

## EQUALITY AND THE FOLLY OF PREJUDICE

Everybody says that all people are equal and everybody says they want to believe that.

It is thought that it is not our common human nature that makes us all equal. Reason says that if we are equal then what make us equal is our personhood. If we were non-human persons we would still be equal to human persons. The equality then does not mean you have to be a human to have rights. It is enough to be a person.

That means an alien like one out of the Alien movies would still have the same rights as a person if it is a person.

Not all persons necessarily have the kind of body we have. Dolphins may be as smart as us and persons like us though they do not have the bodies to do the things we do.

If your personhood manifests as a human nature, that does not mean you have to be human to be a person. It also means that if your equality comes from your personhood then it has nothing to do with being male or female. These are to personhood what apples and oranges are to fruit. Fruit is accidentally not necessarily apples or oranges. You can imagine that we might have had something else if apples and oranges never existed. Your human nature does not guarantee that you are a person. Your human nature is an attribute. Your sex or gender is an attribute. They do not affect you as a person but only the kind of person you are.

Today equality is valued so highly that people are willing to risk trampling over the rights of some in order to force their vision of equality on them. It is thought that equality is so important that it is better to impose it badly than not to impose it at all.

Equality

Justice and avoiding discrimination go together. There is no right to discriminate. I know that I have no right to discriminate. Males are equal to females. Adults are equal to children. People of one race are equal to people of another race. People who are homosexual are equal to those who are heterosexual.

I see people as people and treat them accordingly.

It is a mistake to think myself better than anybody else. If I meet a person who does much wrong I must recognise that me not being like that doesn't mean I am better than he or she is. It only means that chance gave me the power to improve myself sooner than it did her or him. Once I was a big mistake maker too.

To judge others as equals is to respect myself as them. If I start thinking I can treat them as I please, I will have to accept somebody else doing that to me. Its harmful for me to see myself as better or worse than others.

A person is consciousness which uses a body and a brain. Consciousness is the essential you. The king is equal to the beggar in the street for both have the defining feature of consciousness. Some mystical groups insist that the one power has become all those different beings so that I can give and I can receive.

To love another person is to love myself. To make hate is to invite others to hate me for hate is not rational.

There has never has been a teaching that has been as inspirational for the recognition of equality as this.

To recognise my rights and my equality with other people no matter who they are, no matter what they are, I have to see that my rights are mine for no other reason than that I am a living human being. Rights are not bestowed on me by God. God implies they have to be attached to me but are not naturally or necessarily mine because I am a person. God is used as a crutch to give rights, absolute rights, to people. These are rights that are rights no matter even if everybody thinks they are not.

Equality is seen in Christianity as a core matter of what faith in God and God are about. It is destroyed by saying there are invisible beings and zygotes who are as important as people. In a society that ignores religious matters, all that matters then is not God giving equality but human persons giving it. It becomes about equality in the eyes of human beings.

Equality involves equal opportunity.

Equality hopes for equal outcomes.

If you think of God wanting man to be equal that is not the same as thinking of man being equal that is not going to be easy. Equality is hard enough anyway but that makes it worse. God equality is really about equal opportunities such as love and compassion so it is not going to appeal to most people. And as for the equal outcomes God stands for that which is there when the world is passing away for he is not about the world.

The state only recognises my rights. It does not give them to me. Because sometimes it is not possible to treat everybody the same, the state has to lay down what rights people have. The state does not however make the rights but it only respects them. The state does not give you rights.

Equality and fairness are thought to be different things. Equality means that all are valued the same but fairness is supposed to mean people can be treated differently because of the circumstances. For example, the good citizen has freedom and the criminal does not and languishes in prison. Equality and fairness are exactly the same thing. The criminal should be in jail because he is equal to others and because it is fair.

One thing that is vital to secularism is working for as much equality as possible. Without religion, we would be on a more level playing field. Religion is about treating people differently: eg Muslims can't have communion in a Catholic chapel. Mormons won't do weddings in the name of Wiccan gods. Secularism then if not anti-religion still results in people weaning themselves off religion. If loving the bad person and hating their badness is possible then it is secularism makes it possible. It is impossible to give it a religious spin and call it, "Love sinner hate sin", and mean it when love is about furthering equality and religion is certainly not pro-equality. Without religion we would be all equal.

Concerns about the spiritual and being religious create new inequalities and temptations to endure and further inequalities to worry about as if there is not enough. This means that demands made on the religious level when the religion is untrue may be satisfied at the expense of real demands. If you demand rights you only imagine you have that is not equality and somebody else has to suffer. You have robbed yourself of the things you should be worrying about.

