

Trump supporters are blinded by rage



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As a black conservative and evangelical Christian minister, I have been puzzled — and even shocked — by the support Donald Trump has received from the evangelical community. Since last year when a number of famous preachers met with him, I have been trying to understand what appears to be blatant hypocrisy among the church leaders and a critical compromise in their faith.

Now, I believe I understand what's going on. I am convinced that it's all about rage. Red, hot, uncontrollable political anger. When the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage, it was the straw that broke the camel's back. It was a monumental act that happened on the watch of the Republican establishment.

The Supreme Court decision left many conservatives not only disappointed and deeply hurt, but it pushed them over the edge. It filled them with an anger that continues to boil over as the country moves in a progressive direction.

When Trump so brazenly proclaimed, "I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody, and I wouldn't lose voters," he was correct. But his comment said more about his followers than about himself. Why would they rally around a man who clearly opposes most of the moral values they claim to espouse?

To understand this support, we have to consider what generally happens when a person is mad and flies into a rage.

First, the person acts hastily and without thinking. There's no intellectual reflection or consideration. It's all about raw emotions. In the heat of the moment, the person thinks only of revenge, self-preservation and winning.

This same passion can be clearly seen among evangelicals. When level-headed Republicans try to promote true conservatism and explain the problems surrounding a Trump election, they are met with instant rejection.

After Cal Thomas and other conservatives made strong arguments for opposing Trump, they faced criticism but no solid intellectual (or Biblical) arguments. Thomas noted: "I was not disappointed, or rather I am disappointed that no one who reacted negatively rebutted any of the arguments I, or the other contributors,

made about why we think a President Trump would not pursue conservative goals.”

Trump supporters are voting not with their heads, but with their hearts. And in the game of politics and marketing, the hearts will usually win.

Second, the person who flies into a rage often reaches for the nearest and most lethal weapon available to subdue his or her opponent. Little or no thought is given to non-lethal force or diplomatic options.

For many evangelicals, the end justifies the means. Like Malcolm X (believe it or not), they wish to win “by any means necessary.” Their goal, which is wrapped up in threads of pragmatism, is to elect a Republican president at any cost. For them, it doesn’t matter whether the candidate is extreme, toxic, racist, self-centered or hedonistic. It’s all about using the most lethal force available to get the job done.

Their reliance on Trump is not unlike the communities in the movies of the Old West that placed all their hope on a hired gun. Unfortunately, the gunslinger was a hired gun for a reason: He was a killer, and he had no respect for life.

Third, the person who flies into a rage eventually recognizes his or her mistake, but only when it is too late. It is at this time that the person feels regret and asks, “What was I thinking?”

While it is doubtful that Trump will be elected president, we can only imagine what may happen if he should ever hold that important office. His supporters, I believe, would discover on day one that his promises were just that: promises.

His lack of knowledge about government affairs and his incompetence in working with people would bring the country to its knees. His supporters would find that it’s one thing to buy and sell casinos and quite another to lead a country. His many flaws and contradictions would become apparent, and his disdain for people who are not like him would weaken the office in ways that they never imagined.

When reality sets in, his supporters would come to their senses. They would ask, “What were we thinking?”

But let us hope that they will come to their senses before it’s too late.

It’s OK to be angry. But a wise person once said, “Be ye angry, and sin not.” That’s good advice. For if we let our anger run its course, it could lead not only to blind rage, but also to unthinkable consequences and unnecessary trouble that would make America anything but “great again.”

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