

This Dangerous Sin Can Ruin Your Life

When we attended the 10-year anniversary celebration of Mercy Multiplied in the St. Louis, Missouri area, one of the young ladies who graduated from the program shared an eye-opening testimony. She said that her father committed suicide when she was a teenager and the pain of that situation led her to start drinking and taking drugs. When she realized her life was falling apart, she went to Mercy Multiplied for help.

The thing that really struck me was when she shared that as she went through the program, she came to realize that her problem started at the time her father committed suicide because it made her angry that he took his life and left their family. She couldn't get well and overcome her addiction to drugs and alcohol until she got over being angry with him.

Many times we have issues in our lives because we're angry about something but we don't know it. I believe that for many people, the root of their problem is due to the fact that they are angry at God because their lives haven't turned out right, or they are angry with someone who has hurt them. They may even be angry at themselves for some reason.

The word "anger" is one letter away from "danger." Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying, "Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame," and "Anger is never without a reason, but it seldom has a good one." It's so important for us to be aware of any anger issues we have because they can become dangerous and create damage in our lives.

Our Anger Epidemic

We live in an angry society, and we see the effects of it in problems like road rage, which has surged over the last few years. I recently researched statistics on anger and

discovered that an estimated 1 out of 5 Americans has an anger management problem. According to an article I read in *Newsweek*, people are coming out in droves asking for help with anger management. Enrollment in anger management classes is booming and the demand for counselors is at an all-time high.

The Holy Spirit is the ultimate anger management Counselor! Jesus says in John 14:26 (AMP), "But the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My will teach you all things." We can be confident that when we go to God, He will give us the help we need to face the truth about ourselves and overcome our problems.

What Anger Looks Like

Dallas Willard, who was a professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California for 47 years and a best-selling Christian author, defines anger as "a feeling that seizes us in our body and immediately impels us toward interfering with, and possibly even harming, those who have thwarted our will and interfered with our life." He also says, "Anger will evoke anger on the other side." In other words, one person's anger feeds another person's anger.

We all get opportunities to be angry. You may not be the kind of person who gets road rage, but you may still get angry over what the Bible calls "trifling (ill-informed, unedifying, stupid) controversies over ignorant questionings" that "foster strife and breed quarrels" (2 Timothy 2:23b AMPC).

I wasted so many years of my life being angry about things that didn't really matter and trying to control people I was never going to be able to control. The truth is, there is nothing better than peace! And God's peace in our soul equals power in our lives.

So, if you want more power and energy in your life, you can't be angry all the time.

Find Freedom From Anger

In order to be free from anything, we have to face truth and take responsibility for our behavior. Blaming other people or circumstances and making excuses never changes anything.

John 8:31-32 teaches us that if we abide in Christ, continually obeying His teachings, we will know the truth, and the truth will set us free. I want to encourage you to go to God first when you are angry. Tell Him honestly how you feel and make a determined decision to forgive. There is no sense wasting your life being angry about something that happened years ago—or even something that happened earlier today.

Take a few moments and pray something like this: “I need Your help, Lord, to deal with my anger. I thank You that because of Your love, grace, mercy and the power of the Holy Spirit in my life, I don’t have to act on those foolish feelings that can cause problems in my life and hurt me and others.”

Spend time quietly waiting on God with an open heart to hear what He has to say to you. Study what His Word says about anger and being angry. And trust Him to help you make some positive, healthy changes that will bring more of His peace and power into your life.