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Don't sin by letting anger gain control over you. Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

–Ephesians 4:26-27, NLT

Millions of Americans are angry. Some express their anger in violent outbursts of aggression. Others cover it up and silently simmer.

Are you dealing with an anger issue? Periodically all of us do.

Anger is one of the strongest emotions we have. Many Christians erroneously believe it is a byproduct of the fall and that all displays of anger are sinful, but it is actually a God-given emotion.

The word “emotion” comes from an Old English word meaning “to carry along.” It’s the idea that emotions propel us or cause us to act. From a practical perspective, God gave us emotions to motivate us, to move or push us along.

Can you imagine life without a motivating force on the inside of us? We’d never be triggered to do anything! Emotions in themselves are not bad.

If you study Jesus in His moments of anger, you will find Him interacting with His environment, provoked and motivated to bring about change (see Matt. 21:12-17). His example shows the righteous use of anger.

However, there is a flip side to ire. Though anger in itself is not sin, it can become so when our flesh gets involved.

Let’s look at the root causes of sinful rage. The Bible uses several different words to describe anger, most often the Greek word *orgidzo*. It means “to throw up the hands in

disgust, to be exasperated, to take all the air out.”

The idea is that when something catches you off-guard and knocks the wind out of you, beware. Such an occurrence carries the potential for sinful anger.

Another term often used is *prosochtheo*, meaning “to be vexed or irritated.” This word carries the notion of being left with no resolution or way out. Negative circumstances that are prolonged sometimes vex us to the point of sinful anger. What are the keys to overcoming it? Here are a few:

- »Practice self-control.
- »Walk in forgiveness.
- »Recognize the symptoms of rising anger.
- »Admit you have an anger problem.
- »Give no place to Satan.
- »Allow someone to hold you accountable.

You don’t have to be angry. If you learn to harness the motivational power of anger and give no place to the devil, your anger will become a productive force that brings change.

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