

# THE VICE OF ANGER

*The Christian Teachings of Virtue (Series 4, Part 3, Teaching #27)*

**Instructions:** Watch video, read aloud, underline what stands out to you most, discuss

**Leader Guide...**  
See the back page for detailed facilitator instructions.

Out of pride and envy arises the bitterness of anger. Pride inflates your sense of self; envy twists your view of others. And when either is wounded—when your ego is bruised or someone else receives what you think you deserve—anger ignites.

*The vice of anger is a disposition of unjust wrath toward God, neighbor, or the good.*

Not all anger is sinful. Scripture shows us that righteous anger has a place. When Jesus overturned the tables in the temple, it was not from pride or resentment, but from holy zeal—a burning desire to defend the sacred and stop what was sinful (see Matthew 21:12–13). Righteous anger flows from love for what is good, not hatred for who is guilty. It seeks justice, not vengeance. It acts to restore, not to destroy.

But unjust anger—this is the anger that defiles the soul.

Unjust anger is personal. It’s wrath directed not at sin itself, but at the one who caused your inconvenience, hurt your pride, or exposed your weakness. It lashes out in a moment or simmers quietly for years. It wears many masks: impatience, sarcasm, contempt, passive aggression, rage, resentment, and revenge. And whether brief or boiling, loud or silent, its effect is the same: it hardens your heart.

Anger, when unchecked, makes you short-tempered, short-sighted, ill-willed, and unforgiving. It clouds the intellect, weakens the will, and turns your passions into weapons. It leads you to curse what you were called to bless, and to hate those you were called to love. Worst of all, it often leads to resentment not just of people—but of God. For if He allowed this pain, this wound, this offense... then surely He, too, deserves your wrath.

But that is a lie. A soul enslaved to anger cannot live in the freedom of grace.

So how do you fight it?

Counter anger with the virtues of meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, and prayerfulness.

Meekness is not weakness—it is strength under control. It allows you to feel the fire of anger without letting it burn the bridges of charity. It holds your power in check. It pauses the response, softens the tone, and tempers the heart. Forbearance endures what is hard to bear without retaliation and gives others the space to grow—just as God gives space for you. “If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow” (Chinese Proverb).

And forgiveness? It is your liberation. “To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you” (Lewis B. Smedes). Anger may feel like control—but it’s actually a chain. And forgiveness is the key. Let it go. Hand it to God. Release your grip on justice and trust Him to carry what you were never meant to hold.

*(continues on next page...)*

## 7 Chief Vices

Pride

Envy

Anger

Sloth

Greed

Gluttony

Lust



**Watch Video:** Scan the QR code to access the video for this teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more.  
Or, visit [horseandchariot.com/the-vice-of-anger](http://horseandchariot.com/the-vice-of-anger)

Above all—pray. Especially for those who hurt you. Even when you don't feel like it. Especially then. For prayer is the place where vengeance melts into mercy. It doesn't always change the other person—but it always changes you. The waves of anger are broken on the rocks of prayer. And from that brokenness, peace flows.

We all feel anger. You will feel it again. But you don't have to bow to it. You are not its slave. It is said, "The best guarantee against anger is to let it happen before you act" (St. John Bosco). So when it rises—pause, breathe, pray, and choose the higher way.

For anger may roar like a lion—but virtue stands firm like a rock. Meek, steady, and immovable. That is your call. That is your strength.

Let Christ rule where wrath once reigned. For the one who walks in peace reflects the One who calmed the storm.

Out of pride and envy arises the bitterness of anger. When self is wounded or desire is denied, anger ignites. While righteous anger seeks justice rooted in love, unjust anger flows from ego, resentment, and wounded pride. It clouds judgment, hardens the heart, and distances the soul from grace. But through meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, and prayer, anger can be mastered rather than obeyed.

**1. Unjust anger is personal.** It reacts to wounded pride rather than defended truth. → When you become angry, is it love for the good—or protection of your ego?

**2. Anger hardens the heart.** Whether explosive or silent, it corrodes peace. → Are you carrying resentment that has begun to shape your spirit?

**3. Anger clouds reason.** It distorts your perception and weakens discernment. → How often do you act before praying or reflecting?

**4. Meekness restrains power.** Strength under control prevents destruction. → Can you feel anger without letting it rule your response?

**5. Forgiveness frees the soul.** Holding anger chains you more than the offender. → Who do you need to forgive so your heart can be free?

**6. Prayer dissolves wrath.** It transforms vengeance into mercy. → Have you prayed sincerely for the person who hurt you?

