

## Does Error have Rights?

“Error necessitates sacrifice to correct it, and serious error necessitates serious sacrifice. To accept the truth means to sacrifice – and if you have rejected the truth for a long time, then you have run out a dangerously large sacrificial debt” – Jordan Peterson, 12 Rules for Life.

If you don't make the sacrifice then somebody else has to make it instead and that is down to you. You are their oppressor. If you don't make the sacrifice then you are passing on a worse sacrifice to somebody else. That person may not be in a position to choose but will be forced to pay the price.

Fulton J Sheen wrote that you must always be tolerant to people but never to lies or errors. “Tolerance applies only to persons, but never to truth.” Error is not ignorance when the person is not at fault for being ignorant. Error is more deliberate than that. It can manifest as ignorance when the person has no excuse for not learning.

All error is just crying out for refutation. It is our duty to grant it its wish. Error and lies are intolerant towards the truth. Truth has to tolerate itself by being intolerant of them. Tolerance towards them is intolerance of truth.

Error has no rights but persons do. Error is bad for it means the person who errs is not what they should be so persons come before error. If error has rights then the error of the person who believes he or she has no rights is to be respected which is absurd. Persons come before beliefs and errors. Therefore you cannot harm or kill a person for not sharing your beliefs. Religion expects devotion that costs you your life either by physical death or by a living death and from this it is clear that error is imagined to be worse than death or suffering.

Error has no rights - do we have the right to believe that two plus two is five? – and truth has the right to overcome it. Nobody encourages scepticism or Pyrrhonism which is the belief that we can know or believe nothing. The sceptic or Pyrrhonist can be happy and live a normal life and act say as if poison can kill in case it will but he or she denies knowing that it will kill. So we do not oppose scepticism just because we want people to be safe and happy but because we acknowledge that all have to investigate the truth about the central things in life. We want the sceptic to believe we exist for we find it insulting when he or she says they do not believe one way or the other. This implies that all should investigate main truths of life and that religion is to be shunned for it does not encourage this. It implies that all should propagate the truth as they see it and be open to correction. It implies that anybody who thinks they are right has to be divisive to some extent which is why Humanism alone can do this justifiably for it has theorems to prove that its main points are right.

Many religion promoters say, “Present the gospel to unbelievers. If they reject it do not press them. They have the right from God to reject the gospel.” You have the freedom to do what is wrong but that does not mean you have the right to it.

A right is based on the concept of justice. Rights are based on justice or needs. So why do those missionaries for religion lie? They are really thinking of themselves. They want to promote the right to deliberately refuse to heed the truth and to promote lies. Why maybe out of habit and a lack of concern for right and wrong.

The idea of erring being right and acceptable and good is incoherent. If we have the right to be wrong it would only be as long as we are erring in good faith. Then its the good faith that is respected not the error. Nobody has the right to refuse to know the truth unless it will be too painful for them. But in that case they are bound to try and face up to it and we are bound to help them to. Nobody has the right to deliberately err.

Do people have a right to err though error in itself has no rights? No. We have to put up with error for we are frail beings but that does not means error should be happening. It is not fair to truth to treat an error as truth so if we should err then justice is nonsense. The idea of erring being right and acceptable and good is incoherent.

Some think that Paul in Romans 14 commands respect for the erring consciences even of Christians. But elsewhere Paul and Jesus insisted that people must be hit with the truth right in the face and that was the way they preached. What Romans 14 is saying is that Christians must not judge a brother who does wrong thinking it is the right thing to do (v13). It is people who do not know all about the gospel who are meant (v14). If they should know then they can be judged. The chapter gives nobody the right to err. It implies that if you do know or should know, then there is no excuse for having an erring conscience.

The Bible says God gives light about right and wrong to all who want it. So all who have an erring conscience are implicitly accused of defying him.

A person in Hell who claims to have been sincere and well-meaning in his errors about God and religion and is now in Hell for believing the wrong things is told, "Having allowed oneself to drift, unresisting, unpraying, accepting every half-conscious solicitation from our desires, we reached a point where we no longer believed the Faith. Just in the same way, a jealous man, drifting and unresisting, reaches a point at which he believes lies about his best friend: a drunkard reaches a point at which (for the moment) he actually believes that another glass will do him no harm. The beliefs are sincere in the sense that they do occur as psychological events in the man's mind. If that's what you mean by sincerity they are sincere, and so were ours. But errors which are sincere in that sense are not innocent."

We conclude that error has only one right and that right is to be fixed. But those who err need gentleness and patience and respect not because I condone the error but to heal it.

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Is Christianity a Cult?