

Into Thy Word Ministries Bible Study [www.intothyword.org](http://www.intothyword.org)

**General Idea:** When God tells us that love is not easily angered, He means just that. We are not to be touchy, easily provoked, fretful, resentful, suspicious, or oversensitive with our feelings. We are to be very slow to get angry, and we are not to let little things cause us to “fly off the handle.” Because God loved us so much, He did not allow His anger to wipe us out of existence when we so much deserved it. Instead, He allowed His drama of redemption to unfold throughout history, climaxing with the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. We need to try to understand other people, and with respect, place ourselves in the shoes of another. We need to listen, and not allow our hostile feelings to get the best of us. We are not to let the sun set before we extinguish our anger with our spouse. Since God is patiently working in us, we should reciprocate with the understanding of the debt we owe to God and the unfathomable love and concern He has for us. Love puts us in another’s shoes.

**Authentic Love is not touchy or resentful, and does not “fly off the handle!”**

### Contexts and Background:

This passage echoes one of the original problems this church faced and that Paul addresses in this Epistle, and that was *lawsuits*. One will not easily sue if one is not easily angered. When we get love right, then we can get life right and be happier, healthier, and more joyful and content. Our families will not be dysfunctional and our church will be amicable and productive. This all hinges on how we understand and implement love. We can control our annoyances, frustrations, irritations—even our anger with love, if we look to Christ. If we can see Him as our head (because He is) and as our employer so all that we do is in and for Him, then we can be Christ-seeking and not self-seeking. Relationship building and edifying and not tearing down or causing dysfunction and strife will become the prime assets for a contented life and a healthy church. With real, true love, we can be authentic Christians living out our transformed lives and our best for His glory, regardless of our circumstances.

### Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings:

- *Love is/Charity.* Love that is real is self giving and sacrificial; it reacts and synergizes all we are and do. It takes the gift God gives us and enables us to practice it; it allows us to be more meaningful, effectual, and applicable in others lives. If all we do is know about love and not practice it, we are left with only a cold, intellectual idea that is of no use to God or others. It takes goodness and molds it into something beyond words that edifies and builds up. It makes relationships happy and enduring; it makes life fun, real, and powerful. When we live with real love, we prosper in all areas; when we do not live it out, we are left with nothing but hopelessness and despair. What love is not will leave us destitute and filled with rudeness that will overtake and depress us, our families, and our church. A church can’t be welcoming without love; a pastor can’t teach effectively without loving his people. A family or church without authentic love will create substitutes for it, and these substitutes will become weapons more powerful and deadly than a gun or a sword or cultural hostilities (Mark 12:28-31; John 3:16, Matt. 22:34-40; John 3:16; 13:1, 34-35; 14:1; 15:9; Rom. 1:31; 5:10; 12:10; 1 Cor. 13; Eph. 2:4-7; Phil. 2:2; Col. 1:1-6; 3:12-14; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2:8; 3:6; 12; 4:9-10; 5:8; 13; 2 Tim. 3:3; Heb. 10:24; 1 John 4:7-12).
- *It is not easily angered/is not provoked/ is not easily angered/doesn’t fly off the handle/ is not touchy or fretful/is not irritable or quick tempered/does not get upset with others is not stirred to wrath.* Anger is a vice, sin that abuses others and us and should never have a foothold in us. When we are easily provoked, we show a lack of self control and a lack of trust in our Lord. All this does is bring us to the same level of spitefulness and bitterness as others and we come to live in it ourselves. When this happens, we must seek to break the bonds of this sin that seek to destroy

others and us. Our faith must be love-filled so it affects our actions, our verbal expressions, our mannerisms, and our body language so we reflect our Lord. If not, our faith and thinking are skewed or even absent. Anger is formed from our doubts and fears as well as frustrations—our unmet expectations that will destroy God’s past, present, and future work in us. It will neuter what God wants to do in us and take a teaching point to edify and forge it into a weapon that harms others. It is interesting to point out that the modifier word “*easily*” does not appear in the original Greek texts but first shows up in the KJV and survives in most translations today. Why? Two reasons: one, we sometimes have to add modifier words to smooth out the language from translations so it is more readable (grammar is different in Greek than English) as long as it is in context. Also, it is said that King James, who commissioned the translation, was easily angered and thus the translators wanted to convict him. Nonetheless, *easily* fits the context and meaning (Prov. 12:16; Eccl. 7:9; Matthew 5:22; Rom. 2:8; 12:19; Eph. 4:26-18, 31; Col. 3:8; James 1:19-21; 3:9-10).

