

Zip It! Msg 4 – #@\$%!@#
 Sermon preached by Dr. Rick Mandl
 Eagle Rock Baptist Church
 March 2-3, 2019

What makes you angry, and what do you do about it?

That's one of the things we're looking at this morning as we continue in our series called "Zip It" Looking at the way we use our mouth and the things that result from that.

A pastor stopped at a garage sale one day because he was looking for a lawn mower

And this particular garage sale had a lawn mower for sale, and it was running already and it appeared to be in good shape.

So the pastor bought it.

The next day he decides to try it out.

So he's out in his front yard trying to start it.

And he's pulling on the cord, and he's pulling on the cord, but it won't start.

And just then he **notices a kid riding by on his bicycle**, and he **recognizes him as being the same kid** who was at the house the day before where he bought the lawn mower.

And the pastor asks him, **"Aren't you from the house where I bought this?"**

And the kid says **"Yeah."**

And the pastor says, **"Well do you know how to start this thing?"**

And the kid says, **"Yeah, you have to cuss it!"**

And the pastor says **"What?"**

And the kid says, **"If you want to start the lawnmower, you have to cuss it!"**

The pastor says, **"Listen son, I'm a pastor, and if I ever did know how to swear . . . I'm not saying that I did, but if I ever did know how to swear, I've long since forgotten that after all these years."**

And this kid with a wisdom beyond his years said, **"Don't worry pastor. Just keep pulling on that cord and it will come right back to you."**

What do you do when you're angry?

What's your default response?

At the top of your notes you'll see these words from Ephesians 4.

"Don't sin by letting anger control you. Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil." Ephesians 4:26-27

The little Greek word that's translated "as foothold."

"foothold." Ephesians 4:26-27

It's the word "Topos."

And that word means "an opportunity."

It means **"a location,"**

Literally, it means **"a room."**

In other words, in your anger don't give the devil a guest room in your heart.

Don't allow anger to live unchecked and unguarded without taking it before God and asking him to do help you to do what is right in the situation.

In fact, if you look back in the very beginning of the Old Testament, there's an interesting story about two brothers, and you see in this story how anger started leading one of them in the wrong direction.

These two brothers, Cain and Able, went to make an offering before the Lord.

And Able made a good offering, but Cain didn't, and so God rejected Cain's offering and here's how the story goes.

Genesis 4:6, the Lord speaks to Cain and says . . .

"Why are you so angry?" the Lord asked Cain. Why do you look so dejected?

Now don't miss this . . .

You will be accepted if you do what is right."

Genesis 4:6

God says, "You have a choice -- your anger can lead you to do what is right or wrong And then notice the next verse . . .

“But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

Genesis 4:6-7

Again, the challenge. . . *“Why are you angry?”*

Don't give the devil a guest room in your heart.

You're in a spiritual battle.

And if you don't bring your anger before God, sin is crouching at your door and it desires to have

you

Anger, in itself is not always wrong.

We're going to see that there are two types of anger.

SINFUL ANGER – and this is the one we're most familiar with and this is the one that one is

always wrong

And then there's **SANCTIFIED ANGER**.

And this occurs when we're angry at the right things, and the right times, for the right reasons.

And we deal with our anger in right ways.

You can't necessarily control your emotions, but you can control what you do with them.

But first, let's look at a couple of . . .

Wrong Ways To Handle Anger

There are SPEWERS and there are STEWERS and you probably know which one you are

But just in case you don't let's talk a little bit about these two . . .

1. Spewers express their anger

And I might even say that “express” is a nice word.

It's probably more like “erupt” or “explode” or whatever other verb you want to use.

You get angry and you just let loose, and then you're done.

When you get angry no one has to ask you “Are you angry?” because everyone around you

knows you're angry

In the animal kingdom, when you think of SPEWER, think of the

Skunk

Skunks SPEW!!!

That's what they do

When they are upset, they just let it out and everyone around them knows about it.

I don't want to be gross on this, but this is the best illustration I could come up with . . .

Take a moment a remember a time when your child or your brother or your sister or your friend

was sick . . .

