



"I feel guilty getting angry with God."

I know that's actually a statement, not a question. But there - as is often the case - is an unasked question behind the statement. The question goes something like this: "Is God angry with me for being angry with Him? Is He going to 'zap' me - or worse?"

The 'question' came from a relative of ours who had experienced several tragic losses in just the past year. It's likely a question you can relate to if you've been through situations where you just don't understand what God is doing - or why He allowed what He did.

For starters, let's clear up one common misconception: It's NOT a sin to get angry. Listen to this about Jesus:

"He looked around at them in anger, and deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts..." Mark 3:5

Anger is a natural emotion when things don't go the way they should or the way we expect.

But there is this caution about anger in Ephesians 4:26

"In your anger, do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry."

God needed to give us that caution, because, unfortunately, our anger very often does lead us to sin - doing and saying things contrary to what God wants. Things that actually make the situation worse - like hanging onto our anger.

The Psalms are expressions of emotions. And anger is one of the emotions expressed in the Psalms. Anger that is directed at God. Listen to this example from King David at the beginning of Psalm 13:

*How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?*

David is venting his anger to God. He's going through one of those tough situations where it seems like God has forgotten him; seems like God has even abandoned him.

Think about it. If you're going to vent your anger, what better place to vent it than to God. He can take it. He's God after all! And, as God, He understands that things happen - and that He allows things to happen - that we don't understand. He sees things we don't see. He knows things we don't know. He has long-term plans that we don't see with our short-term view.

Also, what better place to direct your anger, because God is the One who can actually do something about it! He can get you through the situation. He can change your perspective and help you to see that, well, you just don't see everything God does. He does that for David as we hear at the end of the psalm:

*But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing the LORD's praise,
for He has been good to me.*

So, the bottom-line answer is: "It's okay to take your anger to God - even your anger at Him. It's actually biblical! And after you've vented, let Him remind you that you can trust Him to see what you don't see. You can trust Him to have a plan to get you through.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net