

DEALING WITH ANGER

Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy? Proverbs 27:4

Anger is simply defined as a feeling of extreme annoyance or displeasure. Displeasure may be brought about through things such as remarks, hatred and jealousy. The cognitive behaviour theory attributes anger to several factors such as past experiences, behaviour learned from others, genetic predispositions, and a lack of problem-solving ability.

According to the Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT), introduced in 1955 by Albert Ellis, irrational evaluative beliefs such as "Things must be the way I want", or "Others must do what I tell them to do", combined with a low-frustration tolerance (LFT) (e.g. "if they don't do it I can't stand it") cause anger and lead to aggressive behaviour.

Making foolish remarks such as 'bitch', 'bastard' or similar can trigger anger in vulnerable people. But the scripture advised- "1 Peter 1:15 - But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;" and Proverbs 26:4 says "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself."

AVOID MAKING PEOPLE ANGRY

As Christians, the first step to take in dealing with anger is to avoid making people angry. Carefully choose your words. In some cases, keeping quiet may even be better so as to avoid strife.

Proverbs 15:1 - A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

James 1:19 - My dear brothers, **take note of this**: Everyone should be quick to listen, **slow to speak** and slow to become angry, ... See also Colossians 3:8

SHOW RESTRAINT WHEN ANGRY

Another way of dealing with anger is to show restraint. Be wise.

Psalms 37:8 - Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil.

Ecclesiastes 7:9 - Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

Proverbs 29:8 - Mockers stir up a city, but wise men turn away anger.

Proverbs 29:11 - A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.

WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?

If the cognitive behaviour theory attributes anger to factors such as behaviour learned from others then do not keep the company of one who is easily angered.

Proverbs 22:24 - Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered,

IN YOUR ANGER, DO NOT SIN

Ephesians 4:26 - "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry. Amongst other things, Saul's anger towards David caused him to sin.

1 Samuel 18:8 - Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. "They have credited David with tens

of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?"

GET RID OF IT

Colossians 3:8 - But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

Ephesians 4:31

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice
Also listen to correction or pleas – See Abigail's good advice to David - 1 Samuel 25:23-35

Forgiveness is key. "He who forgives an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter alienates a friend." Proverbs 17:9

ANGER IN RELATIONSHIPS

Anger is one of the most common negative features in relationships. If not carefully managed it can degenerate into loss of affection, violence etc. Listen to this: "When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister; and she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!" Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"" Genesis 30:1-2.

Here, Jacob spoke with wisdom because Rachel was made barren – "When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren." Genesis 29:31. If you were Jacob, how would you have answered?

SEVEN REASONS WHY YOU MUST NOT BE ANGRY

1. For man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. - James 1:20.
See also Matthew 5:22.
2. Anger may cause you to lose friends.
3. It may make you lose a job.
4. Anger may be injurious to your health. The physical effects of anger include increased heart rate, blood pressure, and levels of adrenaline and noradrenaline. "Arrhythmia, also known as irregular heartbeat can be triggered by anger and other strong emotions in vulnerable people"
5. It may destabilize a relationship.
6. Anger may demean you
7. It may cause you to destroy property, harm or kill. Eventually, it may lead to a prison sentence.

Think of these two verses always: "If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all."- Romans 12:18 and "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"- Hebrews 12:14