

# Thoughts in Considering Anger - Expanded

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Rough Draft - sorry for the typos and cadence

## Thoughts in Considering Anger - Expanded

Several

years ago, I sat with a Christian friend whose family was reeling from the sudden loss of a young relative. This young man held promise and was pursuing the Lord, and his death seemed shocking and senseless, unfair. My friend asked me, through teared eyes, "I love the Lord and so did my nephew. I know James writes 'Count it all joy' and I know it is true. But how can this be true? I just can't see how in this case."

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds - James 1.2

In this death, there was no apparent reason or fault of his own, no violence against him. It was more difficult because the only reason he could see would fall to God. And this led to the next hurdle - how to deal with Anger towards God.

Anger

is a difficult and potentially confusing topic for followers of Christ. It's especially problematic because, handled incorrectly, we can be unknowingly committing sin. Anger is largely unavoidable, and in many cases it is right.

Understanding the mechanics behind Anger can help us be free of the sins that drive it, which clears our vision to see issues and allows a proper perspective to manage the responsibilities given to us by God. In our confusion, we can also choose not to embrace right Anger in a misdirected sense of peace and thus abandon our responsibility, allowing evil to go on.

Finally, when faced with a loss that lacks any other person responsible but God, we are open to sinning against Him, or falling into a long spinning decline of grief as we struggle to reconcile a loving God with the outcome He has allowed upon us. Assigning a loss like this to fate or an indifferent God clashes with His declarations of Sovereign care over us.

This has been written to try to resolve these problems of Loss, Grief, and Anger as His Word explains it. The hope is that clarity will help us see this hidden sin, grow our faith, bring us comfort, and expand our love for the God Who loves us.

### **Why this matters**

God is unchanging. What He revealed of Himself to Moses also is unchanged. With the appearance of Jesus, the many important terms of our dealings with God have changed under the New Covenant, but God and how He operates remains unchanged.

His expectations of us to obey His Commandments remain. We can make a mistake in believing He no longer cares if we obey, since we enjoy forgiveness through Jesus. But as Paul wrote:

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin

that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? - Rom 6.1-3

It still matters whether we understand God's expectations and follow them, avoiding sin:

Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul. - Josh 22.5

And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. - 1 Pet 1.19

Sin offends God, and hurts us. Our Sanctification is the process of quitting our sin, committed in error or not. The exercise of wrong Anger is hurtful because not only does it work against His design, it can also further include wrongly judging others. Anger can be a breeding ground for unforgiveness, of which Jesus gives serious warning:

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. // For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. - Matt 6.12, 14-15

Life is difficult, and most of us will come to face issues that seem unbearable. Understanding how God sees these issues, and how He would have us learn to respond, is for His Glory and

our benefit. Misused or misplaced Anger, and the Judgment that precedes it are opportunities to sin. Consider, if forgiveness is associated with Judgment, and Judgment with Anger, how grievous is it if we Judge even God?

It is said that 'still waters run deep'. Judgement and unforgiveness can run below the surface of Anger. Believing that our wrong Anger is just a Human natural response is contrary to God's facts. So too is believing that all Anger is unjust. Understanding the terms and how they interact is important.

The famous argument defended by French philosopher Rene Decartes, "I think therefore I am", seeks to demonstrate that the most foundational proof of one's existence is Thought. If one has Thoughts, he must exist. Without existence, Thoughts are not possible. Thoughts are the first essence of existence.

We, who God made in His image, are isolated from one another in our Thoughts. God graces every new Human with core Thoughts and understanding - a common consciousness of morality and a testimony of Himself in Nature (Rom 1.18-20). From there we are responsible to strive to form and know and shape our own Thoughts. We cannot simply inherit another's Thoughts, nor God's. But, He alone fully knows ours. We are alone and responsible for our Thoughts, and the Lord tells us repeatedly to recognize, pursue, test, and embrace His Thoughts in order to obey and be free of wrong Thoughts and their consequences:

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." - John 8.31-32

Because

we cannot directly share Thoughts, words are extremely important. Words seek to summarize and convey Thoughts and notions. Thoughts are the primary expression of our being, and words are a secondary description of Thoughts. A dozen Thoughts can stand behind a single word, with each word also having words summarizing them. Because words are summaries of Thoughts, they must be carefully understood and considered if we are to clearly associate them with the underlying Thoughts. We see the importance God's living Word, in that Jesus Himself is the Word embodied and revealed:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. - John 1.1-2

This

is why God's Word, and our understanding of those Words, is so significant. God also tells us His Thoughts are beyond us:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." - Isa 55.8-9.