And for whatever reason, you were in the way

And they SPEWED on you

I'm sorry to remind you of that, but it happens

If you're a parent you know it's happened.

“Daddy, I don't feel so gooooooood. . . .”

When that happened, what happened to them?

Do you know what happened to them?

They felt . . . better

Cuz they got it out

But how did you feel?

You felt not-so-good.

You felt like re-spewing.

That's the biological and the spiritual nature of spewing.

Spewers are the ones who express their anger right up front.

You have short fuse, a hot temper, when you're angry everybody knows about it.

You're like a skunk.

When it comes to dealing with your anger, you're a SPEWER

How many of you are SKUNKS?

A few hands . . .

If you're a SKUNK and you didn't raise your hand, don't worry about it.

Because if you are a SKUNK, even if you didn't raise your hand, **we know who you are, cuz YOU SMELL - - - WE CAN TELL.**

Proverbs 29:11 says . . .

"Fools vent their anger, but the wise quietly hold it back." Proverbs 29:11

Proverbs 14:17 says . . .

"Short-tempered people do foolish things..."

Proverbs 14:17

Do you want to be wise or do you want to be a fool?

You get to choose.

God has called us to be people of self-control.

For some of us that **comes more naturally** than others.

But for all of us, - - - self-control, the ability to manage our anger is one of things that God wants to grow in us

"Self-Control" is one of the fruit of the spirit.

So there are spewers, but there is also a second group of folk when it comes to dealing with their anger, and if you're in this group, you're feeling pretty proud of yourself because you don't SPEW, instead you . . .

2. Stew

Stewers are the opposite of SPEWERS

If SPEWERS express their anger, then STEWERS suppress their anger.

They stuff it down

They keep it in.

And again, if you look at that verse I showed you from Proverbs 29 . . .

"Fools vent their anger, but the wise quietly hold it back." Proverbs 29:11

You THINK that because you're not SPEWING, you've got this one nailed.

But the fact is, people around you still KNOW that you are mad

They KNOW that something is going on

And they never know when you're going to let it out because you've got all this stuff

SUPPRESSED.

If you don't deal with your anger in a right way, you can still do damage to those around you even if you don't SPEW

Some of you are SPEWISH

And you're married to a partner who is SPEWISH

You follow the SPEWISH calendar. . .

You observe the SPEWISH holidays. . .

Others of you are STEWERS

And that's not a good place to be . . .

That's why that Bible says ***"Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry,"*** because if you do that you sleep in fighting position.

You're facing one way, and they're facing the other way, and the first one that touches loses, right?

If the SKUNK is the member of the animal kingdom that represents SPEWERS

Then when it comes to STEWERS, I think you can think of the . . .

A TURTLE

When you're angry you just retract into your shell.

How many of you would admit to being turtles?

When you get angry you just hold it inside.

Just SPEWING - - just letting loose - - with your anger is not the right way to handle it

Nor is stuffing it down . . .

King David in the O.T. wrote these words in Psalm 32

He said . . .

"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long."

Psalm 32:3

He's saying when I pushed down my feelings and didn't deal with them, it took a toll on my physically.

And that what happens when we take our anger and we allow it to fester, to stew inside of us.

Stewers, when they get angry will have knock-down-drag-out fights just like the spewers do.

The difference is they do it all in their head.

If they were hurt by something, they rehearse it.

They will replay every detail of the hurt.

But they won't actually confront the issue head on.

There's an example of this in the New Testament.

It occurs in one of Jesus most famous stories.

The Parable about the Prodigal Son.

If you're familiar with the story you know that a father had two sons

One of them (the younger son) asked for his share of his father's inheritance.

The father gave it to him. The son immediately goes off – and spends it all

He spends it on a big party, on women, on alcohol, and on wild living.

And he's doing fine until . . .

Until the money runs out,

And the friends run out . . .

And he wakes up with nothing in a pig pen,

And he realizes that his father's hired servants, live better than he does.

And so he begins to make the trek home, not hoping that the father would accept him back as the son, but hoping that his father would allow him to come back as a servant.

And so he starts the long journey home, and as he does the father sees him.

And you know the story. . .