We suffer from tribe like impulses and want certain people - our own kind - to thrive at the expense of others who we do not consider to be as valuable or important to us. We like to think that an equality formula is going to help solve these problems. Our dislike of treating people as equals and feeling they are is very complicated. Family and friendship by definition oppose egalitarianism. And religion therefore does as well for it says that the family and friendship are necessary for it to exist. Christians claim to be a religious family. You can't have a Church in which nobody likes or values anybody else. The nearest we can get to egalitarianism is by becoming people and not religionists. There is enough to promote inequality without religion coming along to help. And also, religion seeks to make family and friendship somehow sacred. We can celebrate them but seeing them as somehow divine is too much of an endorsement.

Religious people meddle in politics on the basis that all people non-religious and religious are equal. But it is people as people that are equal. Religion has nothing to do with it. There is no reason or excuse for religion meddling in politics. Get involved in politics if you want to but as a person not as a religionist.

Atheists value their families and do not want to be part of a religious family for they are well aware that that is going to far and giving up any right to moan about prejudice and bigotry. Supernatural beliefs do little or nothing to help us deal with the suffering that comes upon us all and the frustration and the disappointment. In fact they make the problem worse.

The Bible has no language of rights. The Old Testament uses a word called mishpat which is the nearest it gets to mentioning rights - its a term that means practical justice. The New Testament speaks of exousia or rights or authority and speaks of them being renounced for the sake of love (page 152, We Don't Do God).

George Carey says that "at the heart of the modern notion of equality is a fundamental relativism" (page 154, We Don't Do God). He explains that this is in essence a refusal to make a distinction between "being" and "doing". Thus he argues that the rights of the adulterer are equal to the rights of the wife he has betrayed and we must not judge between them.

Women, children and men of every race and sexual orientation are all equal – that is, all are equally valuable. While it is true that not all are equal in the things they can do this by no means shows that all are not equal in themselves. Let us prove this.

If all are not equal, inequality is determined either by the degree of intelligence or virtue. Religion would have to say that if this is the case, then clearly whoever is the most devoted to God is superior to others who are less devoted. Atheists would be at the very bottom rung of the ladder. Religion endangers egalitarianism for it teaches that God comes first meaning that his authorised representatives must be treated as special. If God is that great then clearly those who formulate belief in God

and defend it must be greater than the God they invent! If we think inequality is determined by intelligence and or virtue then clearly belief in God or religion is only going to make us worse.

It is mad to look down on anyone who is allegedly not as intelligent as you are for intelligence is not as important as having a good nature and we all have the same good nature. Intelligence is no good when you are evil so it is not good in itself. If allegedly stupid people should be discriminated against what about children? The attitude leads to child-abuse. The so-called intellectuals have little to be proud of. The real intellectual focuses principally on right and wrong and what they are. That is all the Humanist does and that is why the Humanist stresses that the propagation of the truth as we know it is paramount.

It is chance that makes one person more talented or intelligent than another so there is no reason for that person to think that they are superior for they have made not made themselves what they are. If we have free will there would be some justification for a sense of smug superiority. If there is a God and he makes people the way they are then he want us to look down on the people he has made less wise and talented than us. We would have to because we cannot blame chance.

All people are equally good and valuable. Evil people are not evil in themselves but evil forces have taken over them. Belief in free will denies this. It challenges the fact that people are equally good and so it is pro-discrimination and pro-injustice. It is uncondusive to the right attitude. Discrimination always starts with the view that some people are not as good in themselves as others.

One subtle form of sexism claims that men and women are equal but have different roles to play. The husband is supposed to work while the wife stays at home looking after the children. Some men are better with children than their wives are. Some women are better manual workers than some men are. Isn't it obvious that those who preach about roles are being arbitrary? They hide their hatred and sexism in remarks like, "We support the right of women to be women and treated as women!" Was there ever a chauvinist who wouldn't have said the same thing? To say, "I am not sexist but I just hold that men and women have different roles", is the epitome of hypocrisy for this role stuff is what sexism is all about.

It is obvious that the best has to be thought of everyone for if we are going to start thinking the worst there is no place we can stop or think we should stop at. Yet racists and sexists claim that other races or the opposite sex are inferior for they are allegedly less moral or beneficial than they are. It is insane to suggest that badness follows racial boundaries. There are evil and silly people in all races. Recall your own failures to show yourself that.

Judge no one by appearances, skin colour or by your feelings. A sinister looking person can be better than the normal looking one.

Do not boast of your good deeds in such a way that it makes others feel inferior. To be full of pride and show it is to humiliate yourself for others will not respect you. Do not boast about tomorrow for you don't know what it will bring.

Equality is a principle. Equality would require that what religion you are in or are not in is a matter of indifference. The Catholic notion that religious equality is heresy and nonsense would have to be dismissed. The Catholics claim to be the one true Church and that all others though not completely wrong are not the one true Church. Equality shows that it is morally wrong or bad to follow religion. Instead of being neutral about religion, the state would have to at least ask people to abandon religion. Religion would be like a legalised brothel. The law cannot punish it but doesn't like it either.

