

## Making Your Anger Work for You

### Ephesians 4:25-28

#### Ephesians 4:25-28 (New International Version)

<sup>25</sup>Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. <sup>26</sup>"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup>and do not give the devil a foothold. <sup>28</sup>He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

#### "Watch out!"

**F**or many years Tom had struggled with his anger. "It seems like I can go along for a while and it doesn't bother me, and then all of a sudden, I lose my temper and say things that I'm usually sorry for later. I'm not the only one in my family with an anger problem. My father, who is a wonderful Christian man, has for many years had a reputation for being 'hot-headed.' He doesn't get angry very often, but when he does, watch out!"

Although Tom is embarrassed and thinks himself "atypical," many men are like him. They tend to view anger as a problem, something that must be avoided, and something negative that they must conceal. In reality, research tells us that most people experience this emotion 8-10 times a day. When we begrudge, or are annoyed, irritated, frustrated, offended or cross, we're experiencing anger in some form.

#### Reflection

Anger is energy. While we may have minimal control over when and how we become angry, we do have control over how we choose to express it. We can either spend it or invest it. Because it involves physical and emotional energy, it is up to us whether to use that energy in constructive ways or to abuse ourselves and others. We could utilize it as an opportunity to channel energy into positive change in our lives.

Part of what it means to be made in God's image is that we, like God, have a variety of emotions. The Lord Jesus, a human reflection of God, experienced anger as well as joy, sorrow as well as peace. And, he directed his anger to be used for a purpose.

#### Accountability and Application

Write about a situation that consistently makes you angry. Although you feel the anger in this situation, are you able to see that your response to it is your choice? Commit in writing your choice to deal with your anger constructively.

Do you "stuff" your emotions and then boil over?

Who can you discuss your anger with?

**PRAYER:** Lord, please help me to get honest with you, myself and others. Help me seek the help I need to deal with my anger in more constructive ways.