God's

Thoughts are so far beyond ours, yet He graciously stooped down to convey His Thoughts

for us through Words that we strive to understand. If words are can only summarize greater Thoughts,

how shrouded is our understanding of the Mind of God?

“For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.” - 1 Cor 13.9-12

And

any understanding we might have is possible, again, only with His help:

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. - John 14.26

Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God. - John 8.47

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.  
- Heb 4.12

God

as a Person is wholly complete and perfect.

There is no disconnect between Who He is in His Thoughts and any action or outcome that proceeds from His Sovereign actions. Whoever God is and whatever He does, it is purely expressed in agreement with His Thoughts. There is absolutely no deviation.

We,

made in His image, were created to exist in exactly that same way, without deviation. The Fall of Adam became possible once he disregarded God’s warning and he turned to a knowledge that threatened to give him opportunity to embrace Thoughts God had commanded against. Embracing these Thoughts and

choosing to act on them, Adam became dangerously exposed to deviation. With this Fall, all individuals descending from him would also have the disadvantage of a freedom to deviate. The result today is a world of persons of mixed Thoughts, who have part God-given sensibilities, yet polluted with Thoughts/beliefs/actions that deviate from God. This state of existence begins with the first choice to deviate (to sin), and once entered, each person is condemned.

This

mixed state of wrong and right Thought, of sin and not, brings our lives misery and threatens our final standing before God.

Knowing the right thing to do is challenged by a competing throng of embedded, wrong Thought. God tells us

this in a thousand different ways throughout His Word. His goal is to Save us from deviation, and He

demands it if we are to make the cut.

Jesus is the culmination of our rescue, and coming to belong to Him is among the most relevant commands to right Thought.

Jesus offers to bring us into a forgiven state, that we would have the

Holy Spirit to quicken our ability to further understand and embrace God's Thoughts,

and make way for Father to accept us.

All of this is an incredibly costly and gracious effort to see us led

back into conformity, into non-deviation in our Thought and action.

A

big problem with our mixed state of Thought is that while we are held

responsible to right Thought and action, our Thoughts, deviant to His, can

deceive us to believe our wrong Thoughts and actions are right. We are created fully equipped to have

opinions and beliefs. Yet, wrong Thoughts

and actions that we allow to masquerade as right give us a false assurance of

God's assessment of them. We cannot

simply trust our Thoughts but have to always check them for conformance to His Thoughts. We always have to ask if we are fulfilling His expectation of us to live in agreement with His intention, as created in His Image.

## **Words are given to instruct us**

Words

are important, and their meaning can be confusing. Consider Anger, and its close relative Judgment. How are they defined, and what might they show of the Thoughts of God? How do we understand and employ these words that represent Thoughts that direct action?

For

example, God's Word instructs us that most anything made by God in itself is not wrong (unclean), but the definition belongs to God alone. Further, He expects us to learn how to divide the truth, and use anything made by Him only to His Glory. We deviate if we divide it or use anything otherwise. Two general examples are:

"I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' But I said, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But the voice answered a second time from heaven, 'What God has made clean, do not call common.' This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven." - Acts 11.5-10

One person esteems one day as better than another,

while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. - Rom 14.5-8

The list of Thoughts and actions that can be used in deviance (or not) is endless - Food, money, clothing, sex, killing, love, worship, music, possessions, position, authority, military, taxes, etc. The topics of Anger, and its close relative Judgment, are also highly subject to misuse.