- God is calling us to control our anger. Why? Because it provokes us and others to violence, it destroys relationships and community, and it does not solve problems. It closes off our minds and hearts from God and others, and keeps us from seeing and understanding God and His instruction (Prov. 14:29, 15:18; 16:32; 29:11; 22; Eccles. 7:9; Matt. 18:15-17; 21:12-13; Rom. 1:18; Eph. 4:25-27).
- Anger, in and of itself, is not wrong; it is all about how we handle it. Anger can even be used for good, when we have it constrained—as in *under control*. It is not a sin if we use it in the parameters of the Fruit of the Spirit and Love. It becomes sin when we allow it to fly off the handle, thus losing control and/or provoking others wrongly.
- The Bible tells us that it is OK to be angry, but not to allow it to cause us to sin! When Jesus saw His house of worship and prayer turned into a market, He modeled to us the correct way to channel our hostility in fervent action. Anger can be a solution to motivate us to action, or a real problem that brings hurt and destruction (Prov. 14:29, 15:18; 16:32; 29:11; 22; Matt. 18:15-17; 21:12-13)!
- We must be aware of the serious, destructive nature of anger, even our annoyances that can build and be stored for future wrath. We are called to deal with our anger before it becomes a weapon and hurts others. A simple means of anger can lead to murder in various forms, from literally killing someone, to destroying relationships, and escalating small problems into big ones, because our pride and hurt is in the way. If we truly desire to be authentic followers of Christ, we will be committed to reconciliation with others as He is with us (John 3:5; James 1: 19-20; 1 Pet. 1:22-23)!
- The Gospel is meant to bring people to Christ and create healthy relationships. God’s primary purpose in our lives is to bring us out of our self-destructive and self-seeking nature, and into the reclamation of redemption in Him; this is the work of Christ.
- Mistaking anger for love is like seeking to kill to protect, but all you do is commit suicide. It is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to get sick. You have to catch a glimpse of how our Lord sees this like a parent observing His precious children fighting mercilessly and needlessly (Prov. 14:29-30; Eph 4:24; 1 John 2:8).
- Life does not always make sense! We may not understand our life and plight, or why we have troubles. We may never receive an explanation for them, as Job did not. However, we can still trust in Christ who loves us and is “caring” us through! We need to accept His caring like so many Christians who, when faced with problems, really seek and rely on God. Countless Christians tend to only see their situation, recoil in bitterness, and strike in anger, even aiming that anger toward

God and family. We must see that He is, indeed, in control so we have no basis to be angry or bitter (2 Cor. 4:7-12).

### **Devotional Thoughts and Applications:**

Anger is neutered when we have the proper focus and attitude. We are called to keep focused on Christ and not ourselves; so, we are looking at God's Word as a mirror of ourselves, of our soul, not to see us, but to see God working in us. When we only see ourselves, we see sin and brokenness, failure or self-seeking inclinations, and wrong attitudes and bad choices, while not recognizing them! This will translate into how we deal with our anger, how we relate, and how far we can develop healthy and good relationships. We must see God's interests and not our own; then the journey of maturing in the faith will become more real and our frustrations and doubts less real. Our problems become less as He becomes more; then, we will get love right.

We have to get love right and practice it if we want to have a good church, a good family, and a content and meaningful life. We can't be constrained to what we think or what others have to say; we must be conformed to the Word as our primary means of instruction and guidance. Besides; what is more important for us to learn than what love is? Without love we have nothing. If we praise our Lord, or our character and what deeds we have done or could do, yet do not love, God is telling us this is worthless; we have nothing. Our love, its understanding and practice, is not placated by our past, fears, insecurities, hurts, culture, society, or any influence upon us either externally or internally.

**The Essential Inductive Questions** (for more Inductive questions see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

**Read these two passages again in different translations (1 Corinthians 13:1-8; 1 John 4: 7-12)**

1. Discuss your thoughts on this aspect of love.
2. Give a positive example.
3. Give a negative example.
4. How is this type of love working in you?
5. Why is this love not working in you?
6. What blocks this love from being exhibited in you?
7. What would it take to get this love working in you?
8. What are you willing to do about it?

## **Additional Questions:**

1. Why does real love not anger easily?
2. Any church that lacks love will have disorder. Why? How have you seen this so? How have you seen Christ the Lord replaced with pride and strife?
3. Empathy is made up of two characters—sympathy and understanding. How does showing empathy also show the love of our Lord? How has Christ showed empathy to you? Why is this important?
4. How does love help us be submissive to God and be better examples to others? How does your faith factor in with your love?
5. What would happen in your family and church if more people, including you, got love right and practice it more?
6. How do you react when someone at school or church or work hurts you? What can you do to not allow insults or past failures to get you down or anger you? What can you do to be better at accepting allowances for the shortcomings of others?
7. If you want to have a good church, a good family, and a content and meaningful life, what do you need to do?
8. How can your trust that Christ loves you so much that He did not allow His anger to wipe you out of existence when you deserved it, help you be more tolerant to others?
9. What needs to take place in you for you to be better at listening, and not allowing your hostile feelings to get the best of you?
10. What can you do to keep the little things from causing you to “fly off the handle?” What can be done to improve your attitude and your church?

*A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly.* Proverbs 14:20

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For further helps in dealing with Anger: [The Character of Anger](#)

<http://70030.netministry.com/apps/articles/default.asp?articleid=35223&columnid=3803>