The purpose of this lesson is to study the Bible teaching about anger.

I. The Relationship between Anger and Sin

A. Bible Examples of Acceptable Anger

Psalm 7:11 – God is angry with _the wicked_ every day.
Exodus 11:4-8 – In Egypt Moses acted as God’s spokesman, yet spoke in great _anger_.
Exodus 32:19-24 – When Moses saw Israel worshiping the calf, his anger became _hot_.
Numbers 16:15 – When men rebelled against Moses’ leadership, he was _very angry_.
Mark 3:5 – Jesus looked on the Jews in anger, being _grieved_ at their hardness of heart.
2 Corinthians 7:11 – When Corinth disciplined a fornicator, Paul praised their _indignation_.
Ephesians 4:26 – Be angry, and do not _sin_.

Some anger is justified. But note that every case listed above involves being angry at sin.

B. The Danger of Anger

James 1:19,20 – The wrath of man does not produce the _righteousness_ of God.
Proverbs 14:17 – A _quick-tempered_ man acts foolishly. [Prov. 29:22]

Anger can cause us to “blow up.”

Some psychologists encourage people to “vent” their anger.

Proverbs 29:11,20 – A fool _vents_ all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back.
Ephesians 4:31,32 – Put away anger that is associated with bitterness, clamor (“loud quarreling” – NKJV ftnt), _evil speaking_, and malice.
Genesis 4:4-8 – Cain’s anger led him to _kill_ his brother _.

[Col. 3:8ff; 2 Cor. 12:20; Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15:18ff; Prov. 19:11; Rom. 12:17-21’ Acts 7:54-60; 19:28; James 3:9-12; 1 Peter 3:9; Matt. 7:12]

Anger can cause us to “clam up.”

Ephesians 4:31,32 – Put away anger and wrath, along with _bitterness_ and _malice_.

Instead of putting away anger, some people put it _inside_ to fester malice.
Ephesians 4:26 – Do not let the _sun_ go down on your wrath. Instead of letting anger build up, we should work constructively to eliminate the cause of anger.
James 1:19 – Be slow to wrath and _slow_ to _speak_ (not “refuse” to speak).
Leviticus 19:17,18 – Instead of hating our brother and holding a grudge against him, we should love our neighbor and _rebuke_ him: _talk_ to him about his wrong.

Note that clamming up is often what leads to blowing up!

[Matt. 5:21-24; 1 Cor. 13:5]

II. Ability to Control Anger

Jesus was angry and was tempted in all points like we are, but He did not sin (Heb. 4:15).
Ephesians 4:26 – Be angry and _sin not_.
Proverbs 29:11 – A fool vents all his feelings but a wise man _holds_ them back _.
Proverbs 16:32; 25:28 – He who _rules_ his spirit is better than one who captures a city.
Other passages refer to this as “self control,” (1 Cor. 9:25-27; 2 Peter 1:5-8; Gal. 5:22,23).
1 Corinthians 10:13 – No _temptation_ is beyond our ability to handle.
We can control our anger, when we really want to.

[Gal. 5:20; 2 Tim. 1:7; Psalm 37:8; Prov. 14:29; Philippians 4:13; Psalm 37:5; Eph. 6:10-18; 3:20,21; 2 Cor. 9:8; Josh. 1:5-9.]
III. Bible Principles to Help You Control Your Anger

A. Study the Scriptures and Develop a Plan.

Psalms 119:105 – Your word is a _lamp_ to my feet and a light to my path.
Matthew 4:1-11 – Jesus dealt with Satan’s temptations by _quoting Scripture_.
List passages about anger, study and memorize them. Then develop a plan of action.
[Joshua 1:8; Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Proverbs 3:5,6; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Ephesians 6:17; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12]

B. Repent and Pray.

Acts 8:22 – To be forgiven, we must _repent_ and pray for forgiveness.
1 Peter 5:7 – Casting all your _cares_ upon Him, for He cares for you.
[Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:8-10; Matthew 6:13]

C. Discuss the Problem with Other Christians.

James 5:16 – Confess your trespasses to one another, and _pray_ for one another, that you may be healed. Others can help bear our burden (Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:14).

D. Avoid Hot-Tempered People.

Proverbs 22:24,25 – Make no _friendship_ with an angry man, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul. Associating with people who practice sin tempts you to participate. Associating with those who have overcome the problem helps you overcome it.
[Matthew 6:13; Romans 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 1 Peter 4:3,4; Proverbs 13:20; Exodus 23:2; Psalm 26:5; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:11]

E. Think before You Speak or Act.

James 1:19 – Be swift to hear, _slow_ to speak, slow to wrath.
Proverbs 29:20 – There is more hope for a fool than for a man _hasty_ in his words.
Proverbs 15:28 – The heart of the righteous _studies_ how to answer.
Proverbs 15:1 – A soft answer turns away wrath, but a _harsh_ word stirs up anger.
Don’t speak to hurt, get even, or antagonize. Stay calm enough to say what is helpful.

F. Work to Solve the Problem that Angered You.

The issue is not _who_ angered you, but _what happened_ to anger you. Learn to distinguish the act from the person. Hate the sin, but love the sinner.

Use your energy constructively to solve the problem. Wrong responses are: (1) Blowing up and attacking the person who angered you. (2) Blowing up and attacking an innocent bystander. (3) Holding a grudge (clamming up the anger inside yourself). The only proper response is to use your natural energy to _work on the problem_.

Matthew 5:22-24; (Luke 17:3,4) – Talk with those who upset you to be _reconciled_.
Ephesians 4:26 – Don’t let the _sun_ go down _on_ your wrath.
Ephesians 4:26,29 – Speak what is good for _edification_. Note: (1) Say what is necessary. If it won’t help solve the problem, don’t say it! (2) Say what edifies and imparts grace to the hearers. Speak to help, not to hurt. [1 Cor. 13:5; Rom. 12:17-21]
James 1:19 – Be swift to _hear_, slow to speak, slow to wrath. Be willing to listen.
Matthew 7:3-5 – Examine your own conduct. Maybe you have been wrong.

G. Apologize to Those You Have Hurt.

Matthew 5:23,24 – Seek to be _reconciled_ with our brethren.
Luke 17:3,4 – We must say, “_I repent_” “I was wrong. I am sorry. Please forgive me.”
Have you harmed someone in anger? Are there sins against others you need to make right?

© David E. Pratte – 2019; www.biblestudylessons.com
Scripture quotations are generally from the New King James Version (NKJV), copyright 1982, 1988 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.