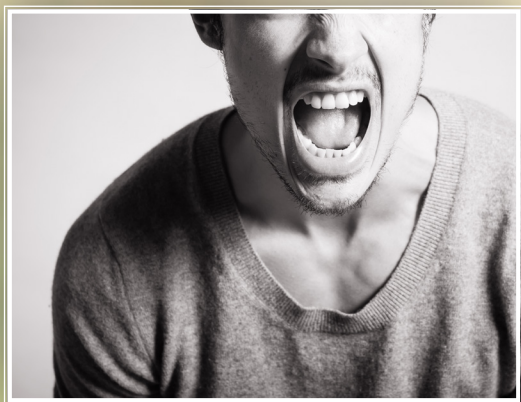


BILL ZECHMANN

Can Others Make You  
**ANGRY?**



Principles for Living

# Can Others Make You Angry?

by Bill Zechmann



Principles for Living

[www.principlesforliving.org](http://www.principlesforliving.org)

# Can Others Make You Angry?

So much in life is about attitude.

You have heard people say, “What’s with the attitude?” When we think about attitudes, we often think about negativity.

Here is the definition of attitude: *It is a state of mind or a feeling and can involve an arrogant or hostile state of mind or disposition.*

Think about it: **Anger is an attitude.**

When we think about anger and people who show negative emotions outwardly, we often say, “That person has a real anger problem.” If you talk to the person, they will often say, “I can’t help myself.” They look at anger as if it’s something outside of their control.

But is it?

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version of the Bible.

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## What is Righteous Anger?

If I get angry it's because I allowed myself to do so.

It's also interesting to note that I never get angry when things go my way. I only get angry when they don't. Why is that? Is it because I am self-centered and not getting my way?

Many Christians with anger problems want to look at Jesus in the temple chasing out the merchants and the money changers. They also want to compare their anger to God's wrath. If our anger is motivated by our love of God then I see nothing wrong with it. If it is motivated by our own selfishness then it is wrong.

I'm not saying we won't be irritated by things in our lives. But those things should not make us lose control and have outbursts of anger.

I believe we should be able to *control* our anger. If you say there are times that we can't control our anger, then in essence you are saying the fruits of the Spirit are inoperable in humans. We must remember self-control is one of the fruits of the Spirit. That fruit is most bountiful in mature Christians.

I am not saying we won't have angry outbursts in our lives. What I am saying is that anger is something that can be controlled. Let's look at what it says in **Proverbs 29:11**.

*Fools vent their anger, but  
the wise quietly hold it back.*

If we choose to understand that anger is a choice, we will begin to realize it is something we can control. If we don't believe it's a choice, we will continue to struggle with negative outbursts.

I want you to notice something in the case

where Jesus chased the merchants and money changers out of the temple.

In **John 2:15** it says,

*So he made a whip out of cords,  
and drove all from the temple  
courts, both sheep and cattle;  
he scattered the coins of the  
money changers and overturned  
their tables.*

Notice that Jesus made a whip out of cords. That took forethought. He wasn't out of control.

If we continue in **John 2:16-17** we read,

*To those who sold doves he said,  
'Get these out of here! Stop turning  
my Father's house into a market!'*

His disciples remembered that it is written:

*Zeal for your house  
will consume me.*

Notice Jesus was motivated by His love of God and respect for God's house. We know anger is going to happen if we let our guard down or if we are zealous for God.

In **Ephesians 4:26-27** it says,

*In your anger do not sin. Do not  
let the sun go down while you are  
still angry, and do not give the  
devil a foothold.*

How does the devil get a foothold if we let the sun go down on our wrath? It's because the longer we allow anger to fester in us, the harder it will be to get rid of it and the longer it will take.

If we believe anger is something we simply cannot control, we will lose the

battle. If we want to control our anger, it is imperative that we believe and understand that it truly is an attitude. When we are angry, we are extremely disgusted. Our disgust rouses up an emotion inside of us. That emotion begins to burn in us. We can feel it. Our face may get red. Our blood pressure goes up.

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Because we have these physical symptoms that are seemingly out of our control, we think that anger is uncontrollable. *But this isn't true.*

We need to stop and think about

what it is that causes us to get angry. What triggers it? It really is a feeling of loss of control.

