

WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY?

POWER, FEAR, AND ANGER AMONG HISTORICALLY POWERFUL AND HISTORICALLY POWERLESS COMMUNITIES

Rev. Drew Stever and Rev. Dr. Eric H.F. Law



We are angry because these abuses of power are not new to young adults in the Church today, but reach back for generations. Faith leaders, young and old, are tired of addressing those in power and receiving no productive response. What we are witnessing is a surge of burnout from leaders voicing concerns about abuse, without receiving an adequate response. As a result, many talented, diverse young leaders are leaving ministry and leaving faith communities.

**SETTING THE TABLE**

Take a breath together as a group. We know that hard conversations can be heavy on our bodies, but also present us with an opportunity to push through to create a new world together. Read together out loud or taking turns line by line the following poem:

RECONCILIATION

by Arleta Little from the book *We are Meant to Rise*

I am here at my own risk.

I am here honoring the history of my hurt and anger, recognizing that more than hurt and anger are possible.

I am here to bear witness to your becoming; to witness the work that I cannot do for you; to welcome you to witness the work that you cannot do for me, but we can meet each other.

This creative opportunity will be what we make it and will be only as limited as we are.

We can be present for possibilities and we can be as wild as our imaginations.

Herein lies the ability to create the world anew.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Where do you see institutions using power that destructs? Where do you see institutions using power that unites?
2. What would it look like to radically name and seek forgiveness for harm committed by the historically powerful? What action steps can you and your community take to receive the thoughts, ideas, and projects from the historically powerless with compassion and curiosity?
3. What does the Church need to do in order to acquaint itself with Holy Death? What would it look like to grieve together?
4. If you are part of the historically powerful, what are you afraid of? How real is this fear? Will this fear cause you direct harm? Is this fear actually discomfort? Is this fear actually grief? How does this fear impact how you use the power that you have? To whom or where do you go to feel empowered? To whom or where do you go to seek support in exploring this in faithful, productive ways?

CONTINUE

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

5. If you are part of the historically powerless, what are you afraid of? What is this fear pointing to? How does this fear impact how you use the power that you have? To whom or where do you go to feel empowered? To whom or where do you go to seek support in exploring this in faithful, productive ways?

CLOSING

What is the “low-hanging fruit” step you could take for yourself and/or your congregation in response to this discussion today?

A low hanging fruit is something you could easily do this coming week.

Given this theme and your context; what is one “moonshot” you could imagine?

A moon shot is a giant leap into relationship and connection that would require monumental effort but be totally amazing.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The Word at the Crossings by Eric H. F. Law

Fear Not - Living Grace and Truth in a Frightened World by Eric H. F. Law

Love and Rage: The Path of Liberation through Anger by Lama Rod Owens.

The Human Library

Belonging: The Science of Creating Connection and Bridging Divides by Geoffrey L. Cohen

{The And} - a card game focused on deeper conversation around relationships and healing. Topics include healing, racism, coworkers, kids, and more.