## **God has expectations**

Christ's forgiveness is complete, yet God still has demands upon us. We are to 'work out our salvation with fear and trembling'. This includes striving to know Him and be conformed to His Thoughts.

One example is of God calling Job to face Him and answer for his Thoughts, followed by a greater revelation of God's Thoughts.

Job was at a disadvantage in that the whole of God's Word had not yet been revealed, and he was in uncharted waters.

However, Job was born within about a hundred years of the Flood, and alive while Noah and his sons still lived.

Job was aware of many things said of God, and Job's Thoughts were informed by what was available to him at that point:

Have you listened in the council of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself? What

do you know that we do not know? What do you understand that is not clear to us? Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us, older than your father. - Job 15.8-10

“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me. “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding.” - Job 38.1-3

Jesus also summarizes His expectations in John 14.21:

“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” - John 14.21

God has expectations that are to govern us in all of the factors involved. However, there are defined lines of responsibility He assigns to us, and the rest He reserves for Himself. Wrath and Vengeance (Punishment) is one example He largely keeps for Himself:

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” - Rom 12.18-19

Yet, he assigns responsibility to everyone to strive - ***within the bounds of what we are responsible for, and in the way He prescribes*** - to: a) know and correct our Thoughts; b) Discern the world around us; c) Judge everything His terms of right from wrong; d) Do not wrongly Condemn, even ourselves; e) exercise Anger in a right way; f) dispense Punishment.

## **A Pathology of Anger**

Anger

is one of the more conspicuous actions we exercise, but it resides in a path that is tied within a series of other factors.

While Anger can seem to pop up almost unexpectedly, it cannot appear by itself without the involvement of a preceding series of factors, and unchecked it can progress to latter factors. While

this statement might seem untrue, the fact that Thought cannot be denied from a conscious Being, and that any action a Being commits is a result of Thought, shows there are dependencies. The dependencies are described to us in His Word, which can be arranged into a 'Pathology'.

The

progressive factors described in God's Word concerning Anger are:

**Thought** - The intellectual product of, and the essence of, Being

**Discernment** - The testing, comprehension and perception of the obscure

**Judgment** - To compare facts and seek just-ness

**Condemnation** - To pronounce wrong and assign blame

**Anger** - A violent passion of the mind with a propensity even towards vengeance

**Punishment** - To inflict suffering on an offender found un-just

Each

factor is foundational to the factor that follows it; none of the factors can exist without first employing those before it:

**Thought** rests upon the bedrock of the Being who expressed the **Thought**;

**Discernment** must be rightly informed and governed by **Thought**;

**Judgment** can only function upon a **Discernment** of the details perceived;

**Condemnation's** pronouncement relies upon a **Judgment** of facts towards just-ness;

**Anger** reacts to **Condemnation**, which was initiated by **Judgment**;

**Punishment** fulfills the demands of **Condemnation**.

For

example, Thought has no predecessor except existence, and Jesus' instruction of the Thoughts of the 'heart' demonstrates that the heart is the seed bed, nurturing our Thoughts that derive our actions:

The driver of the sin of unforgiveness leading to divorce -He

said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." - Matt 19.8

The driver of the actions of the person - And He said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person." - Mark 7.20-23

"Hear then the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with

joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.” - Matt 18-23

Each

factor relies on its predecessor. An attempt to skip over any of the factors threatens the intentions of Thought, tainting the process and its outcome. God calls this a perversion, or subversion, of Justice:

“You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous.” - Duet 16.19

### **The definitions of words are important**

The

factors can be defined as:

**Thought** - The intellectual product of, and the essence of, Being

**Discernment** - The testing, comprehension and perception of the obscure

**Judgment** - To compare facts and seek just-ness

**Condemnation** - To pronounce wrong and assign blame

**Anger** - A violent passion of the mind with a propensity even towards vengeance

**Punishment** - To inflict suffering on an offender found un-just

Our attention here will touch on Discernment, and focus on Judgment, Condemnation, and Anger.

### **Discernment leads to Right Judgment**

Discernment is easily confused with Judgment. Again, the two are closely related, but Discernment precedes Judgment. If Judgment occurs, it began first with Discernment. Confusion of the two and our responsibilities in it will badly affect our perception and subsequent actions.

