

### Racism vs Prejudice

As self-aware human beings, faced with our own mortality on a daily basis, we are frequently subjected to the popular phrase, "you can't take it with you." Some folks take this to mean that we shouldn't worry about money or material things. It seems like sound advice.

If we can agree that material wealth has no function after we die, then it is easy to argue that neither does it truly matter while we are alive. It matters in the sense that it can make our existence more comfortable, but it has no bearing on who we truly are as people.

If people are positive, self-reliant and hard-working, they naturally tend to increase in wealth and social status. If we put a lens on ourselves that causes us to view things in terms of capitalism vs communism, some may claim that this statement is only true in a capitalist society. This argument is true, but only contextually.

The argument that self-reliance is only virtuous in a capitalist society disregards the fact that only in a communist society does the attribute of self-reliance become a non-issue. Every system (other than communism) rewards consistent, reliable hard working individuals. Even an individual outside of any society that lives completely off the land is rewarded by hard work and punished by laziness.

Communism is a utopian ideal, and rightfully so. We dream of a society where all of our free time could be devoted to our own creative pursuits. A world where we weren't deprived of our precious energy due to working a job in order to survive. We would prefer a world where those unable to kindle the same productive spirit as ourselves could be taken care of. We feel this way simply because we are aware of their suffering (even if self-inflicted). We understand the painful truth that this cannot be achieved until a post-scarcity society is truly realized.

A post-scarcity society would be defined as a society where all needs of the people are inherently provided for. Those who have been duped into believing that we have already achieved a post-scarcity society only have such beliefs because of a lack of awareness. Without a machine like the replicators in *Star Trek*, someone will always have to work to provide for the needs of the people. The replicator is a machine that creates (out of thin air) any type of food a person desires.

Even with replicator technology, not all members of society would be free of duty, as maintenance and order would still need to be provided. Still, this technology is the only logical solution to make any communist society a successful one. So, only until we have some form of advanced *Star Trek* technology, hard work, self-reliance and righteous creation are the most important virtues in regards to success.

But if self-reliance is important for any individual (because of the wealth and success it facilitates), how can this also hold true considering *you can't take it with you*?

With this argument, we may tend to border on the nihilistic. If no amount of hard work can secure the defeat of

our own mortality, then how do we find a reason to take care of ourselves and go on living?

Maybe this is a case of true intersectionality, where the ideas of self-reliance and responsibility run congruent with the ideas of self-empowerment and individuality. Maybe these ideas have no real function unless combined together with all of the other ideals that make up a successful human being.

Success is completely self-defined, but the template which allows us to define it are based on a uniform foundation. Once we assert ourselves as an intelligent, free thinking and compassionate individual, then we are able to move on from there and "find our own truth," as the expression goes. The individuation process is the groundwork that must be laid before our "truth" can be found.

What matters more than what we possess physically are the things that we can control, which are our words and actions. Sometimes, right action can bring us material wealth, but the material things that we possess and consume do not define who we are.

It is unfortunate that as a society today, we frequently try to assume the intent of other people. We point fingers, accuse people using loosely defined terms, and we take offense when others don't seem to share the same ideals as we do.

A good example of this is the right to free speech. At the same time, we can disagree with what someone is saying yet still support their right to say it. We must draw a line at action, however, as certain actions can cause harm and added suffering to other individuals. This is not our right to inflict on others (without consent). This is why only actions can be legislated within a civil society, but free thought and speech must be

supported unilaterally. We must consider all ideas. We must provide a platform for all ideas, good and bad, and trust that the good will succeed (because of the righteous and superior action they breed).

It is right to place emphasis on our choices of words as well as our actions. Words are expressions of our feelings and actions are expressions of our character. Expressions, in this context, are what we do that is observable to other individuals (observable being the key word). If it is true that *you can't take it with you*, these two expressions are the only things we have that are truly *ours*. We may create something physical *through* these expressions, but whatever is created is not ours to possess on anything more than a surface and transient level.

Words and actions are expressions of our thoughts and ideas. As individuals, it is our choice as to when we should turn our feelings and thoughts into words and actions. Feelings are expressed in words, and thoughts are expressed in actions.

It is arguable that we can control the way we feel about things, but it is sure that we can control the words we use to express our feelings. Words only have power if we choose to accept them as truth. Words have no real control over what people do, only action (or the threat of action) can control and manipulate others.

It is our choice whether or not to take offense to the words of others. If we don't accept them, we don't have to acknowledge them. It is not our right or obligation to silence another, nor is it our right to take action against them. It is, however, completely acceptable to take action for yourself (accepting all consequences).