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A MEEK AND PEACEFUL SOUL

Those who resist unjust anger exhibit these traits:

**1. Meekness.** They possess strength under control.

**2. Forbearance.** They endure injury without retaliation.

**3. Forgiveness.** They release offenses and trust God with justice.

**4. Patience.** They pause before reacting.

**5. Charity.** They respond with love rather than contempt.

**6. Peace.** Their spirit remains steady even under provocation.

### Signs of Anger Taking Root...

- You react quickly with sharp words or sarcasm.
- You replay offenses in your mind long after they occur.
- You struggle to let go of resentment.
- You justify harshness as “being honest.”
- You grow bitter toward someone who hurt you.
- You feel inward irritation even in small inconveniences.
- You subtly blame God for allowing your suffering.

**Think:** Anger may rise like fire, but I do not have to let it consume me. When I cling to resentment, I imprison myself. When I forgive, I am set free. Strength is not found in retaliation, but in restraint. Peace is not weakness—it is Christ reigning where wrath once ruled.

**Pray:** Lord, calm the storms within me. When anger rises, grant me the grace to pause, reflect, and respond with love. Teach me meekness in moments of heat, patience in moments of frustration, and forgiveness when I am wounded. Guard my heart from bitterness. Let Your peace rule where wrath once reigned. May I reflect Your mercy in every response. Amen.

SELF-EVALUATION & ACTION STEP																					
<p><b>Of the areas you underlined throughout this teaching, which stood out to you most and why?</b> (Reflect, write down, discuss)</p>																					
<p><b>Rate yourself from 1-10</b> 1 = Anger frequently governs my reactions 10 = I consistently respond with meekness and peace</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">1</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">2</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">3</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">4</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px; text-align: center;"><del>5</del></td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">6</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">7</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">8</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">9</td> <td style="padding: 2px 10px;">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;">←</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>(avoid 5)</i></td> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">→</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	<del>5</del>	6	7	8	9	10	←				<i>(avoid 5)</i>	→				
1	2	3	4	<del>5</del>	6	7	8	9	10												
←				<i>(avoid 5)</i>	→																
<p><b>Why did you give yourself this rating?</b></p>																					
<p><b>What situation or person most easily provokes your anger—and why?</b></p>																					
<p><b>Are you harboring resentment that needs to be confessed and released?</b></p>																					
<p><b>What practical step can you take this week to practice meekness (pause before speaking, pray before responding, seek reconciliation)?</b></p>																					
<p><b>Daily Affirmation:</b> Today, I will master anger. By God’s grace, I will respond with meekness, forgive quickly, and let Christ’s peace rule my heart instead of wrath.</p>																					

# FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

## Courageous Facilitator,

Your willingness to step forward and lead is a gift of grace to your community and a brave act of faith. God bless you for answering the call to inspire others to grow in virtue and pursue the character of Christ.

The Holy Spirit thrives in fellowship and community, working powerfully through the connections and shared experiences of small groups. That's why these lesson plans are designed to cultivate genuine relationships, inspire meaningful conversations, and foster a spirit of transformation through shared wisdom and grace.

Facilitating these lessons is both simple and impactful. While many forms of teaching rely on one-way communication, where one person speaks and others listen, true transformation happens through two-way communication. In this format, ideas aren't merely taught—they're explored together. You'll guide, but everyone will share and learn from one another, creating a rich environment where the Holy Spirit can move and grow each mind, heart, and soul.

These lesson plans succeed because they:

- **Encourage connection** in a collaborative small group setting that fosters action and accountability
- **Empower every voice** with opportunities for each participant to share and contribute
- **Inspire growth** through educational, inspirational, and transformational teachings

Your role as a facilitator is to:

- **Follow the instructions and trust the process**—the wheel is already built, you're here to guide it.
- **Honor the schedule** by being punctual and respecting the time of your group.
- **Lead with love** and rely on God's grace to inspire, guide, and uplift everyone in the group.

Your courage to create a space for growth and fellowship will not only bless others but will deepen your own journey of faith and virtue. Together, with God's help, lives will be transformed.

*To God be the glory!*

## FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

### 1. Getting Started (5-10 mins)

- Give everyone a few minutes to join before getting started. Be friendly and greet people as they arrive. Get them talking! Come prepared with some good ice-breaker questions you can ask during this time.
- 3-5 minutes in, do quick introductions for anyone new to the group. What brought them to the group? Spend a moment getting to know them.
- Open with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).

### 2. Watch & Read the Teaching (5-10 mins)

- Watch the video of the teaching as a group.
- Have a volunteer read all of page 1. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

### 3. How it Applies (5-10 mins)

- Have a volunteer read all of page 2. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

### 4. Reflection & Discussion (20-30 mins)

- Have everyone quietly take 5 minutes to complete the "Self-Evaluation & Action Step" on page 3.
- Then, going around the group, have each person take a minute to share what stood out to them most about the teaching and why.
- If time allows, continue the discussion using the remaining self-evaluation questions as a guide.

### 5. Wrap Up (5 mins)

- Remind everyone to do the daily affirmation until you meet again next time.
- Ask for any prayer requests from the group.
- Close with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).