Discernment requires us to carefully “divide” the facts of the situation and consider what God has to say about them in His Word. Since the Word is considered complete in addressing our need to understand how to see things, the Word is indispensable. So too is a careful investigation of the facts.

Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. - Eph 5.8b-10

### **Judgment, informed by Discernment, directs Condemnation**

Judgment is an important initiator to Anger.

Judgment indirectly precedes Anger, and the two usually closely accompany each other. Of the two, Judgment is an easier action to learn to see in ourselves before Anger erupts. Judgment misused or outside of our responsibility breeds sin.

***A main reason Judgment is important in understanding Anger is that neither of the proceeding factors - Thought and Discernment - call for, or from themselves result in, Anger. This does not negate the importance of right Thought and Discernment. Both are necessary to establish right Judgment. However, Anger can only begin if Judgment has occurred - even if flawed. If so, then wrong Judgment gives opportunity to wrong Anger. Therefore, if Judgment is the earliest indication of where we can begin the fight against sinful Anger, as the phrase goes "Better to crush the egg than to have to kill the snake".***

## **Judgment in Salvation**

God's

Judgment is an immense concern to anyone who has been faced with the terrible Holiness of his Creator, and it's perhaps the main reason most Christians have historically concluded to surrender to Jesus.

(Surrender to the compelling love of God alone, without escape also from His Wrath, is another topic.) It is also

the foundation beneath Salvation, the reason for it and how Salvation is carried out through Jesus. The Old

Testament, particularly the Books of Moses, is awash with God's punitive actions against those who oppose Him.

The New Testament, Gospels and the rest, also speak much on the topic, but include a different facet.

## Judgment in the Bible

Like

many subjects we study in the Bible, we can wonder about seeming contradictions. Translations from the original language can contribute to the problem, as translations inherently tend to summarize an original word's richer meaning into the lesser translated word - the full meaning can be lost in the translation. So, we must remember to be diligent.

### Judgment defined:

**Judgment:** The process of forming an opinion or evaluation by discerning and comparing; an opinion or estimate so formed. - <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/judgment>

**JUDG'MENT**, n. The act of judging; the act or process of the mind in comparing its ideas, to find their agreement or disagreement, and to ascertain truth; or the process of examining facts and arguments, to ascertain propriety and justice; or the process of examining the relations between one proposition and another. - <https://av1611.com/kjbp/kjv-dictionary/judgment.html>

### Biblical examples of Judgment:

#### Judgments Past

- **The introduction of sin:** Banishment from Eden and over Creation and mankind (Overall Judgment on sin) - Gen 3:14-24
- **A rampant Evil:** On the Earth's Human and Demonic inhabitants (The Flood) - Gen 7:17-24
- **Striving for equality with God:** On evil Human collaboration (Tower of Babel) - Gen 11:5-9
- **A higher regard for false gods:** On

Egypt, their gods, and Pharaoh (Release of the Hebrews) - Exod 7-12

- **Rejection of God's and His**

**imposed Authority:** On persons challenging God's man, Moses (The rebellion of Korah) -

Num 16:1-35

- **And again** on the next day (Grumbling community, 14,700 killed by instant plague) - Num 16:41-50

- **And again** with Moses' sister and brother (Miriam made leprous) - Num 12:1-12

- **The sin of the individual**

**affects the community:** One person's sins can't hide in the crowd (Achan, his family and

possessions killed for taking spoils of war) - Josh 7

## Judgments

### Future

- **On the whole World:** The Tribulation (Seven Seals) - Rev 6-16

- **On individuals belonging to**

**Christ:** The

Judgment Seat of Christ (Resurrected and Raptured Christians) 2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor

3:12; Heb 6:10; Rev 3:11

- **On the Nations:** Jesus begins the Millennial Reign separating His Own and the Rest (Sheep and Goats) - Matt 25:31-46

- **The Judgment of the Angels:** A future task given to Christ's followers (Judgment of fallen Angels) - 1 Cor 6:2-3; Jude 1:6

