

I Am That Fool

I Vent My Anger

Here's where we've been together.

1. I'm wise in my own eyes
2. I don't like discipline
3. I'm defensive when corrected
4. I trust myself
5. **I vent my anger**

In this series, each of these topics has ultimately led us to see that God's good news through Jesus is available even though "I'm That Fool". This is a series not just about our foolish tendencies, but about God's love for us and the grace he gives not only to forgive us, but to help us take steps from wherever we are on to where God wants us to be.

To get us started today, I'd like to begin with the question,

"Why are people's fuses so short these days?"

Some obvious answers include:

- We have been under many stresses, fears, and frustrations the past couple of years.
- People's fears and stresses were fueled by emotionally charged polarized ideas.
- People take hostile positions when they do not like being told what they can and cannot do.

Some less obvious answers are offered by Sociologists:

- Social distancing untethered people from school, work, church, and other social groupings.
- Sociologists tell us that this shifted our outlooks, attitudes, and behaviors.
- To date, many people have not yet shifted out of these changed outlooks, attitudes, and behaviors.
 - **Robert Sampson, A Harvard sociologist who studies social disorder said, "When we become untethered, we tend to prioritize our own private interests over those of others or the public."**

There are two very common reactions to ANGER: **Blowing Up**, and **Clamming Up**.

Both can be harmful. One takes the energy of the anger and vents out. The other holds that energy in, and it does a number inside. It can become resentment and bitterness.

Let's talk a bit about the foolishness of VENTING, or blowing up.

Proverbs 29:11 (CSB) A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise person holds it in check.

My tea kettle spends most of its time sitting quietly. It only sounds off when things get hot! When things reach the boiling point, my tea kettle screams. Everyone within earshot gets quite uncomfortable. My Tea Kettle has a name. Its name is “JIM.”

I. I SPOUT like a TEA KETTLE

Although I may clam up more than I blow up. I am no stranger to spouting like a tea kettle when things get too hot inside.

Unfortunately, I spout off with **those closest to me**. It isn't fair. Sometimes I'm angry about something else and don't even realize it. I always regret it when I spout off like an angry Tea Kettle.

Question: Is it a sin for me to be angry?

Answer: No. The initial feeling of anger is a God-given emotion. The way you respond and express this emotion determines whether or not you allow your anger to become sin.

Ephesians 4:26 (NIV) “In your anger do not sin”...

The sin is not the anger. The sin is in what we do with it.

Your anger is a signal that *something is wrong*— like the red warning light on the dashboard of a car.

Ephesians 4:26 (NIV) “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,

- **Blowing up or Clamming up is not the solution.**
- **Opening the hood to figure out what is going on with that red warning light is a good starting point.**
- HINT: The anger isn't usually what we think it is. “*You make me so angry*” is not really what is happening. They aren't making us angry, our narrative in our head interpreting what this all means makes us angry.
- If you are angry a lot, and you often think it is the other person who makes you so angry, chances are very good that you are interpreting the anger warning light INCORRECTLY. Invite a mechanic to look under the hood. A soul mechanic.

James 3:5–6 (NIV) Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶ The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

Words are powerful things. [Light a match.] Words can warm and comfort, but they can also set the whole course of our life on fire!

II. My uncontrolled words are a Wrecking Ball

Proverbs 25:28 (NIV) Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.

In ancient times a city's main defensive protection were the walls of a city. Break those walls and the enemy rushes in and takes over.

What people do not see is this truth: uncontrolled words wreck your own protective walls.

“I am my worst enemy!”

I have NEVER seen this as a bumper sticker. I don't think many angry people believe they are their own worst enemy. But this ancient wisdom is basically saying they are. You are not not just hurting others, you are destroying yourself.

It is not easy to believe in the angry moment, but it is true, uncontrolled anger opens the door to the fire of hell.

Have you ever witnessed someone coming Unglued, or Unhinged? Isn't this what you thought? You thought “What's gotten into him/her?”

Now you know. The fire of hell is now at work within. Uncontrolled anger let the fire in. I punched holes in your protective walls.

When you lose self control, something evil this way comes.

Wow. That was a dark and ugly thought. Sorry about that. But don't you worry hope is on its way, you just have to wait till point # 4. And now, Point number 3... (almost there)

III. My quickdraw GAVEL is still a smoking gun

*James 1:19–20 (NIV) My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,²⁰ because **human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.***

I'm the fool who is most dangerous when ***I am hurt or angry and I think I'm right.***

Spouting off in anger when I think I'm right doesn't work! It makes matters worse.

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

This series is not about the bad news diagnosis, although we need the diagnosis. This series is about the good news for those of us who have this disease called sin and foolishness. And now for the good news...

IV. The remedy is DIVINE POWER

The answer when we are angry is not **Blowing Up**, or **Clamming Up**. Both of those approaches will hurt others and you. The answer when we are angry is **Praying Up**.

2 Peter 1:3 (NIV) His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

God offers us divine power, everything we need through Jesus.

- My forgiveness is found at the cross.
- Buried with Christ, my uncontrolled anger is buried in his tomb.
- I am resurrected and made new.
- I am filled with divine power by God's Spirit filling my cleansed life.
- I have everything I need for life and godliness.

This is my NEW identity in Christ. I'm not condemned to remain that Fool. That's the OLD me. The new me is set free in Jesus, the more I reprogram my thoughts and rehabilitate my life, the more my new identity shines with the truth of who I am in Christ.

I know that through this series, I've been saying "I'm that Fool", but that old identity is gone. **"I'm not that Fool." "I'm God's child, called by his own glory and goodness" to shine in the image of Jesus.**

"I'm not that fool, I'm that child who has access to everything I need for life and godliness in Jesus."

I'm not blowing up, I'm not clamming up, I'm Praying Up. Let's start Praying up right now. We have access to everything we need for life and godliness.