



Pre-Enraged by Brett Petrillo

*All Scriptures and comments are based on the **New King James Version**, unless otherwise noted.*

"Another police shooting." Just three little words are all it takes to erupt the volcano of internal feelings throughout our nation. People start screaming "racism" and "injustice!" People start marching, shouting, rioting, and storming police stations. People start pointing fingers in all directions. While other people will take to social media to argue and fight, with minds already made-up, and with no intention of backing down. Some others choose to hide from it all, optimistically hoping that the fires being created by the spewing volcano out their bedroom window will magically fizzle out.

Our nation is deeply divided. However, even though the nation seems to be split like the east is from the west, they all actually share a common trait: **Pre-enraged**. In other words, people living in a state of continual anger. Then, when an event unfolds, it simply provides an outlet for this anger. All the while, the pressure continues to build inside day after day in our cultural volcano.

Are we really so blind that we can't see the real problem here? Let's stop beating around the bush; the problem is a godless society. We are seeing the tragic, rotten fruits of a society that is living in darkness (**Galatians 5:19-22**). Few are focused on God. Few look to His word for guidance. And until something changes, the volcano will continue to erupt.

God detailed out the perfect solution in **Ephesians 4:29-32**. While He was speaking of church relationships, it's also the perfect solution for our culture as well. So, what should the Christian's response be?

1. **Close The Mouth (verse 29)** – Paul instructed,

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

We are fooling ourselves if we feel like spouting off on social media is the solution. In the last year, social media platforms have become one of the most putrid places on earth, where the newsfeeds are largely a collection of people spewing words that do nothing but inflame and divide, and are in many cases, just ugly. Where are the words that bring "edification" and "grace" to these situations? If these aren't clear goals, then "let no unwholesome word" come from our keyboards.

2. Cool Off (**verse 31**) –

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

Politics. Racism. Prejudice. Injustice. America has become a very bitter, angry place. A place where clamor (i.e. loud voices), "slander" (i.e. harmful speech), and "malice" (i.e. evil intentions) have become the true pandemic in our country. The last place on earth any of this should be found is in a Christian. Have we been bitter? Have we been angry? Have we been adding to the eruption? It's time to "**put them away from you.**"

3. Be kind (**verse 32a**) -

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted...

The lack of kindness on all sides is glaring. A wise person once said, "If you aren't kind, you're the wrong kind." Kindness translates to soft, gentle words and actions. As the wisest man who ever lived once said,

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (Proverbs 15:1)

Oh how desperately we need soft, gentle, and kind reactions right now.

4. Forgive (**verse 32b**) –

...forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Many, many people have been wronged, or at least feel they have been wronged. Very few are letting it go. Few are practicing forgiveness. 2,000 years ago, no one was more wronged, abused, mistreated, and innocent than Christ as He hung on the cross. Yet, in some of the remaining moments of His life, Jesus uttered the words,

"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."
(Luke 23:34)

To lower the temperature, forgiveness must start somewhere. It should start with us.

We are living in a world that's exploding, but Christians don't have to. May we have the self-control and courage to respond in the way God has told us to respond.

—-- Brett Petrillo, *Daily Bread*, 4-12-2021