

Pride & Peer Pressure: A Tale of Two Rights

Firstly, I apologize for the abysmal title. I just couldn't for the life of me conceive a more appropriate headliner. If you could find it in your hearts to forgive me, we can proceed. If not, I suppose your journey ends here.

"I'm right, you're wrong!" has seemingly become a self-conscious adage for the millennial generation. Worst of all, the negligent, irresponsible and unaccountable behaviour the Internet stimulates from both anonymity and popularity has enchantingly swollen this sense of self-righteousness. Albeit, such a blatant claim is a massive generalization on my part, but it does not lack justification – Western society cultivates the belief that right and wrong birth in the eye of the beholder and the only person we ought to hold accountable is our *self*. While personal responsibility is undoubtedly noble, the greater context of such belief is found wanting. Weaved from the same fabric there is a polar socio-moral that emphasizes truth ought to be subjective and therefore should be determined by a majority ruling of *embellished belief*, which more often than not leads to "peer pressure" dissemination through social movements. You'll often see famous actors or artists push for you to adopt such a belief as more virtuous and morally right than your own, ironically. It should be said that both views on truth believe right and wrong to be subjective propositions, truth is only as right and real as you want it to be so long as it fits in with the collective vibe. Perhaps you may be wondering *how can we be right and wrong at the same time and yet remain true to ourselves? – And can we even truly be sure about whether we're right or wrong if certainty begins anonymously and is determined by popularity?*

It is no wonder why it seems people want witnesses as blank canvases for expression rather than friends who challenge their thinking – truth initiates in *self*. They use social media to splurge their thoughts without introspection, they gain instant gratification from having anything they want at their fingertips anywhere and anytime, they momentarily pledge their undying allegiance to anything they "like" right then and there, and they update statuses for immediate emotional attention. It is true that online security has never really been our strong suit, but the level of self-absorption is just obscene.

Is it wrong of me to say that thinking is a virtue nowadays? Thinking in and of itself has been hijacked by contradictory social constructs, the anonymous nature of online dialogue rouses a lack of liability and empty convictions mixed with a proclivity to "go viral", which seems to copy-and-paste a self-committed aspiration *to be right* paired with an inconsistent unwillingness to be *in the right*. I fear the social constructs of online culture have overcome our generation with black-and-white discernment in fashionable "philosophical" clothing for the sake of social self-preservation via pride and peer pressure.

At its core, it should not come surprising that all this chatter is not new. It is merely an inflamed symptom of the same old conceit that has fraught human rationale since our antediluvian ancestors, albeit a little oversized this time around, but nonetheless a puffed up confidence in our postmodern paradigm. Ultimately, if right and wrong birth with *self*, truth is a matter of pride and accountability is instantaneous: "I'm right, you're wrong!" Even if majority of people disagree with you, there is no objective basis as individuals for why they are right. In other words, *who started the truth? – And why must we stick to it?* Peer pressure, of course. As usual, chameleon types will bend their belief to mold with the *status quo* to preserve such social

“righteousness” in order to appear intrinsically self-made. And the only thing that can possibly overrule such thought is if truth begins and ends objectively outside of our mind, if we extract what we have been taught and remember truth is an “is” and not an “as”.

To be *in the right* means that truth, reality and morality does not initiate with human thinking, but there is an extrinsic aspect to our reality that is true, moral and right, irrespective of human-to-human communication. To be *in the right* in the Biblical sense of things is to be Holy, to be set apart from the world as sons and daughters of God, to be inline with God’s law and commandments, to keep what ought to be a distinct attribute of God as *sacred*. In a world where nothing is sacred and all manner of sacrilegious appetites can be accessed online, truth is squandered by the wayside and *to be right* is a matter of pride or peer pressure, take your pick.

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