

Holy Anger

Reflection from Conference Minister from *April 29, 2020 Coconut Wireless*

During this time of anxiety and confusion, it is easy to give ourselves over to feelings of anger born out of impotence in the face of the disease or of frustration in the face of muddled politics. Here are six dynamics for us to be aware of if we are wanting to burn with a righteous anger:

- 1 Acknowledge your anger, for it is telling you that something is wrong:** Anger is an emotion tied into our sense of right and wrong and our sense of self-preservation. By asking, "Why am I angry?" we can understand why we sense something is wrong or how we are experiencing emotional wounds, if not physical wounds.
- 2 Surf your anger, do not be drowned by it:** Like all emotions, anger can become a controlling motivator of our thoughts and behaviors. It is a proper use of anger when it lights within us a want and drive to make the world better. It is a dangerous use of anger when we brood, plot revenge, think in terms of harming another. This darker anger does not make the world a better place, for it is often used for self-gratification as opposed to self-betterment or community enhancement.
- 3 Love people while being angry with the systems we are caught up in:** We are all products of the society and culture we live in. We are all caught up in the beautiful and dark sides of the ideologies of our social systems. Let our anger be focused at the web of attitudes and behaviors that are operative so we might forgive those entangled in the webs.
- 4 Keep the communication open to learn about the system—how and why the individual participates in the system:** We often become angry when we only have limited understanding of the issue. Anger at this stage is good if it tells us to proceed with caution. Anger at this stage is poor if it allows us to draw conclusions before having a full understanding of all the dynamics involved.
- 5 Allow anger to move you to wholistic action and not irrational lashing out:** When anger moves us to examine the full picture, then we are in a better position to articulate the errors in the system, as opposed to attacking an individual. Having the fuller picture in front of us allows us to address the system.
- 6 Be willing to learn and allow your anger to teach you about yourself and personal growth you might need to undergo:** As with most emotions, our arousal to anger tells us more about ourselves than about anyone else. Anger can help shine a light upon the growing edges of our souls, highlighting old wounds and indicating developing sensitivity. The best use of anger is to allow it to deepen our own self-awareness so the Spirit may continue to refine us ever deeper into Christ likeness in love.

David K. Popham
Conference Minister