It is wrong to revere equality and then participate in a voluntary organisation such as a religion that will not practice it. For example, Catholics do not allow gay activists to teach in Catholic schools. Leave the organisation and vote for equality with your feet.

Real equality seeks to minimise inequality. Therefore minimal authority is needed. Do not have clergy.

Realistically it is hard to get society to implement equality correctly. Too many people don't really believe in it properly. Religion is dangerous for it is based on the glorification and deification and divinisation of inequality. For example, in Catholicism women cannot be priests and yet Catholicism claims to be one and holy. It celebrates its errors and injustices. It calls itself the people of God. Also, great inspiring books cannot become part of the scriptures. One religion cannot be viewed as acceptable as another. Jesus cannot be seen as good as a much loved Hindu idol. Holy people who are better than any priests cannot say Mass unless they become priests. Religion is dangerous. Nothing should be revered or adored when it is a sanctification and endorsement of inequality and unfairness. Gay Catholics complaining about how the Church treats them is bizarre. What do they expect? They are weak minded and childish and perhaps spoilt.

The Church says that people are equal as persons or equal in what they are but not equal as regards abilities and goodness (page 305, Moral Philosophy by Joseph Rickaby). So you can be valuable one way and not as valuable in another. One who believes this has no business having a go at racists or sexists for his own belief makes them legitimate and his disapproval

of racism and sexism would be pomposity. Why? Racists do not deny that there is a way in which all people can be equal but they do deny that this proves they should be treated as equals. You can regard a person as valuable as a person and still look down on that person and discriminate against that person because of what that person does. The only solution to the problem is to say that no matter how evil a person is that person is still as valuable as the saint in every way. In the same way, a diamond that falls into excrement is still as precious as the clean one. It is only people like us determinists that have the solution. The solution is to deny that our value is decreased in any sense by our evil actions for evil is a sickness.

If it is true that not all people are equal, then it follows that no culture but one, no country but one and no religion but one has the best people. Religion will lead to war if it thinks its people are more equal than others and it puts the divine sanction on this by praying and pretending to be on good terms with God.

We don't really feel equal to one another. Many people leave us in a state of awe. There are people we look down on. And we know we all have different and unequal abilities. The person who is good at finance can be terrible at cooking. One person can be the best force in the community while nobody else takes the trouble. Is God and spirituality a way of compensating ourselves? Do they give you a way to be equal? Yes. If you do nothing for others but seem to pray successful prayers for others you will feel better than the community altruist we have just mentioned. Also, religion and faith urge you to combat atheists and philosophers though you cannot know what you are talking about. You pump yourself up with arrogance and feel smarter than the smart.

## RIGHTS

A right is a benefit to which you are justly entitled even if you are not free and capable of deserving the benefit because you are too young or mentally ill. Rights are based on basic needs. They cannot be based on anything else. People only have a right to what gives them a decent life. Surplus money should be forcibly taken from the wealthy by the law for the benefit of the underprivileged.

Rights are not based on desires. Desires are too changeable and we can want what we should not have. Rights presuppose the supreme value of the person for a worthless article can't have rights. The biggest right comes first when you cannot have them all. The most basic human right is the right to life.

When we don't have free will we have a right to be totally happy.

We don't have a right to have a child for you don't need to have one. But if the population got too low you would have the duty and therefore the right to have a child.

There is no real problem in determining what the rights of the person are. The difficulties are in deciding what is ethical for ethics entails putting higher rights first and what rights come first is disputed for there are many complicated and different situations.

## DARK SIDE OF EQUALITY

We only feel jealous and envious when we see the other person as being our equal and feel we should have the good things she or he has or that we think she or he has. That could be why equal rights people are often so hostile and are in the grip of a rabid sense of entitlement.

The problem with equality is that working for it is difficult and definitely impossible so making all feel they should be equal is going to lead to division and rancour. Trying to make a company fair and inclusive is a problem if you don't have enough of group x to fill a quota. You may have to turn away some of the best brains. And what one person wants from equality differs from the next. Remember how many LGBT are against same sex marriage. The problems then are bad anyway but saying we are all equal in God and because God has made us equal only makes it worse. Each person is a vulnerable person and no matter how strong you are nature is cold and stronger. The person who feels all are equal and who has won their version of equality can feel more secure than they are and from that place of security can end up attacking others who are falsely seen as strong as them. Equality blinds you to the damage you do.

Some argue that if you focus on equality in the eyes of human beings not God then that is dangerous because human nature always gives out special treatment to certain groups and is bad at seeing inequality. And its dangerous to rest equality on fallible human judgement anyway. It can be mistaken, abused and may lead to groups thinking they should be more equal than others for equality is just based on whoever shouts the loudest and who the government favours. Society can be driven apart by fears about equality if it is only based on what people think.