

How Should Christians Respond to Racially Charged Anger?

By every account, we appear to be an angry people. Quick to take offense, we find reasons for anger everywhere. Turn on the television, and you see constant reasons to get mad. From politics to racial tensions to the economy, injustice seems to be everywhere, and we hear about it more quickly and in more detail than ever before.

We seem to be angry as a culture, but within certain groups, anger is boiling just beneath the surface. Racial tension seems to have escalated anger over recent decades, and perhaps it was brought more into the spotlight with the election of our country's first African-American president, Barak Obama. Race, or the specter of race, was right at the surface of many political conversations for his entire tenure.

Perhaps not since the 1960s have we seen race so much at the forefront of discussion; and with it, anger—anger at mistreatment, at misunderstandings, at unequal rights or media coverage. Entire groups of people have been dealing with anger more obviously than at any time since the Civil Rights era.

Anger is birthed when there is a dichotomy—unequal treatment. And we more clearly see these dichotomies now in our information overload age than ever before. They are a cold, hard reality.

In my book, *U Mad? U Can Stop Being Angry at God, Others and Yourself Once and For All*, I take a look at the issue of anger in our times not from a perspective of race but one of humanity. Anger is not a black issue. It's not a white issue. It's not a male issue or female issue. It's not just an issue for the poor, or for the rich. It is a prevalent problem for people of every race, gender, socioeconomic status, and even

faith.

With 64 percent of people feeling the world is becoming an angrier place, according to a Mental Health Organization report, this problem isn't going away. The question is, "What are we going to do about it?"

The answer isn't pretending the problem doesn't exist, and it isn't just traditional "anger management." The solution involves letting God back into our lives to teach us the steps He designed to help humans deal with this normal emotion—and to take it out of the driver's seat of our lives. {eo}

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