If we have the right attitude toward anger, our reactions to negative situations will change. When we don't get our way, instead of having a negative emotional outburst, we will simply catch ourselves and say, "Oh, I'm sensing a loss of control here." We defuse the anger because we recognize it for what it is: A strong emotional feeling that results from a feeling of loss of control or not getting our way, which are often the same.

## **Patience over Anger**

Another problem that causes anger to seem uncontrollable is the fact that the person that is experiencing anger issues wants relief right away. In **James 1:19-20** it says,

*Understand this, 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.*

Wow! This scripture insinuates we talk too fast when angry. We need to be slow to anger and if we want to be quick at something, it must be at listening. That is going to require patience, and guess what patience is? It is a fruit of the Spirit.

We have talked about a couple of the fruits of the Spirit that are needed to overcome our anger and ultimately get it in control. Once we allow these fruits to come to fruition in our lives, some of the other fruits will show up along with them, such as gentleness and peace.

We can see how these fruits help us live in peace. Let's look at what can cause anger. In **Proverbs 30:33** it says,

*As the beating of cream yields  
butter and striking the nose*

*causes bleeding, so stirring  
up anger causes quarrels. (NLT)*

How do we stir up anger? For one thing, righteous indignation from God – but *most anger comes from the flesh*. Stirring up anger is a task for those that are busybodies.

How we chose to respond to others when they try to stir the pot will help us in our battle against anger. There are things that you may feel call for anger. Let me ask you: Should anger be used as a last resort or a first resort? Even much of God's wrath is kept for the day of Judgement.

The Bible talks immensely about mercy. If you are a person that has anger problems, then chose to be a person that extends mercy to others. It's hard to be angry and merciful at the same time.

**Proverbs 19:11** says,

*A person's wisdom yields  
patience; it is to one's glory  
to overlook an offense.*

So, *can others make you angry?* I think we have seen that they can, but we can also prevent them from causing us to be angry. We have the power to be in control. Consider what it says in **Ecclesiastes 7:9**:

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**Some people see  
the foolishness of  
becoming angry  
– yet they still  
can't help it. Their  
problem is they  
don't know how  
to deal with it.**

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*Do not be quickly  
provoked in your  
spirit, for anger  
resides in the lap  
of fools.*

Do you consider  
yourself a fool?  
You may be saying,  
man you hit the

nail on the head with that! Some people see the foolishness of becoming angry –

yet they still can't help it. Their problem is they don't know how to deal with it. Just knowing that it is foolish and controllable is a great place to start.

For many people, anger is a control mechanism. They try to use anger to hold their world together. In the long run it does the opposite and tears their world apart. Rage can be such a conflicting emotion and most people fear being around it. That is why – even though it may be at a subconscious level – people will have outbursts of anger. It allows the angry person to feel as though they are taking charge of a situation. Unfortunately, it does nothing to help solve the problems.

If you have anger problems, just stop and think about it for a moment. Do you think those around you will enjoy your company when you are like this? The very reason some people get angry is that they get jealous of others that are looked up to



and treated differently. The truth of the matter is we need to earn respect. We can't demand it, and that is often what we are trying to do by becoming angry.

## Anger Kills Love

Let me ask you this question: How often is your anger a cause of your love for others? You may say that's a ridiculous question. Well, it might be, but it makes a very strong point. *Anger is usually very unloving of others and very loving of self.* In **James 4:1-3** it says,

*What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you*

*ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

I had an older brother that had tremendous anger issues. He so desperately wanted others to accept him and look up to him. Unfortunately he was a loose cannon at times and nobody wanted to be around him. He couldn't see it but his anger was totally unfounded. Things were not as they seemed to him. He was demanding others to love him. We did love him, of course – he just didn't believe it.

He had a real problem with needing approval. When it didn't seem like he was getting it, he would become depressed and eventually get angry about something.

When we have a need for constant approval we are in a very precarious place.

That need can cause us to act in ways that become counterproductive for us. It can cause arrogance, which nobody likes. That arrogance pushes people away instead of drawing them to us. Arrogance is really a false show of confidence, seeking acceptance and approval. We tend to think if we are spectacular, we will get others to look up to us. We find ourselves seeking glory.

Think for a moment about the sport of American football. It is a very violent sport. There are times when someone gets the wind knocked out of them. It takes that person a while to get their wind back before they can be expected to play again. It can be the same way with anger. Those feelings of frustration need to be looked at the same way as getting the wind knocked out of ourselves. We need to ask those around us for a break. This gives us time to collect ourselves before we get back to normal.

