

# **ANGRY WITH GOD**

**By  
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The young woman that sat across from me was very pregnant and extremely angry. Her features, which were probably very pretty, were so distorted with bitterness it was impossible to see any beauty. I have known people who have allowed a consuming anger to destroy their lives but I still don't understand the desire to hold on to such an ugly emotion, especially when it is directed towards God.

I met Amanda last week while my husband, Glenn and I were ministering at a Christian drug and alcohol rehab for women and their children. It is a tremendous program that provides the opportunity for these women to surrender their lives to Jesus and let Him conquer their addictions. Needless to say, all these women come into the program with lots of baggage including a history of physical abuse or incest. Amanda is one of these. She was sexually abused by her father and now she cannot forgive. I'm not talking about forgiving her earthly father; I'm talking about forgiving her heavenly Father.

She began her life story by telling Glenn and I how she came to be in the program. Although she is only 25, Amanda has been in jail often for drug related crimes. Two months ago as she stood before another judge he shocked her by offering an alternative to jail. He suggested she consider entering a year long Christian program to get help for her addiction. He then offered to pay her entrance fee out of his pocket. Amanda chose to enter the program and acknowledges that God did a miracle for her.

At this point the conversation took a turn. Amanda confessed to being in and out of Christianity for many years and said the reason for this was that she had not been able to forgive God for the abuse she suffered. Glenn responded by questioning her as to why she would lay the blame on God for what her father did to her. She explained that she was angry with God because it was His job to make sure nothing bad ever happened to her and He had failed her in this. Of course we tried to show her the error of thinking this way using Scripture and trying to help her understand the nature of man's freewill, but she was determined to make God as evil as her father.

What became clear was that Amanda felt that God did not take good care of her and that she believed that she was a much better parent than He. She proclaimed her love to be so great for her children that she would give her life for them; she would never let anything bad happen to them. In other words she condemned God by claiming herself more kind and compassionate than He was. After questioning her about her “children” I learned that in addition to her unborn child, Amanda had a six year old daughter who had been taken from her. She wouldn’t tell me why but I did get her to admit that her daughter had to be taken away because Amanda was not a good mom. Yet again Amanda declared she would lay her life down even now for her daughter and her unborn child. Obviously she has not yet understood that she would never die for her children because she has not been willing to live for them.

As the conversation came to a close I asked Amanda to pray that God would show her the cross; the reality of our wickedness, Jesus’ incredible sacrifice and the gift of forgiveness offered to rebels such as us. I suggested that the real reason that she is experiencing anger towards God is because she has not truly seen Him or known Him; she does not understand who He is. She replied that she knew all about the cross, God and Jesus and there was nothing more to learn about Him. Now it was up to God to bless her so that she might one day forgive Him. Until that time she would continue to be angry with Him.

To believe that God has done anything for which He needs our forgiveness is a polluted, twisted idea. Only created, sinful beings are guilty of crimes that need to be forgiven. The Lamb of God is pure and holy. Jesus has never committed an evil act. In this Amanda showed her complete ignorance of the character of God, the sacrifice of Jesus and her own wickedness. However, the struggle with anger towards God is a very real issue for many of us.

To feel anger towards God is something we all have experienced at times even if we dare not tell anyone about it. Sometimes we don’t recognize it for what it is or we try to dress it up in religious garb to make ourselves appear righteous. Anger is a strong emotion and we will not begin to conquer it until it is confessed. It is not sin to feel an emotion, at times we cannot help feeling anger, but it is what we do with the emotion that matters. If we are angry at God we must drag that anger up the hill to Calvary and lay it down in the shadow of the cross to see whether we really have any right to our anger. Then as we walk by faith back down Calvary’s hill we must determinedly surrender our emotion and cry out for a heart that “would see Jesus.”

From some of Job's statements it appears that he had his struggle with anger at God. He accused and questioned God. He wanted some answers for what he perceived as injustice on the part of God. But notice at the end of the book of Job God does not address Job's questions and Job no longer requires any answers. In fact all his questions were forgotten. Why? Because instead of responding to his inquires God gave him a revelation – He answered Job with Himself. It is here we find Job acknowledging the foolishness of his anger when he confesses; "My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5&6)

When Job had an encounter with God two things changed; Job's perception of God and Job's perception of Job. How much better it would have been if early on Job had said; "I do not understand what is happening, but I will yield my emotions to the Character of God. By His Word I know He is loving and He is merciful. I choose to surrender my emotions and conception of God (surrender to who) because I only know Him but a little." Would this have immediately caused Job's anger to die? – probably not (at least it doesn't for me). Yet statements of truth are expressions of faith that will subdue the emotion until a fresh encounter with Jesus puts to rest our questions. Consider David's Psalms of lament in which he brings out a complaint, yet soon afterwards makes statements like this; "But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth. (Ps 86:15)

The abuse suffered by Amanda is not the obstacle to her finding freedom from her anger; it is her unwillingness to surrender her emotions to God. Until she is willing to "despise herself and repent" she will remain blind to her true condition and her need of mercy. She has heard of Jesus, but she has not seen Him. At this point Amanda will not even consider the possibility that God is other than what she believes Him to be. The freedom for which she longs will elude her unless, in brokenness, her heart begins to cry out; "I have only heard of You, but now let my eyes see you."

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