



SEVEN • Rage

One would think that with all of life's modern comforts, technology, medicine (sedatives and antidepressants), fitness, and communication, that the Deadly Sin of rage, like polio, would be a disease we would have built immunity to – leaving only a few cases lingering around in some Petri dish in case of biological warfare. Well, we haven't. Just take a look at the gallery of rage.

From BBCNews.com:

Web rage hits the internet: Half of web surfers lose temper on regular basis. We have all heard of road rage and air rage. Now we have web rage. More than half of all internet users admit to losing their rag with the net at least once a week, according to a Mori study.

High on people's stress meter is the length of time it takes websites to appear, help buttons that do not offer any help and requests for personal details before being allowed into a site.

One frustrated IT manager admitted to smashing up his £2,500 laptop after a web page failed to recognize his personal details after six attempts.

If you sense a colleague's mounting anger at the web, it might be best to leave the room. A small number, 2%, admitted to hitting workmates to vent their frustration.

Revenge tales are also common. One 43-year-old man ordered £1 million worth of goods from a website after a TV he ordered failed to turn up despite sending numerous e-mails.

CNN.com

“‘Road Rage’ runs rampant in high-stress U.S. society.”

From Correspondent Kyoko Altman

Washington (CNN) – For the fourth year in a row, the death toll on America's highways climbed in 1997, thanks mainly to a new malady known as “road rage.”

More than 41,000 died in traffic accidents, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The government agency says that two-thirds of those deaths were the result of road rage.

Shot, stabbed and run over

David Willis, president of the American Automobile Association's Foundation for Traffic Safety, also sounds the road-rage alarm. Motorists are being shot, stabbed, run over for totally inane reasons,” said Willis. “Like, ‘She wouldn't let me pass,’ or, ‘Nobody gives me the finger.’”



Checking the Roots of Rage

Read this, from Drirene.com:

“Family of Origin” stuff is all the abuse and neglect and unhealthy boundaries, and things you were taught (one way or another) by your family while you were growing up.

If you grew up in an abusive home (for instance with Dad abusing Mom), you “were taught” that domestic violence was normal, that it is something men do and women tolerate. That piece of information was “stored” in your system of values and beliefs, the bedrock of “who you are.” Right along with that belief, you learned that it was OK that Dad was not responsible for his behavior and didn’t have to pay consequences – and that if Dad was unhappy it was Mom’s fault because she accepted the blame. So you didn’t learn healthy boundaries. Later, because of those beliefs, you may end up being the victim/abuser in your own marriage.

1. When your parents got angry, how did they express it with each other? With you?

2. Do you think when you have a family that you will show anger the same way as your parents, different, or radically different? Why?

3. Stressdoc.com lists several different styles of anger. Which one describes how you tend to behave when angry?

From Stressdoc.com
Styles of Anger:

1. *Plan to Get Even.* When you’ve been unfairly treated or criticized (or, at least, feel you’ve been) do your eyes widen; perhaps, you have a ghoulish grin? Endorphins have nothing on the biochemical rush as you plot revenge! Bring on the costarring role in Nightmare on Elm Street Part XIX? Or do you simply and stealthily retaliate through gossip and innuendo? Perhaps you’re into prevention: “Screw it to others before they can even think about screwing it to you!”
2. *Consuming Anger.* Do you try drinking or eating your anger away or is it so consuming it’s eating away at you? Maybe you try controlling your hurt and rage through pseudo saintliness or by spouting artificial affirmations – fast food for thought – instead of compulsive eating? If so, these lines from “The Self-Righteous Rap” may strike a chord:

Are you a martyr in self-imposed prison? Denying your needs becomes “heaven’s vision.” When you’ve been hurt you just quietly pray But wish you could scream: “Go ahead...Make my day!”
3. *Intellectual Intimidation.* “Oh, you don’t really believe that, do you?” “What’s wrong with you?” “You should have done it this way.” “You are so disappointing to me!” (Restrain me, please.) Know any one who is into “acc- you-sations”? Are you a “blameaholic”? The intellectual bully’s techniques range from finely judgmental observations to condescending characterizations. Probably a graduate from “The Institute for the Compassion-Impaired.” There’s a competitive edge to the aggressor that’s often a cover for self-doubt or a win-lose, dominant-submissive survival strategy.
4. Ephesians 4:26 says, “In your anger do not sin.” Which means that the Bible does not consider anger to be sin. When do you think anger “crosses the line” and become sin?



Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you.

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.

There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you – who are you to judge your neighbor?

8. James states that rage comes from within. Think of some times where you lost your temper. What kind of “battle” was going on “within you” (4:1)?

9. Under the right situation, do you think you could kill someone?

10. In vs. 4:2, James is probably not referring to literal murder, but murdering someone with your thoughts (rage). Can you remember a time recently you hated and hurt someone with your thoughts?

11. James sees at the core of rage and anger, a selfish agenda that has been frustrated. Do you agree? What agenda or plan of yours is most likely to cause rage? Who most often frustrates your personal agenda?

12. What does it mean to “humble yourself before God” (4:10)? How would this help the problem of rage?

13. What bearing does James 4:12 have on the problem of rage?

Summary

Without the ability to entrust our lives and judgment to God, mastering rage may always be a losing battle. The greatest step you can take is to humble yourself before God and entrust yourself, your reputation, and your desires to God. There is a great article entitled, “My Heart, Christ’s Home, that can help you see how to let God be involved with all areas of your life. It’s an easy read, but could make a significant difference in your life.

End 

The Compass is the discipleship curriculum for Campus Crusade for Christ’s Campus Ministry. It was created by Centerfield Productions, the field based division of CruPress. We’d love to hear your feedback on this lesson. Please write us at centerfield@uscm.org