While he's still a long way far off, the father runs to him, throws his arms around him, puts a robe on him and a ring on his finger, sandals on his feet and orders that the fatted calf would be slaughtered because tonight, they are going to have a party

But there's a character in the story we don't talk about as much.

That's the older brother.

This is the brother who didn't ask for his share of the inheritance. This is the brother that stayed home when he was supposed to stay home.

This is the brother that did all the right things.

And when he sees his little brother getting all this special treatment after living like a fool, look at what scripture says.

"The older brother was

WHAT?

angry and wouldn't go in..." Luke 15:28

He wanted nothing to do with his brother.

He refused to deal with him.

He just wanted to stay outside and STEW.

15 times in the Bible scripture talks about anger with the metaphor, or the analogy of a fire.

Anger and fire, they're one in the same.

The interesting thing about fire is it is kind of a paradox.

If you live in Northern Alaska - - fire is life.

If you don't have fire, you're not alive.

You have to have it to live.

It boils your water, it heats your home; it keeps you warm, it cooks your food.

On the flip side, fire can burn down your house and destroy everything you have

So fire is both potentially and necessary and destructive and deadly.

Anger is the same way.

So how do we deal with it?

Well, if it's sinful anger, the right way to deal with it is to . . .

1. Sinful anger: PUT IT OUT

Ephesians 4 says . . .

"Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you." Ephesians 4:31-32

Get rid of it

Put it as far from you as you possibly can.

Now, how do you do that?

Our MEMORY VERSE for this week has some great advice. . .

James 1:19-20 says . . .

Memory Verse

“...Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

WHY????

because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

James 1:19-20

Think about those words. . .

quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

Thomas Jefferson once said. . .

“When you’re angry count to 10,

When you’re very angry count to 100,

And if you’re still angry keep on counting.”

Someone once said. . .

“Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret.”

It’s really wise to think before we speak.

The writer of Proverbs wrote . . .

“When words are many, sin is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise.”

Proverbs 10:19

Why is “he who restrains his lips wise?”

One reason is because once words are out there, it’s very difficult to take them back.

Consider the case of **what a South Dakota newspaper, the Watertown Public Opinion** did to one unlucky traffic offender.

The paper printed the following retraction . . .

Their retraction said,

“Due to incorrect information received from the Clerk of the Court’s Office, Diane K. Merchant, 38 [address], was incorrectly listed as being fined for prostitution in Wednesday’s paper.

The charge should have been failure to stop at a railroad crossing.

The Public Opinion apologizes for the error.”

Even if you print a retraction . . .

You can’t UNSAY something

You can’t UNHEAR something

Which is why it’s important when it comes to SINFUL ANGER, to get rid of it - - to put it out.

But there’s another kind of anger that we haven’t even talked about yet, and it’s called

RIGHTEOUS ANGER. . . .

SANCTIFIED ANGER

And when it comes to this kind of anger, the right way to handle it is to . . .

2. Sanctified anger: Fan The Flame

Sanctified anger is when we get angry at the things that anger God.

Those are not usually the things that we’re angered by.

We get angry when we are slighted, when we are offended, when we’re ignored, when someone doesn’t respect us.

The things that anger God are different.

They’re things like human suffering, abuse, Injustice, oppression, prejudice . . .

Those are **some of the things in this world** that **ought to make us angry.**

Sadly, those are seldom the things that do.

In Mark chapter 3 there was a time when Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath for the purpose of healing a man.

The religious leaders were trying to catch him doing something illegal.

And we’re told that . . .

“[Jesus] looked around at them

How did he look around at them?

angrily and was deeply saddened by their hard hearts. Then he said to the man,

whom he had come to heal . . .

‘Hold out your hand.’ So the man held out his hand, and it was restored!” Mark 3:5

Jesus saw a man in need of healing, and he healed him, and those who were seeking to trap Jesus, only saw it an opportunity for entrapment.

They cared nothing about the man in need of healing.

And that **both angered and saddened** Jesus.

As I said, I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this one, **not because it's not important**, but because when it comes to the issue of **ANGER**, I don't think this is the area where most of us **realize we have a problem**.

