

## **one**

### **The Vice of Anger**

Anger is a natural feeling that prompts us to correct some evil. However, for most of us, the anger that's meant to correct some evil usually ends up instead destroying some good. Anger is meant to be constructive; it's meant to give us energy to fix problems. The vice of anger is the sin whereby our anger causes us to create problems.

## **two**

### **So why do we indulge in destructive anger?**

Because it's easier. It's always easier to break things than to fix them. It's easier to curse, punch a hole in the wall, yell at our kids, or get outraged about some atrocity happening in some other part of the country or the world. But God wants us to be focused on other things, such as forming our kids, reforming society, maintaining our house, putting up with the nonsense at work, and just doing what needs to be done.

## **three**

### **Anger is always vicious when it's not constructive.**

It's sinful when it's disproportionate to the situation. If your anger is too long or too intense, if you blow up regularly, have a short fuse, or people tiptoe around you, then you're guilty of vicious anger. Probably, in those cases, your anger isn't so much based on responding to an evil around you, but it's an egotistical way of getting people to pay attention to you and treat you carefully.

Remember that the saints always had thick skin. It was always hard, usually impossible, to offend them. So if you take offense easily, you're on the wrong track.

## **four**

### **Another mark of sinful anger is when it's directed to an evil that's not your place to correct.**

If you're getting angry about situations and policies that you can't change, and that you have no right to change, how can that anger be constructive? The point of anger is to help you carry out the decisions that are within the scope of your authority.

There is such a thing as righteous anger, and the model for it is Jesus in the Temple. However, be careful. Jesus was cleansing the Temple, and too often we read that passage and think that we should follow him primarily by getting outraged at the corruption in the Church. We think the primary way to imitate Jesus' wrath is by reform

## **five**

### **Righteous Wrath.**

There is such a thing as righteous anger, and the model for it is Jesus in the Temple. However, we should be careful not to misunderstand this passage and think that our primary way of imitating Jesus' wrath is by getting outraged at the corruption in the Church. While we may all have some small role in reforming the Church and

society, it's important to remember that we're not the Pope, the President, the bishops, the governors, the priests, or the congressmen.

Moreover, in the New Testament, the Temple doesn't primarily represent the Church, but the individual Christian. Each one of us is a temple of the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul writes. Therefore, our righteous wrath should primarily be directed against the evil within ourselves, our sin, our vice, and our corruption. If we're going to get angry, it should be about our own sins, and we should use that energy to cleanse God's temple, which is our own soul. Anger is a God-given energy, but it's first meant to change the evil within us, the only thing we can control.