- **The Final Judgment:** All unbelievers from the whole of Humanity judged and banished to Hell (The Great White Throne) - Rev 20:11-15

## Judgments

## Present

- **Of Self:** Evaluation of ourselves  
(Motives of heart, resultant actions towards God and others) - Matt 15:17-20;  
James 3:14-16, 19-22; James 1:14-15
- **From God:** His correction of His children in Christ (He disciplines those He loves) - Heb 12:5-11; 1 Cor 11:32; Rev 3:19; Prov 13:24 and Eph 6:4; Mark 3:1-5; John 2:13-16; Matt 23:1-4, 29-33
- **Towards Others:** Judgment and discernment of our peers (How we weigh and act on the actions and heart of others around us) -

Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, "As I live, says the

Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. - Rom 14:10-12

### **Condemnation obeys Justice, precedes Anger, and establishes the terms of Punishment**

Condemning, or Condemnation, is a larger issue that follows Judgment. Condemnation cannot exist without Judgment first, and, Judgment potentially leads to Condemnation, if it is taken that far. The issue then is, does God command Judgment without proceeding to Condemnation, and if so, how does this matter?

Responsibility for Discernment, Judgment, Condemnation and Punishment are afforded by God to those who govern us. Judges in particular exercise this role. We'll

note that Anger is not usually highlighted in a Judge's job, and certainly not wrong Anger. Of course there are plenty of example of an angry Judge, but the danger is in Anger coloring the other factors. Traditional statues of Lady Liberty feature her with a blindfold and an honest scale. Why? Because the goal is a clear discernment in order to Judge impartially - even impartial to the Judge himself.

Judges

also have the task of Condemnation, the pronouncement of wrongdoing and the assignment of blame. For the rest of us, there seems to be a distinctive, fine line in the Condemnation we are allowed to exercise. We shall call things right or wrong, but no further. The dooming to punishment remains the role of God and the permitted authority.

### **Condemnation defined:**

The act of condemning; the judicial act of declaring one guilty, and dooming him to punishment. -

<http://www.kingjamesbibledictionary.com/Dictionary/condemnation>

Condemnation is declaring an evildoer to be guilty and can refer to the punishment inflicted on man because of that guilt. Without Jesus mankind stands condemned before God, not only because of the sin of Adam (Rom. 5:16-18) but also because of our own sin (Matt. 12:37). However, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death," (Rom. 8:1-2). Christians have passed out of condemnation because they are forgiven in Christ. - <https://carm.org/dictionary-condemnation>

**Then there is the topic of Anger**

## Anger

is the one out-showing factor that can most easily ignore the responsibilities and bounds of the other factors. It is

emotional, as opposed to intellectual (Thought, Discernment, Judgment, Condemnation), and physical (Punishment).

Condemnation is by nature a mix of intellectual and emotional, but the emotional factors can be bridled, leaving only intellect.

## Anger

can also pose a danger to subverting the other factors to satisfy itself. Emotions are closest to the Flesh, and can have

great influence over our decisions and actions.

As with all most things given by God, our emotions can be a considerable blessing, or they can be misused and cause sin.

Anger itself is not necessarily a sin, unless it is improperly employed and outside of what God has commanded of us.

A conscious choice towards Anger must be supported by the earlier steps in order to appear. It isn't possible to

engage Anger without first Judging and Condemning, not matter how quickly or insignificant the steps might seem.

Consider, how is it possible to have Anger without first Judging and Condemning?

## Some

of the things that make Anger so tricky are:

1)

Anger is a natural emotion God made in us

2)

There are many instances when Anger is not a sin, which can further confuse the issue

3)

Anger can suddenly appear with no other person apparently responsible for the things that angers us

4)  
We can easily assign our own reason and misuse Anger, apart from God's Reason.

