

## Wrath

The Seven Deadly Sins are also known as Cardinal Sins.

### Why bother?

- Sin creates an inclination to sin—engenders vice by repetition of same acts
- Clouds conscience (29 references in NT)
- Oracle at Delphi, "Know thyself."
- **When we name a sin found in ourselves, we are confronted in the dark alley of our soul with saboteurs who seek to prevent our union with God**
- Human capacity for self-delusion is nearly infinite. We ignore or worse rationalize our retched behavior

### Anger Feeds Upon Itself

Anger is a virus  
That needs not even air  
To propagate contagion  
Whenever it is shared.

Anger can't be placed in quarantine  
To contain its vicious spread  
For anger feeds upon itself  
And burns a flaming red.

Anger is all consuming  
Anger does not desist  
From destroying sensibilities  
In that haze of its red mist.

David Keig

The root of anger is the perception that something has been taken. Something is owed you. Anger is the result of not getting something you want, what you think you deserve. It is easy to believe that the only remedy for our anger is payback. People ought to pay what they owe. To cancel the debt is to let the guilty party off the hook. They need to pay. The irony is that, in most cases, the perceived debt can never be paid.

Anger has an effect on all other areas of one's life, anger refuses to remain isolated. Anger is a heart disease. If anger is lodged in your heart, then before long, you come to believe that the world owes you. Even if one's feelings of anger are justified, those feelings can give other people power over you.

Angry people nurse and rehearse the hurt. "Let me tell you what happened to me!" Justifying behavior by reciting your story gives ongoing power to the people that hurt you."

The question is: **"How long are you going to allow other people that have hurt you to control your life?"**

- Perceived wrong = somebody owes me
  - Makes me the victim
  - Victims are no longer in control of outcomes
  - Victims always have excuses
  - **As long as you hang on to excuse, solution will never come!**

## Ephesians 4:25-32

Payback and revenge are not the solution to anger. James 5:16 - "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

The Greek term here, "put away from you," means to remove or to separate yourself from. Throw it off like you would if you walked into a spider web.

Forgiveness is the way to throw anger off of you. Forgiveness feels like a decision to reward my enemy. In the shadow of the cross, forgiveness is a gift from an undeserving soul to another. Forgiveness ensures your freedom from a prison of bitterness. When you extend forgiveness, there's a sense that you're set free from your enemy's sin as well!

As Christians we forgive not because the other person deserves it; we forgive because we have been forgiven. It is unlikely that you will ever feel like forgiving. So, you can't wait to feel like it.

### Slaying your anger with Forgiveness

- Identify who you need to forgive
  - You may be mad at God?
  - Remember that forgiving and forgetting are not the same
- Identify what they owe you
  - Name the grievance
  - General forgiveness does not heal specific hurts.
  - You cannot cancel a debt that you haven't clearly identified.
- Cancel the debt
  - Act of your will
  - Burn the list
  - *Heavenly Father, today I choose to forgive \_\_\_\_\_. I have held on to this debt long enough. I cancel the debt. \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't owe me anymore. Just as you forgave me, I forgive.*
  - You don't have to tell the person that you have forgiven them, unless they have apologized.
- Dismiss the case
  - Memories & feelings will return
  - Wrong Responses (take ahold of it & crank it back up OR try not to think about it)
  - Better Response (face it, remember it, say, "He/she doesn't owe me. I cancelled the debt." Pray and thank God for His grace and strength.
  - Emotions will lie. Live by your decision. You decided to forgive.
  - Feelings are the last thing to come around.

Nothing can make up for the past. There's an emotional element involved in hurt that cannot be compensated for through apologies, promises, or financial restitution. To some degree, there will always be an outstanding debt. To pursue payback is futile. It won't happen. It can't happen. To insist on it is to set your self up for unnecessary heartbreak.

**Hebrews 12:14-15** - "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled."

Forgive and allow the hurt to heal!

## **Confession**

I will walk in the Spirit and will not fulfill the lusts of my flesh. I was crucified with Christ. I was buried with him in baptism. I was raised to new life. Now I walk in the newness of life. I am no longer a slave to sin. I am free from sin. I am alive to God. I am more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus. In Christ I have victory and freedom.