

# Overcoming Anger

## (Overcoming Series Part 2)

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**THE LORD'S FLOCK**  
**GROW DIGEST**

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Anger is a passion that can serve justice when properly ordered. However, it becomes a capital vice when uncontrolled, leading to self-destruction, damaged relationships and grave sin. Satan will always try to challenge our holiness by baiting us into anger. We need to persevere so that goodness triumphs.

### 1. God's Anger

God is slow in anger; overflowing with love and faithfulness. God's anger is at times necessary. And yet He is good people, especially to the poor. God is slow to anger because He is compassion and love.

1.1. God is angry at human evil. God used His servant Moses to convey His threat to the Egyptian Pharaoh for enslaving His people. In His wrath, He delivered destruction to Egypt through the ten plagues and He let the Egyptian army be swallowed by the Dead Sea.

1.2. God's anger at betrayal. The Israelites engaged in idolatry and debauchery while Moses went up Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments. This prompted Moses to break the stone tablets in anger.

1.3. God's anger is a response to human evil. After Adam and Eve fell to sin, God gave them the chance to admit their mistakes and seek forgiveness. They made up excuses and thus, were evicted from the Garden of Eden. Similarly, today, the devil uses us to hurt God.

1.4. God is not content to let people sit in their own self-destruction. In the midst of His anger, His love for us is never gone.

1.5. God is angry at injustice. Jesus overturned the moneychangers' tables in the Temple because of the great injustice against the faithful. Sometimes, we also need to get angry with wrong doings.

### 2. St. Thomas Aquinas Distinguishes Three Forms of Anger

- 2.1. Anger as rational judgment is valid and essential.
- 2.2. Ordered passion fits the situation and seeks to maintain or restore social order.
- 2.3. Disordered anger overthrows reason and justice; this is sinful and creates deep wounds.

### 3. Dangers of Uncontrolled Anger

- 3.1. Internal burning – our soul's tranquility is lost through malice or irritation.
- 3.2. Verbal Outbursts – coarse speech, insults, and quarrelling; these are liable to judgment.
- 3.3. Prolonged resentment – hardens into hatred, a mortal sin, and kills charity in oneself and others (1 Jn. 3:15).

### 4. Ways to Overcome Anger According to the Scripture

- 4.1. Be slow to anger (Jas. 1:9, Prov. 16:32). Self-control is a fruit of Spirit. Choose to love than to attack.
- 4.2. Resolve matters quickly (Mt. 5:25-26, Eph. 4:26-27). Do not give the devil the chance to work on us.
- 4.3. Prevent escalation to hatred (Jas. 1:19-20). It is better to be quick to listen, slow to speak and anger.
- 4.4. Guard our speech and actions (Prov. 15:1, Mt. 5:22). Be charitable in words and fast from harsh words.
- 4.5. Cultivate patience and meekness (Prov. 22:24, Gal. 16:32).
- 4.6. Seek God's grace through prayer. On our own, we will be provoked. God's grace makes us endure.

**Conclusion:** Anger is a valid response to a particular situation. It is therefore not a sin; it is what we do with it that becomes sin. The right kind of anger is fuelled by love and justice. When annoyed, be constructive.

**Reflection:** What do you resolve to improve during this season of Lent in order to overcome disordered anger?

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