



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

March 8, 2023

Pastor Randy Ott

Lenten Midweek 2

Sermon Text: [1 Corinthians 13:4-5](#)

“Acceptable” Sins: Irritability/Impatience

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Now is the time of God’s favor. Now is the day of salvation. Amen.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

In Christ Jesus, dear fellow redeemed:

Did you ever wish you could go back and meet some of your ancestors that you maybe have only seen in pictures—great grandparents, great-great grandparents? Do you think that would be kind of fun to talk to them and see what their life was like? I thank God I’ve never met my great-great grandfather. I’ve always thought I’ve been really impatient and quick to be irritable. I know my dad was worse than I am. My dad said his dad was worse than him. So that means my great grandfather would be even worse. Great-great grandpa would be a terror to be around I think.

I’ve struggled impatience and irritability my whole life, and they lead to sinful anger. It’s not like all of a sudden and out of the blue you just become angry and that you sin in your anger. It starts with the annoyance of something that bothers you. You become impatient with someone else because they don’t know that they are affecting your day, which is vastly more important than theirs. If you are quick to do this and you get there pretty quick, that’s irritability. If you’re doing it all the time, that’s just anger. We don’t think it’s that big of deal, do we? We can see the reason why we are impatient and irritable and angry, can’t we? People at times are jerks and it irritates us. It’s their fault how I react to it; not my fault how I react to it—at least that’s what my sinful nature thinks. We excuse that as not being all that bad a thing.

What I read to you in [1 Corinthians 13](#) is an application from [1 Corinthians 12](#) where it talks about how Christians are to deal with one another and with others. We usually associate it with marriage, but it’s really talking about how Christians are to live their

entire life. It says to love. The fulfillment of all the Law is love. That's what Jesus said. What is the first and greatest commandment? ***"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."*** ***"And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"*** [\(Matthew 22:36-40\)](#) You love perfectly. Love is the fulfillment of the Law. So it stands to reason then that if love is patient and I'm impatient, it isn't flowing out of the love God wants me to have. And if you stop and think about it, one of the fruits of the Spirit used to be translated "patience," now in the New NIV translation it says "forbearance," same thing, if that's a fruit of the Spirit, my impatience can't be a fruit of the Spirit. What is left? It's a fruit of the sinful nature. It's sin! It's absolutely and only sin! I don't care if I can understand it, I don't care if you cause me to sin, it is MY sin.

God is pretty serious about all this. Throughout Scripture He talks about patience. It's over and over in the [Book of James](#). It talks about patient endurance and different things like that. In the [Book of Proverbs](#) it says, ***Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly.*** [\(Proverbs 14:29\)](#) I guess you could start calling me "folly" because I'm often quick tempered. [Proverbs 15](#) says, a hot tempered person stirs up conflict but the one who is patient calms a quarrel. [Proverbs 16](#) says better a patient person than a warrior, or one with self-control than one who takes a city. These are the things God tells us about what He wants in us.

We can excuse it all we want. We can say it's not that bad. But I don't care what sin you rank as the worst, your impatience, your irritability, your anger is just as bad in God's eyes. He says if you keep all the Law and break it only in one point, [\(James 2:10\)](#) if this is the only point you've broken it in, first of all, you haven't been paying attention to yourself, and secondly, let's just allow that this is the only thing you've ever done, you deserve to go to hell just as certainly as Adolf Hitler did. "Oh, that's ridiculous pastor!" No it isn't. It's Biblical. But you and I love to rank sins. We love to say "That sin is worse," or "That sin is worse." I guarantee you we always rank the ones we don't see ourselves committing.

During this season of Lent, a time of repentance, a time of dust-to-dust and ashes-to-ashes, we need to see ourselves for what we really are. God hates my impatience. God hates my irritability. God hates how that spills into anger that hurts other people. It doesn't matter if I can understand it. I can understand sin, because I'm a sinner. But I need to understand better how offensive this is to my God. I need to understand more clearly just how incredibly patient my God is.

He didn't give up on us when we have been impatient. He didn't treat us as our sins deserve. He was so patient that He prayed ***"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"*** [\(Luke 23:34\)](#) as people were pounding nails into His hands. And I can't deal with someone that drives below the speed limit in front of me? I'm a fool and so are you.

Don't take this incredible love of God for granted. Don't think your sins aren't so bad. Don't rank sins. That's one of the devil's lies, because then you'll think "God needed to come for that person but not so much for me." This is Lent. I don't care what anyone else has done, if no one else had ever sinned, Jesus came to live and die because I'm such an impatient, irritable fool. Each one of us can say the same (I would tend to waver). If you are thinking to yourself, "You know what? I'm not that impatient," you didn't pay attention last week during "Pride." If you are priding yourself that you're not that impatient, you're kidding yourself. Do you have anyone in your life that you deal with that is incredibly impatient, always irritable and quick tempered and easy to anger? When they do that and it affects you, how patient are you then? How often don't you reply in kind, at least in your own mind, by being annoyed and irritable and angry at them because of the pain they are causing you and others that you love?

Don't take God's love for granted. I think that's one of the greatest things Satan has gotten us to do. We look at the sins of others, decry them and we forget to look at ourselves and see that the sins we are so comfortable with (that we hardly even notice that much anymore) killed Jesus! He had no reason to come and live in our place and be perfectly patient, loving and kind with everyone else, except that you and I can't do it. So He did it in our place. Then He gave Himself willingly on the cross to pay for all the times you and I and the whole world have sinned against others by being impatient, irritable, and angry.

If we understand the depths of our own sinfulness, the depths of how guilty we are before our God, we won't take Him for granted and think "You know what? There is worship today but it's kind of sunny. I have other things I could do." Then getting to know God better and getting closer to Him and getting to know Him and grow in Him and express our love to Him and hear His love for us would be something that we would crave, we would pant after, and we would thirst for. But when we don't think our sins are so bad, God kind of becomes "meh" to us. If He is "meh" to us, we certainly aren't going to share the message of the Gospel with those who don't know it.

See your sin for what it is. Don't make excuses. Don't make rationalizations. Just say what we always say, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Then rejoice in knowing that He is, that He has been, and that He always will be forgiving, loving, patient and kind. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.