

# Anger - Losing Ego, Gaining Humility

Now we're moving from fear to anger. And like last week, I'd like to narrow down what we're discussing. We're not beginning with righteous indignation-although we are heading in that direction. And let's get this out of the way immediately: anger itself is not wrong. When you hear about drunk drivers killing families on the road, children being abused, adultery tearing a family apart, a close friend betraying another for ungodly gain, the poor being mistreated because of their status, injustice, and evil-and you feel nothing-that's a problem.

God created us to respond to evil.

But today we're going to consider what happens when anger gets the best of us. When that happens, it's no longer righteous indignation. Why does that happen? How does it happen? What turns anger from something righteous into something destructive? That's what we're discussing today.

## Negative Examples:

- Cain murdered Abel: Jealousy & Wounded Pride (**Genesis 4:3-8**)
- Joseph dealt harshly with his brothers: Betrayal (**Genesis 42-45**)
- Moses hit the rock: Frustration (**Numbers 20:1-13**)
- Saul chased David: Insecurities, Jealousy, & Fear of Losing Position (**1 Samuel 18-20**)
- David decided to kill Nabal: Importance Challenged & Kindness Ignored (**1 Samuel 25**)
- Jonah angry at Ninevites & God: Pride & Nationalism (**Jonah 4**)
- The older brother towards the younger: Self-Righteousness (**Luke 15:25-32**)
- James & John towards Samaritans: Personal Offense (**Luke 9:51-56**)
- Apostles towards James' & John's request: Jealousy & Irritation (**Matthew 26:47-56**)
- Peter rebuked Jesus: Fear & Frustration (**Matthew 16:21-23**)

## What's Anger Saying To Us?

- "Something important to me is being blocked, violated, threatened, or treated unfairly."
- A personal standard ("People should keep their promises")
- A boundary ("You shouldn't talk to me like that")
- A goal ("I needed this to work")
- A moral belief ("That was wrong")
- A status expectation ("I'm being disrespected")
- A need ("I'm exhausted and nobody is helping")
- **A STANDARD IS BROKEN AND I'M GOING TO PROTECT IT! I'M GOING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!**
- But the challenge is this:
  - Whose standard are you protecting?
  - And should you be the one acting?
  - And if so... how far should that go?
- *The real question isn't:*
  - **"Am I angry?"**

- The real question is:
  - **“What’s at the center of my anger?”**
- Or even deeper:
  - **“Who is at the center of my anger?”**
- Is this about God’s righteousness...or my ego?
- Is this about truth and principle...or something personal?
- What would God actually have *me* do here?

### **Positive Examples:**

- Moses was hot towards Pharaoh then Israel over the golden calf (**Exodus 11:1-9; 32**)
- Phinehas killed idolaters (**Numbers 25:1-13**)
- Samuel rebuked Israel over a king and eventually Saul (**1 Samuel 8; 15**)
- David killed Goliath (**1 Samuel 17**)
- Elijah challenged Israel (**1 Kings 18**)
- Nehemiah rebuked oppressors and those in unlawful marriages (**Nehemiah 5; 13:25-26**)
- John rebuked the Pharisees (**Matthew 3; Luke 3**)
- Stephen rebuked the Jewish council (**Acts 7**)
- Peter rebuked Simon (**Acts 8:9-24**)
- Paul confronted Peter and idol worshippers (**Galatians 2:11-14; Acts 17:16-34**)
- Anger, in itself, isn’t wrong. However, it can cause you to protect your personal interests, with too much zeal, instead of the interests of God if you’re not careful. Generally speaking, it does not “produce the righteousness of God.”
- Did Jesus experience anger? Several times!
  - Temple Corruption (**John 2:13-17**)
  - Hindered Children (**Mark 10:13-16**)
  - Sabbath Failings (**Mark 3:1-3**)
  - Scribes & Pharisees (**Matthew 23**)
  - Lazarus’ Death (**John 11:32-44**)

Anger isn’t wrong. Anger can produce zeal, protection, courage, and positive action. In fact, we often learn self-control through moments of anger. The challenge is learning how to be angry without sinning. Anger becomes sinful when it becomes self-centered, when it lingers, or when it goes too far and/or is executed incorrectly.