has been given a wonderful capacity to think and choose. Man is not a robot, rather we are active choosers and responsible free agents living before the Lord.

1. What or who do you blame for your anger? _____
_____.

2. What is the real cause for our sinful anger? Read the following scriptures and then answer.

Mark 7:20-23

Luke 6:43-45

3. What is the heart? Read Hebrews 4:12 - focus in on the very end of the verse. What two things make up the concept of the biblical heart?

The King James Version use two words: thoughts and intents: the NIV uses thoughts and attitudes. Our sinful anger rises from the sinful beliefs and motives that reign in the nature of man.

4. What does Proverbs 4:23 state? _____
_____.

In order to change anger in your heart, you must recognize and uproot your sinful beliefs and motives, and replace them with godly ones.

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5. Read the section entitled “Anger in Christians” starting on page 49. Write a summary of the material. Be sure to include the “four pictures” packed into James 4:1-3.
6. Are your desires ruling you? List three clues that can help you in determining the answer.
7. Under the section entitled “Biblical Snapshots” the author gave seven examples of these principles in action. Which one spoke to you most and why?

CHAPTER 4: Repentance: The Road to Uprooting Heart Anger

1. Write out the entire second paragraph on page 61. It begins with “We saw in chapter 3.....”

2. There is hope for the one who will humble their self and admit that their anger is sinful. What is it according to James 4: 6? _____

- List the two types of grace mentioned by the author and give two scripture references for each of them.

_____ () & ()

_____ () & ()

God’s grace enables us to forgive those people whose offenses would other wise provoke anger. It empowers us to progressively overcome long-term patterns of judgment, venting, and claming. It provides the foundation for repentance in our own lives.

3. Turn to James 4 once again. What must take place for repentance to be true?

James 4:4-5 _____

James 4:6 _____

James 4:7-8 _____

James 4:11-12 _____

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4. What insight did you gain from the section entitled “Owning Your Guilt And Receiving God’s Grace”?

5. At the end of the chapter under the “For Further Reflection And Life Application” do # 2.

CHAPTER 5: Changing Our Angry Behavior: Sinful Revealing

There is a saying that is so applicable to our discussion on anger: sinful roots produce sinful fruits. Heart change must be accompanied by behavioral change. The most popular approach among both secular and Christian counselors views angry behavior as either ventilating (blowing up) or as internalizing (clamping up). Venters explode, clammers stuff. Another way to say it is that people chose either to express their anger or to hide their anger. Both strategies, of course, are sinful. Both revealing anger and concealing anger offend God and sabotage relationships and call for specific biblical steps of correction and replacement. In this lesson we will deal with sinful revealed anger.

1. How is anger revealed in the following scripture passages?

Genesis 39:19-20

Numbers 20:6-12 (Psalm 106:32-33)

Matthew 2:16

2. Revealed anger can be seen in many ways. How do you make your anger obvious to others? List them below.

3. Not only does the Bible show examples of the expression of sinful anger it also gives directions and warnings against it. Read Matthew 5:21-22 and give the author's two observations.

Observation # 1: _____

Observation # 2: _____

4. In Ephesians 4:31-32 the apostle Paul tells us that we are to put off a number of things and that we are to put on a number of things, also. What are they?

Put Off: _____

Put On: _____

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5. On pages 81-88 the author mentioned a number of passages from Proverbs. Pick the four that spoke to you most and write down what you learned. (Use the other side of the paper if you need more room.)

6. Beginning on page 88 we are given practical strategies and steps for change. Seven items are listed. Write each one out. Along with each statement give any information that was of interest, new, or insightful.

One: _____

Two: _____

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Three: _____

Four: _____

Five: _____

Six: _____

Seven: _____

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7. How can you see the material you have covered in this chapter helping you with your anger?

CHAPTER 6: Changing Our Angry Behavior: Sinful Concealing

There is a saying that is so applicable to our discussion on anger: sinful roots produce sinful fruits. So heart change must be accompanied by behavioral change. The most popular approach among both secular and Christian counselors views angry behavior either as ventilating (blowing up) or as internalizing (clamping up). Venters explode, clammers stuff. Another way to say it is that people chose either to express their anger or to hide their anger. Both strategies, of course, are sinful. Both revealing anger and concealing anger offend God and sabotage relationships and call for specific biblical steps of correction and replacement. In this lesson we will deal with sinful concealed anger.

1. Those who deal with their anger by concealing it often resort to various ways to escape. Such things might include excessive or binge eating, television (such as soaps for fantasy relief), or getting overly involved in a hobby or child's life. How do you deal with the anger you conceal?

2. Summarize what you have learned from each of the three key biblical passages given in the book. Include scripture references we applicable.

Leviticus 19:16-18

Ephesians 4:26-27, 4:30-5:2

Luke 15:25-30

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3. Beginning on page 103 we are given practical strategies and steps for change. Seven items are listed. Write each one out. Along with each statement give any information that was of interest, new, or insightful.

One: _____

Two: _____

Three: (Pay especially close attention to this one) _____

Four: _____

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Five: _____

Six: _____

Seven: _____

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4. How can you see the material that you have covered in this chapter helping you with your anger?