## **Anger Doesn't Change Our Circumstances**

As a businessman, I often work with others in the marketing of their products. If we get on the wrong side of the market it can become very frustrating as we try to patiently wait for the market to turn our way. The longer we have to wait and spend money making margin calls in order to maintain our position, the more frustrated we can become. However if we are willing to throw in the towel and get out of our position, the pain stops.

Getting out of our positions represents our willingness to accept the fact that the markets aren't going to do what we believed or hoped they would do.

The emotions that trigger our anger can behave the same way. Just accepting things as they are can dramatically change our state of mind.

Just like I can't change what the markets are going to do, I can't change what others

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**Just like I can't control what the markets are going to do, I can't change what others are going to do.**

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will do. Once again this shows us how we can have control of our emotions, and that's where anger comes from.

Let's look at some scriptures that I believe can help us

when it comes to controlling our anger. In **Philippians 4:6-8** it says,

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

Do you see here how our mindset is critical in helping us cope with our

circumstances? We are not to be anxious for anything. With God's help, it is within our power to control our anxiety.

Let's continue with **Philippians 4:7-8**.

*And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

What is it that this scripture says guards our heart? The peace of God! The peace of God comes when we consciously give everything over to God. When we let go and let God, we can sit back and be an observer instead of the main character in the scenes of our lives.

I also want to look at what the scripture says in **Philippians 4:8**.

*Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is*

*noble, whatever is right,  
whatever is pure, whatever is  
lovely, whatever is admirable  
—if anything is excellent or  
praiseworthy—think about  
such things.*

What we let ourselves think about is critical to our success of overcoming anger in our lives. We must think about the right things. What's true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable? These are the things to think about. When we meditate on these things, we will not be giving Satan a foothold into our thinking and that is where he breaks us down. We have to look for positive things. The problem is many times we are looking for negative things, so we can justify our anger.

Our natural tendencies are to protect ourselves. If we allow that tendency to run rampant, it will hurt our relationships. When we cast blame on others we

ostracize ourselves from them. Whenever we own the problem it means we're the one taking responsibility for the bad in the situation. When we don't own the problem we're casting blame. Anger gets stirred when we start casting blame and it ostracizes us from others.

***One thing that triggers anger is high expectations.*** No one has ever been disappointed that didn't have any expectations. That doesn't mean I think we should never have any expectations. We need to moderate our expectations to the point that, if they aren't met, we are not devastated by the results.

Patience is one of the fruits of the mature Christian. Patience extends mercy and does not judge. When we are patient with someone, it not only helps the person that has the anger issues, it also helps those that were being judged guilty in some way or another. When we are patient, we

have our inner conflicts moderated and our problems with other people can be resolved.

If you have anger problems, maybe you need to make a commitment to becoming a peacemaker. In **Matthew 5:9** it says,

*Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children  
of God.*

You may say that's what is causing the conflict. Then maybe the best way to keep peace in your situation is to remain silent on certain issues.

One of the most irritating things there is for a person with anger problems is to be criticized and judged by others. But consider how Jesus said we should treat those that run us down. In **Matthew 5:11-12** it says,

*Blessed are you when people  
insult you, persecute you and  
falsely say all kinds of evil  
against you because of me.  
Rejoice and be glad, because  
great is your reward in heaven,  
for in the same way they  
persecuted the prophets  
who were before you.*

Think about it for a minute. If we are blessed to be insulted for being a Christian, why wouldn't we be blessed for putting up with every type of persecution that comes our way, regardless of the reason why or who it is that is doing it?

As Christians we should be able to handle all kinds of conflict because of the fruits that come with maturity in Christ.

## A True Christian Can Defeat Anger

What is it that gives the true Christian their strength? It stems from a proper understanding of the Word of God; a

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**What is it that gives the true Christian their strength? It stems from a proper understanding of the Word of God; a genuine love of God and our fellow man, and a commitment to be holy.**

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genuine love of God and our fellow man, and a commitment to be holy. If you are not a Christian and have anger issues it would be a good time to seek out a church that teaches a Christian lifestyle. Remember that Jesus said there would be many wolves in sheep's clothing. If you're saying you have

been around so-called Christians all your life and their lives look no different than yours, you may be right. Maybe it's time to go to some churches that are different than the one you are currently going to.