Our failure to be angry at the things that anger God is sad, but most of the time it's not the things that is destroying our families.

More often than not, when it comes to anger in our homes, it's not the sanctified anger, but the sinful anger that is tripping us up.

What should I do . . .

If I Have A Problem With Anger

The first thing to do is . . .

Admit It

Own up to it, and admit that you have a problem with anger.

Too often we tend to minimize, and we'll do anything but admit that we've actually got a problem.

I remember hearing about a man who was driving through a very affluent neighborhood.

Beautiful large homes.

Perfectly landscaped yards.

As he drove along he saw something that caught his eye.

He saw a **For Sale sign** on the windshield of a **2018 Porsche Boxster**.

These cars **typically sell for anywhere between 60-\$80,000**

And yet this one had a For Sale sign on its windshield and it said **"For Sale" \$100**.

He knew it had to be a mistake but he wanted to learn more.

So he pulled his car over and went up and knocked on the front door of the house.

A woman answered the door.

He asked her, ***"Is that your Porsche for sale out front."***

She said, ***"Actually, it's my husband's but I bought it for him as a gift, but my name is on the title."***

And the man said, ***"And you're selling it for \$100?"***

She said, ***"Why yes, yes I am."***

And he asked her, ***"Can you tell me why?"***

She said, ***"There's a story behind it, but I don't want to tell and retell the story over and over, so I'm saving it for whoever buys the car from me."***

And the man said, ***"Let me make sure I understand this. You're selling this car for \$100, and you have the pink slip, correct?"***

She said, "Correct"

He opens his wallet, hands her the \$100, and signs the pink slip over to him.

He said, ***"Thank you, now if you don't mind, can you tell me why you're parting with this car so cheaply."***

She says, ***"It's a simple story really. My husband is out of town this weekend on a business trip. He's been taking more of those recently. But this one was different.***

This morning he sent me a text and told me that he wasn't actually on a business trip, he had gone to Hawaii, with another woman.

He told me that ***our marriage was over, and that he hoped we could settle things amicably - that it wouldn't get ugly - - he told me that his lawyer would be contacting my lawyer, the first thing next week to begin divorce proceedings.***

He told me ***I could keep the house, that he would arrange for movers to come and pick up his stuff.***

The one thing he asked was ***if I would sell his car – that Porsche – and then send him half of what I sold it for.***

That's why I just sold it you for \$100."

Very often we don't like to admit when we're angry

We prefer to act out

And we hesitate to admit it when we're angry.

We'll say, "This is just the way I am"

Or worse. .

"This is the way that God made me."

And when I SPEW . . .

We'll say, "It didn't mean anything . . .

"Those are just words. . ."

God has a different take on things . .

"For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of." Matthew 12:34

Jesus tells us that if we have an anger problem . .

What we actually have is a heart problem.

And to solve a heart problem we need the help of a heart specialist.

If good intentions and resolutions were all it took to bring your anger under control, you would have brought it under control a long time ago.

The solution to an anger problem isn't to try harder, the solution to an anger problem is to give that problem to God.

To . . .

Ask God for His help to bring my anger under His control

Again, going back to the HEART for a moment . . .

In Matthew 15 Jesus said. . .

It's not what goes into your mouth that defiles you; you are defiled by what comes out of your mouth."

You read on further and you'll see that he says that . . .

"Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer.

But the words you speak come from the heart—that's what defiles you.

For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. These are what defile you.

We live in a culture that gives all kinds of attention to **HEALTHY EATING**

We're very concerned about what goes into our mouth

And so today we have **FAT-FREE, SUGAR-FREE, CAGE FREE, HORMONE FREE, GLUTEN-FREE,**

GRASS-FED, RANGE-FED, GRAIN-FED, ORGANIC, LOW-CARB, KETO and the list goes on and on.

Always concerned about what goes into our mouth

At the same time we've paid very little attention to **HEALTHY THINKING** what **GOES INTO OUR MIND AND HEART**

About **WHAT WE WATCH - - WHAT WE LISTEN TO**

A few years ago, when our youngest daughter, Kimberly, was still living at home, Judy and I were **awakened by her hysterical screaming.**

She was standing next to our bed and she was saying,

"I'm so scared, I'm so scared, there's something in my room! I heard it and then I saw it in the doorway. It looked like a huge rat!"