Anger,  
even in the most instantaneous appearance (think hammer meets thumb), is a choice that follows the Pathology. A clearer example might be someone greatly violating us. Robbery at knifepoint for example, must proceed through the series. An angry response might begin with knowing robbery is wrong; discerning you are being threatened of loss of life and possessions; judging this is against what is right; rejecting the assault and its consequences; expressing severe disapproval. Whether the occurrence prompting Anger is progressive or lightning fast, all of us must progress through the series. Even when we acknowledge studies demonstrating shortened neural pathways that summarize our responses into almost instant reactions, they are still pathways trained through the exercise of the Pathology.

### **God's responsibilities, and those He gives to us**

#### ***God's and Our Responsibilities within the Pathology***

**Thought** - We are to reject our own Thought as inferior to His, and test those Thoughts we already believe.

**Discernment** - We are to strive to grasp all topics before us, divide them by His Truth, and pay attention to the "times".

**Judgment** - We are to compare our conclusions to His Word and seek what would bring justice.

**Condemnation** - We are to call good as good and evil as evil; every person responsible is warned of their deviance.

**Anger** - We are to be slow to anger, to express anger without sin, and put it away quickly once used properly.

**Punishment** - We are to bring punishment according to our roles, not more or less than prescribed.

### ***Terms by Which God and We Carry Out Our Responsibilities***

**Thought** - God is the source of all understanding, and He is infallible. We are responsible for what we believe or actually understand.

**Discernment** - God's command of every single aspect under Him is perfect Discernment. Our attempt to Discern is limited to what He has revealed to us, and no farther - IE: Interaction with the dead to Discern information is prohibited.

**Judgment** - God is Supreme Judge of all Creation. We are mini-judges at best, restricted to those things He has given us to oversee.

**Condemnation** - Condemnation rests completely under God, as He is Sovereign. Our role is limited to warning only things under our specific responsibility, but even then is limited outside of what God reserves for Himself.

**Anger** - God's Anger is Just and perfect, reaching across all of Creation where He will exercise Vengeance. Our Anger is to be a sinless exercise of emotion, expressed only towards what God would call wrong.

**Punishment** - God's Punishment is and will be righteous and fully measured to meet His Justice. Our exercise of Punishment is bound strictly to our roles and responsibilities, and with measure as prescribed by Him.

## **Considering a Few Biblical Examples**

### **The Archangel Michael**

The actions of Angels reported in the Word can bring insight. Angels, by their created nature, are perfectly in sync with God and His intent. If they weren't, they would, by definition, not remain in His employ. Without any provision offered to them for forgiveness or redemption, one sin would see them expelled from His Presence. They apparently have not been afforded a Savior, as we have. This is why the exchange reported in Jude 1.9 between Michael and Satan is significant:

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." - Jude 1.9

This exchange shows us a window of full and perfect execution of God's ways, offering insight to the actions and Thoughts played out lock-step with God's Truths.

**Thought** - Michael fully knows and understands everything God has given him as Truth. Michael made no attempt to know more or forget anything God had instructed.

**Discernment** - Michael is clear on what is at hand; he was sent to retrieve Moses' body, and Satan attempted to subvert that, against God's command. Michael weighed the situation and concluded Satan remained the enemy and intended to do wrong.

**Judgment** - Michael rightly judged that Satan had no business taking the body, and he judged Satan's actions as

contrary to the task God had given to him. Michael continued to strive for Justice, but left the Condemnation to the Lord.

**Condemnation** - Michael knew his responsibility wasn't here, and obeying God, he left all aspects to Him.

**Anger** - Michael may have exercised righteous anger within his bounds. Some translations record him as saying "The Lord rebuke you!"

**Punishment** - Michael is not recorded as exercising responsibility for Satan's punishment, so we assume he did not, in obedience.

Can we reasonably infer that Michael had the reason and means to go further and punish Satan? Yes, as Michael and the Host had already overcome Satan and the demons once before. But as a servant of God holding strict obedience, Michael pressed into the responsibilities charged to him, and refused to engage the rest.

