

Anger:

A Strong feeling of irritation or displeasure.



Anger seems to be a corrosive emotion in our world today, yet, it has affected relationships throughout history - think of God's admonition to Cain that he not allow his anger to cause him to sin (Genesis 4:6-7). Anger can be especially destructive in marriage as couples allow themselves to vent and even spew anger at each other without reservation. The experts tell us; first, that anger reveals something within us - that rather than venting anger or stifling it, we need to examine it and see where it is coming from. Also, anger is a secondary emotion - it is brought about by frustration, fear, or hurt. Feeling angry is not the problem, how we handle that anger can be a huge problem.

Everyone deals with anger - anger is not a sin, but, as with Cain, the expression of our anger is often sinful. We sin if we express anger in a hurtful or demeaning way, even if the other person has hurt us badly. While we are to give others responsibility for their actions (and there may be serious consequences for their sin), we must accept responsibility for our actions, words, and even our attitude. The injustice of others does not give us a right to sin or act unjustly. Paul wrote in Ephesians that we should "get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. (Ephesians 4:31)

One author wrote that we are to: ***Be angry, but beware***; don't allow anger to control us. ***Be angry, but be aware***; don't allow anger to become a way of life. ***Be angry, but be kind***; only when anger is motivated by love, is it constructive and creative. Good words to live by and Biblical as we read in Ephesians 4:26: "In your anger do not sin." Yes, express your hurt, your frustration, your fear, but do it in a way that honors God.

The question is not, *if* anger affects you, it is *how* does anger affect you? Do you *vent* your anger at everyone and anyone who crosses you? Do you *stuff* your anger; keeping it in and not letting anyone know you are angry? Or do you power your way through it; gritting your teeth and bearing with it. If anger is a problem in your life, get help! There are many great resources to help you express anger in healthy ways to build relationship, rather than tear it down.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Books to check out: *Mad About Us; Moving from Anger to Intimacy* by Gary & Carrie Oliver

Caring Enough to Confront by David Augsburger

Dealing with Anger in Your Marriage by Erin Smalley