It may be true that we can't help the way we feel about things, but we can use our intellect to change the way we think about things. If someone calls us a rude name, we are able to justify not acknowledging the person by rationalizing why they chose to say what they did. We almost always find it was no fault of our own that caused their thinking, and their reasoning is false. False statements come from ignorance, and nothing can be created on a foundation of ignorance.

The whole idea here is to emphasize that people should be judged by their actions, and not by their words. Words can only hurt us if we consent for them to do so. Improper action of others can cause us suffering through no fault of our own. Actions are concrete displays that are provable in a court of law with evidence (and by the consequences they set in motion). Improper words are only ignorance, and ignorance is always overpowered by truth.

After the George Floyd riots began in May of 2020, racism once again became a mainstream topic. Not in the sense that racism was ever a non-issue, but in the sense that it was on the minds of our collective population in a greater way than it had been in a long time. Racism is a topic that should always be in the back of everyone's mind, as the reflection on an issue is the only way to maintain proper action in regards to it. That is to say, when we forget why something is morally wrong we begin to believe it must be right.

We must accept that as human animals, we are easily conditioned. If you are black and as a child, you consistently observe a group of Asian kids terrorizing your local neighborhood, you may tend not to trust Asians as an adult. If you're born white and your mother had three different marriages

that ended by her husband cheating on her with a Puerto Rican man, you may develop anger issues towards people that remind you of your pain.

As a rational, intelligent human being, you understand that your personal experience is not the whole truth, and that each individual deserves fair treatment. We must be compassionate enough to accept that even if a person has racist thoughts (caused by negative conditioning), it is not our place to hold it against them unless their racist thoughts are turned into actions.

There is a word for actions that manifest due to racist ideas, and that word is prejudice. The legal definition of the word being *harm that results from an action*. Racism is an issue, but it not one that we can begin to address until we handle the issue of prejudice. This was the ultimate goal of the American civil rights movement.

Racism is a thought, prejudice is an action. Actions speak far louder than words.

The wisest of those civil rights leaders understood that racism can only be eliminated over time by supporting strong families that pass down ideas of tolerance, coexistence and compassion. Those leaders understood that it would take generations, but they knew that by legislating against prejudice and by integrating into the American system that it was sure to happen eventually. They knew things would get better for every generation, and that was enough.

After George Floyd died, it became apparent (to the rest of the world) that this long process of eliminating racism has not been happening at a fast enough rate. It has become apparent that issues of race and issues of poverty are closely related,

and it seems those most concerned with racism are located mostly in low-income areas. The income disparity was the ultimate tipping point in regards to the issue, and when combined with the spark of police brutality and racism, protests and riots ensued.

A spark will not light a fire unless there is something there to burn, and the black community was ready to ignite after being locked down for weeks due to the fear of coronavirus. The lockdown was an accelerant, the economically distressed minority communities in the United States were a bed of dry leaves ready to burn.

We must not envelope ourselves in conspiracy theories or postulation, we must face the problem as is. We must handle it with our rational minds (and teach our children compassion for the sake of a better future). It is obvious that no individual who agrees with these words would participate in any form of looting or rioting, and we must understand that those who commit these acts have been tricked (for lack of a better word) into them. They don't understand that the ultimate harm will fall on the communities they are trying to help.

This is a political issue. Politics are about money. Democrats support riots to scare taxpayers out of a community and lower the property values, so they can turn around and buy them cheaply to redevelop them. This brings wealth to those that lobby and support their political party. Republicans support law and order because they want people to maintain a flow of currency that hides their manipulation of the Federal Reserve. *Both* of these ideas benefit *both* political parties, and *all* are ultimately concerned with maintaining the status quo (so they can participate in war-for-profit all around the world).

Politicians are corrupt. People hate each other because the media that they take in encourages them to. When people are at their breaking point, they are easily conditioned. This is the society we live in. Constantly at our breaking point and ready to fall into the next trap.

The next time you meet someone different from you, smile and treat them the same as everyone else, regardless of whatever you think. We won't hold it against you, and we *will* believe what you *do* (and not try to assume what you think). We will teach our children about your sacrifice.

We *must* stop talking about racism if we ever expect it to go away. We *must* be tolerant, and we *must* judge people by their actions. We must be vigilant to stamp out prejudice every time we observe it, but we must not project our feelings onto others and assume their thoughts or intentions. We must judge them by their actions.

