

The Decalogue for a Spirituality of Nonviolence

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(As seen in From Violence to Wholeness)*

Active Nonviolence calls us:

1. To learn to recognize and respect “*the sacred*” (“that of God” as the Quakers say) in every person, including in ourselves, and in every piece of Creation. The acts of the nonviolent person help to free this *Divine* in the opponent from obscurity or captivity.
2. To accept oneself deeply, “who I am” with all my gifts and richness, with all my limitations, errors, failings and weaknesses, and to realize that I am accepted by God. To live in the truth of ourselves, without excessive pride, with fewer delusions and false expectations.
3. To recognize that what I resent, and perhaps even detest, in another, comes from my difficulty in admitting that this same reality lives also in me. To recognize and renounce my own violence, which becomes evident when I begin to monitor my words, gestures, reactions.
4. To renounce dualism, the “we-they” mentality (Manicheism). This divides us into “good people/bad people” and allows us to demonize the adversary. It is the root of authoritarian and exclusivist behavior. It generates racism and makes possible conflicts and wars.
5. To face fear and to deal with it not mainly with courage but with love.
6. To understand and accept that the *New Creation*, the building up of the *Beloved Community* is always carried forward with others. It is never a “solo act.” This requires patience and the ability to pardon.
7. To see ourselves as a part of the whole creation to which we foster a relationship of love, not of mastery, remembering that the destruction of our planet is a profoundly spiritual problem, not simply a scientific or technological one. *We are one.*
8. To be ready to suffer, perhaps even with joy, if we believe this will help liberate the *Divine* in others. This includes the acceptance of our place and moment in history with its trauma, with its ambiguities.
9. To be capable of celebration, of joy, when the presence of God has been accepted, and when it has not been to help discover and recognize this fact.
10. To slow down, to be patient, planting the seeds of love and forgiveness in our own hearts of those around us. Slowly we will grow in love, compassion and the capacity to forgive.