Listen, I'm not going to apologize for teaching in a way that actually offers you something more than a religious Christianity. If you are not living victoriously as a Christian, I will not condemn or judge you. I will, however, ask: *What is it you are being taught that is not helping you experience the freedom that Jesus promised to those who have committed their lives to Him?*

Why should we let someone else or some set of circumstances control our lives? If I have an anger problem there isn't anyone to blame but myself. If we want to overcome our angry tendencies we need to focus on the positive instead of the negative. When we keep going over a

bad situation in our minds, it only makes things worse.

One more thing: It is okay to realize there is a problem, but it's not okay to use anger to try to manipulate the circumstances or people around us. Love is to be our guide as Christians. If we walk in love, getting our way won't matter anyway.

So let's examine what life would be like without ever getting angry. Some people would say that's impossible. I agree to a degree, *but having the fruit of self-control in our lives means we can learn to control our anger a little better each and every day.*

We need to learn to diffuse our anger. When we do, life becomes much sweeter. Anything worth having is worth fighting for. **Ephesians 6:10-11** says,

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.*

*Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.*

And in **Ephesians 6:12** it says,

*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.*

The ultimate key to resolving anger is to commit to taking a stand against it. That commitment needs to be tied to the love of God because we need to love Him so much that we no longer want to

hurt Him. We need to commit to walking in unconditional love. When we do, we can move towards having the control it takes to live our lives without being controlled by anger.

Anger can be forgiven just like any other sin. It's like anything that becomes a bad habit. Anger can become just that – a bad habit. It becomes our drug of choice for coping with our problems. The problem is it rarely changes anything for the better. We need to tell ourselves, “No more!”

To God be the glory for His truth today, tomorrow and forever.

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At Principles for Living, we seek to help others come to know the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We also want to help Christians grow in their knowledge and faith in their Christian walk. Our teachings include a mixture of secular psychology and Christian practicality.

If this booklet has blessed you in any way, and you want to learn more about our ministry, our faith, or about the transforming love of Jesus Christ, visit us on the web at [principlesforliving.com](http://principlesforliving.com).



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**Bill Zechmann**  
President & Founder  
Principles for Living



Principles for Living

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## A COMMITMENT TO BIBICAL TEACHING

Bill Zechmann was born in the small rural area of Foster, Nebraska. At the age of eighteen he committed his life to Christ and felt God's call to teach practical Biblical principles. Principles for Living was founded in 2010. His calling was inspired by James 3:1-2:

*Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. (NASU)*

Taking this scripture to heart, Bill spent decades studying the doctrines of different Christian denominations in order to help him understand and teach the Bible more effectively. He holds B.A.

degrees in Biblical Studies and Human Resources Management. Bill is the author of two books and professes that his greatest joy in life comes from helping others find the love of Christ in their lives. The goal of his teachings is to help others find freedom from the clutches of sin.

## A MISSIONARY AT HOME AND ABROAD

In 2010, while serving as a missionary in the Philippines, Kenya, and Liberia, Bill ministered to crowds of 5,000 people and has seen hundreds come forward to receive Christ. At home in the United States, Bill conducts personal growth seminars and evangelistic crusades. His teachings are focused on helping the lost find Christ and seeking a positive change in their lives.

## STRENGTHENED BY ADVERSITY

Bill's teachings have been molded through many of the experiences he has had throughout his own life. He and his wife were foster parents of thirteen children. They tried for many years to have their own children and had various complications before their eldest son was born. Overcoming adversity became their source of strength. Despite the many health problems and the loss of their second-born child, Bill and Jane persevered

together and grew as Christians. Unable to have any more children they adopted a sibling family of three from the Nebraska Children's Home. Regardless of the hardships they have had to face, Bill and Jane maintain that their lives continue to be strengthened by Christ's love.

## ZECHMANN FAMILY

Bill and his wife, Jane have been happily married for over 30 years. They currently reside in Norfolk, Nebraska.

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# Where do we turn when our anger is out of control?

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A hot temper can fracture our relationships, compound our problems and – worst of all – it displeases God. But we have the tools to control our anger in God's word. Inside, you'll learn more about...

- **The damage anger can do to our lives.**
- **The difference between righteous anger and unchecked rage.**
- **How the fruit of the Spirit grows in mature Christians to help us tame our temper.**



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with Bill Zechmann

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