

## Facing the Fire Within

### Lesson 3: Understanding the Characteristics of Anger

**Scripture Reading: James 1:19-20 AMP** 19. *Understand this, my beloved brothers and sisters. Let everyone be quick to hear [be a careful, thoughtful listener], slow to speak [a speaker of carefully chosen words and], slow to anger [patient, reflective, forgiving]; 20. for the [resentful, deep-seated] anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God [that standard of behavior which He requires from us].*

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#### Lesson Objective

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Recognize the different characteristics of anger.
  2. Identify biblical examples of how anger was expressed and managed.
  3. Learn how to discern and address anger in a manner that is acceptable to God.
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#### Warmup Questions:

1. Can you recall a time when you felt angry? What triggered your anger, and how did you respond?
  2. Why do you think anger can sometimes feel uncontrollable? What are some physical or emotional signs that indicate someone is becoming angry?
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#### Introduction: The Power of Anger

Anger is a natural human emotion, but how we respond to it determines whether it leads to wisdom or destruction. The Bible provides numerous examples of anger—some handled wisely, others leading to sin and regret. Today, we will examine the characteristics of anger, what triggers it, how it affects us, and how we can manage it biblically.

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#### I. The Causes of Anger

1. **Betrayal by Someone Close**
  - Moses experienced betrayal when Korah led a rebellion against him (Numbers 16).
  - Betrayal from an enemy hurts, but betrayal from a friend deeply wounds the soul.
  - **Reflection Question:** Have you ever felt betrayed by someone close? How did you respond?
2. **Unjust Treatment of Others**

- Jonathan was grieved and angry when Saul treated David unfairly (1 Samuel 20:34).
- Sometimes, our anger is not about ourselves but about the mistreatment of others.
- **Reflection Question:** How do you react when you see injustice?

### 3. Hidden, Unresolved Anger

- Like a volcano, unresolved anger simmers beneath the surface until it erupts.
- Jesus warned that anger left unchecked can lead to judgment (Matthew 5:22).
- **Reflection Question:** Do you have hidden anger from past wounds that still affects you today?

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## II. Signs of Anger – Learning Your Cues

Anger does not appear suddenly—it builds up. Like a volcano releasing steam before it erupts, anger has warning signs. Recognizing these signs can help prevent destructive outbursts.

### Physical Cues:

- Increased heart rate, muscle tension, headaches.
- Insomnia, stomach issues, high blood pressure.

### Emotional Cues:

- Anxiety, bitterness, depression, insecurity.
- Feeling out of control or consumed by resentment.

### Spiritual Cues:

- Loss of confidence in God.
- Difficulty hearing God's voice and following His will.

### Biblical Example:

- Jonathan's loss of appetite when he was grieved over Saul's treatment of David (1 Samuel 20:34).

**Reflection Question:** What are your personal anger cues? Do you recognize when anger is building in you?

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## III. The Danger of Unresolved Anger

When anger is left unresolved, it becomes toxic. Just as a volcanic crater contains harmful gases and dangerous conditions, unresolved anger leads to:

1. **Physical Damage** – Heart disease, high blood pressure, headaches.
2. **Emotional Damage** – Bitterness, depression, anxiety.
3. **Spiritual Damage** – Loss of faith, difficulty forgiving others, distance from God.

**Biblical Example:**

- Saul's irrational anger toward Jonathan and David (1 Samuel 20:30-31). His anger clouded his judgment and led him to make destructive choices.

**Reflection Question:** Have you ever allowed anger to control your actions or words?

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**IV. Acting vs. Reacting to Anger**

It is important to act wisely rather than react impulsively. Technology helps scientists monitor volcanic activity to prevent disasters. Likewise, we must monitor our anger to prevent sinful reactions.

**Acting Wisely (Biblical Response):**

- **Pray and seek God's guidance** – Like Moses, who asked God to handle his betrayers (Numbers 16:15, 20-32).
- **Express feelings with restraint** – Proverbs 17:27 AMP, *"He who has knowledge restrains and is careful with his words, And a man of understanding and wisdom has a cool spirit (self-control, an even temper)."*
- **Forgive and trust God for justice**
  - *Romans 12:19 AMP "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for God's wrath [and His judicial righteousness]; for it is written [in Scripture], "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord."*
  - *Romans 12:20-21 AMP 20. "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM; IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR BY DOING THIS YOU WILL HEAP [fn]BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD." 21. Do not be overcome and conquered by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

**Reacting Foolishly (Worldly Response):**

- Seeking revenge instead of trusting God.
- Holding grudges and allowing bitterness to fester.
- Acting in the heat of the moment rather than with wisdom.

**Reflection Question:** Do you tend to act or react when angry? How can you improve?

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**Conclusion: Applying Biblical Wisdom to Anger**

Anger itself is not a sin, but how we handle it determines whether we honor or dishonor God. Moses, Jonathan, and Jesus demonstrated righteous anger, while Saul's uncontrolled anger led to destruction.

**Key Takeaways:**

1. Recognize what triggers your anger and the cues that signal its presence.
2. Unresolved anger can be harmful—deal with it quickly through prayer and forgiveness.
3. Choose to act with wisdom rather than react impulsively.

**Final Reflection:**

- What steps can you take this week to handle anger biblically?
- Is there unresolved anger in your heart that you need to surrender to God?

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**Memory Verse:**

*"A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered."* –  
Proverbs 17:27