## **Paul, on Judgment and Condemnation**

The Book of Romans in itself is thick study of Judgment and Condemnation. But for one example, consider Paul's words on Judgment in 1 Cor 4.1-5, and the statement of Rom 8.1:

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything

against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. - 1 Cor 4.1-5

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. - Rom 8.1

Here,

Paul, who clearly judged other people and topics within his responsibilities, (see 1 Cor 5.1-5, for example) demonstrates that the final Judgment of persons regarding sin or not, is left to the authority of God. The difference is that Paul weighs the actions and questions the heart of his Human peers, but in all cases, including his own, leaves the final Judgment of all hearts to God. Furthermore, of those found in Christ, all sin is paid and there is no longer a basis for blame.

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. - 1 Cor 5.1-5

Paul

is an Apostle, an authority of Christ's Church, charged with the oversight of His members. Within that authority he:

**Thought** - Paul understood, perhaps

more clearly than anyone, God's Thoughts through Christ's Spirit.

**Discernment** - Paul heard reliable reports and discerned the actions of the people involved.

**Judgment** - Paul judged these actions as deviant to God's Thought, and looked to bring a just correction.

**Condemnation** - Paul, given this authority under Christ, moved to enact measures that would bring correction, that they would ultimately avoid Condemnation when they faced God.

**Anger** - Paul shows distress in challenging them, within his responsibilities over them and their actions.

**Punishment** - Paul instructs the congregation to invoke punishment in the name of Jesus, as a Church. He and the Church carried out their responsibilities, while remaining within their respective authority.

### **Jesus expresses righteous Anger**

Three example of Jesus' anger are reported in Mark 3.1-5, John 2.13-16, and Matt 23.1-4, 29-33:

He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there whose hand was withered. They were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" And He said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?" But they kept silent. After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. - Mark 3.1-5

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business." - John 2.13-16

Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. // "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, 'If we had been living in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers. You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell? - Matt 23.1-4, 29-33

As Jesus is God and is Perfect, we can begin on the basis that His conduct as flawless. If the framework drawn here is sound, then we can presume this Pathology will withstand scrutiny and give fair insight to His actions. How does it hold up in His examples?

**Thought -**

**Discernment -**

**Judgment -**

**Condemnation -**

**Anger -**

**Punishment -**

**Is my Anger sin?**

Thought

- The intellectual product of, and the essence of, Being

Discernment

- The testing, comprehension and perception of the obscure

Judgment

- To compare facts and seek just-ness

Condemnation

- To pronounce wrong and assign blame

Anger

- A violent passion of the mind with a propensity even towards vengeance

Punishment

- To inflict suffering on an offender found un-just

The

answer depends upon the previous steps of the Pathology. If we, along the way leading to Anger, go

outside of our responsibilities given by God, we sin and taint the step. A later step built upon a flawed, earlier

step only exasperates the sin. Bad

foundations make for worse buildings.

However, if we progress rightly from Thought through Discernment,

Judgment, and Condemnation, we have opportunity to also exercise right Anger. Understanding our Anger and how we got there is key to walking well with the Lord.

If I am angry towards something affecting or threatening me - or whatever is different than what I want - I might reason that a person (their actions), or a situation, or a potential outcome is a threat to what I desire. I will naturally (in my Flesh) want to exercise control over these things to try to affect the outcome to my desire. The problem comes when I am looking to take action over (or beyond) someone or something that is not my responsibility under God. Our desire to exercise responsibilities beyond what God has allowed is rebellion and causes loss. It is sin, which promises pain.

One example might be we might face someone offensive wrongly who threatens our peace and security. If we consider the Pathology, it might look like this:

**Thought** - I will see this person as a creation of God, my peer, and understand how God instructs me to deal with him.

**Discernment** - I will strive to comprehend why I see this person as a threat, and try to understand the perspectives that drive him.

**Judgment** - I will weigh my fear (of loss, perhaps?) against what God says He has for me that is truly important. I'll also consider the value God places on this person and the long-term goals God wants him to embrace.

**Condemnation** - If I condemn anything, it will be only my and this person's actions that are contrary to God's. I will not

condemn anything that God reserves for Himself to Condemn.