CHAPTER 7: Anger against God

Is it ever right or okay to be angry with God? Is it okay to vent your anger towards God? These are questions that all of us have probably wondered about at one time or another. In your present situation you may be wondering about God. Where is He? What is He doing about all this? Why would He allow this to come into my life? Why does He not take away the pain? The questions are not wrong, but to become angry towards God is! Let's see why.

1. Write out our definition of anger from chapter 1. _____

_____.

2. When we apply this definition to our anger against God, what does it imply? _____

3. Kay Arthur insightfully cuts to the core. "You get angry at God," she observes, "because God did not do what you thought he should or the way he should do it or not do it."¹ Notice that we accuse God of not doing *what* (actions or inactions) he should do, or not doing it in the *way* (manner) he should, or not doing it *when* (timing) he should. In short we want what we want when we want it, and when God does not deliver, we judge Him.

* Do we have the right to do this? _____

* Should we express anger to God in any manner? _____

4. The author sites three biblical occasions in which a person got mad at God (Genesis 4 - Cain; 1 Chronicles 13 – David; and Jonah 3 & 4 – Jonah). Answer the following two questions:

* Why did each of the individuals involved get angry?

* Which is hardest for you to understand and why? (Use the backside of this piece of paper if you need more room)

¹ Kay Arthur, "But I'm So Angry!" in *Uprooting Anger, Biblical Help for a Common Problem* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1989).

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5. The solution to sinful anger towards God lies in humbling ourselves and continually repenting of our remaining unbelief and rebellion. Each of us needs to realize that behind everything that takes place is the sovereign hand of God. We must reject the lies that deny God's goodness, power, and wisdom. We must affirm his righteousness, love and justice. There is much to be said for this little obvious phrase: God is God and we are not!

* Read Genesis 50:20; Job 1-2 & 38-42; Psalm 115:3; Daniel 4:35; Romans 8:28-29. What do these passages have to say about God's sovereignty?

6. Robert Jones writes, "If anger against God is sin, how do we deal with our doubts and questions about his providential dealings, especially amid our suffering?"

* What was his answer? _____

* What three biblical personalities did he make reference to: _____

* What are the five common elements of biblical lamenting? _____

7. The author closes this chapter by giving 5 things we should do if we are tempted to blame God for our suffering or are tempted to angry at him. What are they?

* _____

* _____

* _____

* _____

* _____

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8. How can understanding the sovereignty of God help you in your decision not to be angry with Him?

9. How can you see the material in this chapter helping you keep your relationship with God in good standing?

CHAPTER 8: Anger Against Yourself

1. What is our working definition of anger as given in chapter 1? _____

2. When we get mad at ourselves over some failure, we actively direct our anger inward. Our response is a negative whole-personed response, from the heart, against something we did or failed to do. In chapter one we learned of three types of anger the bible speaks about: Divine anger; man's righteous anger; and man's sinful anger. No where do we see that anger being directed against self. However it does speak about the condemning power of ones conscience. (Rom 14:22-23; 1 Corinthians 4:2-4; 1 John 3:19-21) What do these scripture passages have to say concerning our conscience?

3. The author lists five ways in which the Bible addresses the matter of self-anger. Any or all of them may underline a person's experience of being angry at himself. List each of the five and give a brief explanation of each.

One: _____

Two: _____

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Three: _____

Four: _____

Five: _____

4. God's grace is sufficient for sinners such as you and I. He promises to forgive our sin if we will humbly come to Him, with a repentant heart, and ask Him to forgive us. Our conscience need no longer bother us for God has put the sin away. The blood of Jesus Christ washes us clean. His promise of daily grace cascades upon us like a vigorous waterfall. Write out each of the following promises from scripture and what they mean to you (Use the back of the page if you need more room).

* Psalm 103:12:

* Isaiah 1:18:

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* Isaiah 38:17

* Isaiah 43:25

* Isaiah 44:22

* Micah 7:19

5. What insight have you learned for this study concerning your self-anger problem?

6. I would encourage you to complete activity number 2 under “For Further Reflection and Life Application” at the end of the chapter. Was this helpful? If so, how?

CHAPTER 10: Why You Must Deal With Your Sinful Anger

So it all comes down to this. We have learned a lot about anger, but knowing is not doing. What should motivate us to do what we know needs to be done?

1. In a broad sweeping sense we need to do it because God commands us to. Write out the following two portions of scripture:

* Ephesians 4:22-24 & 31

* Colossians 3:5-8.

2. In Christ, God provides all we need to do so. What do the following three scripture passages say concerning his Spirit and the Word in connection to our needed change?

* Colossians 2:9-10

* 2 Timothy 3:16-17

* 2 Peter 1:3

3. Yet the Bible provides more than broad principles. God supplies compelling motives to change our anger. List the three reasons we should change our anger habits. Explain each reason and provide at least two scripture passages for each.

Reason # 1:

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Reason # 2:

Reason # 3:

4. Why are you going to change your anger habits?