Believe me, that is not what you want to hear at 1 in the morning!

And so we handled the problem.

We said, ***"Kimberly, let's pray about this."***

We prayed ***"Lord, please protect Kimberly from the big rat. Protect her so that the rat doesn't bite her while she's sleeping, and if it does bite, we pray the it won't have rabies. Please help Kimberly to sleep peacefully, and have sweet dreams." AMEN***

Then we walked her back to her room, tucked her in her bed and said good night.

How many of you believe that that is the way that the story of the rat ended?

You are very wise.

Kimberly said **she was not going back in the room**, in fact **she was not going to live in our house** until we found whatever it was that she saw, and got rid of it.

So, Judy and I got up, and put on shoes - just in case - and headed toward Kimberly's room.

We turned on all the lights and looked around the room, in the closet, behind the furniture - but saw no sign of the intruder.

Then Judy got the bright idea to look behind the washer and dryer, which are in a little laundry alcove right outside Kimberly's bedroom door.

Judy climbed on top of the washer and shined a flashlight into the narrow space behind it and the wall - nothing there.

Then she pointed to flashlight into the space behind the dryer and what she saw confirmed Kimberly's story - only it wasn't a rat - it was a baby possum cowering in the corner.

Yuck! Those are ugly creatures, no offense to the Creator.

We were faced with a dilemma.

You can't pull the washer and dryer out of the alcove without climbing behind to disconnect them - and neither of us was going to get in that space with the little monster.

So, we came up with a plan.

We pulled the appliances as far from the wall as we could without affecting the connections, then we got a bucket and wrapped an extended wire coat hanger - like you use for roasting marshmallows - around the handle, we also got a broom.

While I held the flashlight, as far as I could from the appliances, Judy carefully lowered the bucket down next to the opossum and tried to coax it in the bucket with the broom.

Unfortunately, the possum wasn't interested in going into the bucket and promptly scurried into the other corner.

We tried again and this time...the wiley creature ran inside the back of the dryer.

We pounded on the dryer until it ran back to its corner.

Finally, after about 45 minutes of trying with the possum running in and out of the appliances we were able to get it into the bucket.

Now we had to carefully lift the bucket up and over the washer without losing the possum, whose tail, by the way, was wrapped around the handle of the bucket.

Carefully, carefully, Judy lifted it up while I stood ready with the broom.

As soon as the bucket appeared over the washer I held the broom firmly on top.

Judy jumped down from her perch and together we ran out the front door of the house and onto the front lawn where we flung the bucket, opossum and all as far as we could throw it and ran back into the house, locked the door and headed back to our bed, which we shared with Kimberly for the rest of the night.

Now why did I share that with you?

I don't remember.

Wait, yes I do.

I shared the story because **when there is an intruder that has invaded our house, we don't ignore it.**

We don't pretend it's not there.

We don't say **"Ah, just leave it alone and it will eventually die."**

We will go to great lengths to get rid of it, and we won't rest until we're sure it's gone.

And that's true whether it's a possum, or a rat, or a bunch of bees, or whatever it is.

We don't ignore it, or pretend it's not there we hunt it down and get rid of it.

But here's the thing.

I've **never heard of a family falling apart, or being destroyed by a possum, or a rat, or a bunch of bees.**

But I have seen families destroyed by anger.

And the sad thing is, when it comes to stuff that gets lodged in our heart, we're just not proactive.

When it comes to our hearts, all kinds of stuff gets lodged in there that have the potential to not just take away a good night's sleep...

Things get lodge in our heart that have the potential to destroy our marriages, our future marriages, our relationships with our kids. . .

And we do nothing about it.

What do you do with your anger?

What you ought to do is . . .

Ask God For His Help To Bring It Under His Control . . .

Colossians 3 says . . .

“But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. . . Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience...

“Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.” Colossians 3:8, 12-13

Let’s pray . . .