

ANGER

In the Big Book (BB), pg# 66 we read, "If we were to live, we had to be **free of anger**. The grouch and the brainstorm were not for us. They may be the dubious luxury of normal men, but for alcoholics these things are poison."

Chris Lutes, writing in Campus Life says, "Anger can make us bitter, withdrawn, negative. It can cripple or destroy friendships or other relationships. Anger is destructive, and unless you learn to control it, it will control you. Some suggestions for controlling your anger include: (1) Do something to "let off steam" without hurting someone, such as hitting your pillow, doing some kind of physical exercise, or simply taking a deep breath and counting to ten. (2) Try to laugh at little irritations instead of letting them frustrate you. (3) Find out what really made you mad. Look beneath the surface for the root problem. (4) Write an angry letter to the person or situation that got you upset. Be totally honest about your feelings, then tear the letter up. (5) Yell at God if you feel angry at Him, but then allow Him to speak to you. (6) Confront the person you're mad at--but only after you've calmed down, and do it gently without blaming or getting emotional. (7) Learn to forgive others and yourself. (8) Channel your anger into constructive action. For example, if it makes you mad that so many people in our world are hungry, volunteer to work at a soup kitchen on weekends. (9) If you find that you consistently can't handle your anger in appropriate ways, get help from a professional counselor. (don't get hung up here, move on the what God says)

1. In James 1:19-20, we read, "My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ⁽²⁰⁾ for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires."

- a) Why should we be quick to listen? Slow to speak? Slow to become angry? (v19)
- b) What does anger do to us? In us?
- c) What is God looking for in our lives? (v20)
- d) From God's perspective, what is the result of anger? (v20)
- e) How is anger expressed?

BB, pg# 64 -- Resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically. In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principle with who we were **angry**. We asked ourselves why we were **angry**. In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships, (including sex) were hurt or threatened. So we were **sore**. We were "**burned up**."

2. In James 1:26, we read, "If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein [control] on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless."

- a) How does anger cause us to lose control of our tongue?

BB, pg# 110-111 --- We know all about liquor as a social lubricant. Some, but not all of us, think it has its advantages when reasonably used. The first principle of success is that you should never be **angry**. Even though your husband becomes unbearable and you have to leave him temporarily, you should, if you can, go without rancor. Patience and good temper are most necessary.

3. In James 4:1-3, we read, "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ⁽²⁾ You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. ⁽³⁾ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

- a) From this passage, what are often the results of anger (there are 4 to 5 things in this passage)?

BB, pg# 37 --In some circumstances we have gone out deliberately to get drunk, feeling ourselves justified by nervousness, **anger**, worry, depression, jealousy or the like. But even in this type of beginning we are obliged to admit that our justification for a spree was insanely insufficient in the light of what always happened.

4. We read in James 5:12, "Above all, my brothers, do not swear--not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned."

- a) What word do you see in this verse that is expressed because of anger? What does James say about swearing?

BB, pg# 87-88 --- As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, **anger**, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions.

5. We are in Ephesians 4:25-27, "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ⁽²⁶⁾ "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ⁽²⁷⁾ and do not give the devil a foothold."

- a) What is Paul's advice concerning anger? (v26)
- b) What do you think he means by not letting the sun go down while you are still angry? (v26)
- c) What does anger do for the devil? (v27)

- d) What do you think a foothold is? (v27)
- e) What can anger lead to? (vs25)

BB, pg# 66-67 --- We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they, like ourselves, were sick too. We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended we said to ourselves, "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being **angry**. Thy will be done." We **avoid retaliation or argument**. We wouldn't treat sick people that way. If we do, we destroy our chance of being helpful. We cannot be helpful to all people, but at least God will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.

6. In Ephesians 4:29-32 we read, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ⁽³⁰⁾ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ⁽³¹⁾ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ⁽³²⁾ Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

- a) How does Paul tell us to handle anger? (v31)
- b) Is there a connection between anger, bitterness, rage, brawling and slander? (v30)
What?
- c) How does anger keep us from building others up? (v29)
- d) How does anger grieve the Holy Spirit? (v30)
- e) Instead of anger, what qualities does God want us to exhibit in our lives? (v32)

Big Book references to "anger, angers, angrily" through Pg# 164 and Dr. Bob's story pgs 171-192. [17, 18, 37, 61, 64, 66, 67, 88, 106, 108, 111, 113, 124, 135]