

## What the Bible Says About Anger

### What is righteous indignation?

Dr. Michael L. Williams, a pastor, author, and Christian educator offers the following definition of righteous indignation. “Righteous anger is based on God’s righteousness, which is rooted in a love of God and love of our neighbor. It is not based on selfish lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, or pride. It seeks to do no harm to others personally, but instead seeks to do good so as to convince the offending party to change their attitude and behavior. It also defers wrath to God and His ministers. Dealing with righteous anger was perfectly demonstrated by Jesus Christ, who serves as our example.”

Jesus demonstrated righteous indignation in Mark 3:1-6. In this passage, Jesus heals a man with a deformed hand on the Sabbath which the law did not permit, the Pharisees were ready to accuse him. Jesus challenged them in front of everyone by asking “Does the law permit good deeds on the Sabbath, or is it a day for doing evil? Is this a day to save a life or to destroy it?” When Pharisees refused to respond, Jesus became angry and deeply saddened by their hard hearts. His anger was in response to the Pharisees’ putting legalism ahead of good deeds and love of others. This was distortion of the heart of God’s law.

### When is anger sin?

#### When we let it control us and the anger becomes bitterness and resentment

And don’t sin by letting anger control 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).

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you (Ephesians 4:31-32).

#### When we are inappropriate with our anger

Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them (Ephesians 4:19).

Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable (Romans 12:17).

Fools vent their anger, but the wise quietly hold it back (Proverbs 29:11).

#### When our anger is motivated by pride rather than unrighteous behavior

Understand my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. (James 1:19-20)

*When our anger is unproductive and distorts God's purposes*

So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. Remember, It is better to suffer for doing good, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong! (1 Peter 16-17)

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