**Anger** - If I express anger, it will not be for the purpose of forcing this person to change for my sake. It will be a clear emotional response, but will be only used as warning towards the sin that opposes God. I won't employ it to exact vengeance.

**Punishment** - Whatever crime, if any, is committed, I will look to whoever is responsible to press within the bounds the authority they possess allows - be it me, the Church, the government, or God.

Consider another example, the meteor out of nowhere that paralyzes me:

**Thought** - No matter what, these things remain: God is Sovereign, even over natural happenstance; there is nothing that escapes His oversight. My lot in life under Christ is fully in His care. Did He allow it, or did He direct it? It doesn't matter, as He ultimately has the final word in all things. Fortunately, we cannot escape this fact.

**Discernment** - There are realities I must now deal with - difficulties in living day to day; the loss of living in mobility; the need to rely on others; the threat of discouragement and resentment, even towards God.

**Judgment** - I have my outlook, and God has His wise reasons. I might have learned from His Word that any real learning usually begins in difficulty, and conclude that even in this, He is somehow loving me.

**Condemnation** - In the end, He is responsible for my state, but I will not blame Him. I will look to James 1.2-4.

**Anger** - Anger towards the situation is an expected struggle. It has brought loss and pain, yet I cannot see how I 'deserved' it. I will be honest in expressing my anger to God, and temper it with His promise that I can trust His actions and motives.

**Punishment** - While this is likely an opportunity that God will use to correct my Thoughts and strengthen my faith, as a person belonging to Christ, I conclude to believe Him that this is not punishment. Correction, even difficult correction, is for the child of God. Punishment is for those outside of Christ.

### **Concluding thoughts**

This argument began with a friend's struggle with James 1.2. The whole Thought is written as:

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. - James 1.2-5

However we choose to frame our understanding of God and our obedience to Him, it must begin from His Word to us. If we are to oppose the world and our 'former ignorance' and 'be conformed to the image of His Son', the first step is in embracing God's statement to Job: "Behold, the fear

of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.”

For

now, we are left in an environment that runs in the opposite direction from God and His wisdom. There is nowhere we

might turn and fully escape the effects of sin.

Fortunately, in Christ, there is nowhere we are outside of God’s care. Until we are relieved of the

burden of life here, God expects us to know His responsibilities and ours, and carry them out as Jesus would. If we can

peer through the dim glass and clearly embrace His promises, we have the assistance of God Almighty to aid us in our labors. We have His promise, and the testimony of

five millennia of believers of God, that we too can find comfort in Him

alone. Through the struggle to understand

Him, we can grow in conformity and enjoy what He offers.

### **Thoughts in Considering Anger**

**Consider (1):** Anger itself is not sin, but its exercise

either in or out of God’s sanctions. Are

not food and sex similar? They

themselves are not sin, but whether exercised according to God’s sanctions.

**Consider (2):** Judgment is the foundation of anger. At its core, is anger a response to a Judgment

of that which opposes our expectations?

Is anger a force we use against what opposes us, that what opposes us

would come to meet our expectations? Doesn’t

Judgment precede our anger?

**Example:** My anger rages against [him/her/that] which

will affect the outcome [loss/gain/circumstances] I want. I have judged this, and

hate what brings this

outcome.

**The Problem:** God governs all circumstances and interactions, so He is exercising His Judgment.

He also dictates how we should view and respond. Anger is rightly expressed toward that which opposes God, to as far as we are responsible to judge. However, anger expressed outside of our responsibility, or outside of God's expectations, is sin.

**The Solution:** Understand the bounds of your responsibility. Surrender all opposition to God, and strive to understand, repent, and obey. Refuse any expectations you find that oppose Him, and allow Him to overrun your heart.

### **Jude 1.9 -**

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."

### **Mark 3.1-5**

- He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there whose hand was withered. They were watching Him *to see* if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" And He said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?" But they kept silent. After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

### **John 2.13-16**

- The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated *at their tables*. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove *them* all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money

changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business."

**Matt 23.1-4, 29-33**

- Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say *things* and do not do *them*. They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with *so much as* a finger. // "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, 'If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets.' So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers. You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?