

I WILL BE TOLERANT OF BIRDS THAT I FLOCK WITH, BUT NOT OF YOU!

Opening Questions:

- Do you believe you are a tolerant person?
- What is a truly tolerant person?
- Do tolerant people hate, despise, have animosity towards or dislike other people who have different beliefs?
- If I claim to be a tolerant person, yet I judge and label a person as "intolerant," am I not being intolerant myself in that very action?
- How does a person who claims to be tolerant know what is right and wrong and thus worth holding or defending as a "tolerant belief"?
- Should I hold or rely on beliefs that are fallacious?

One of the most popular beliefs in today's western culture based on relativism is the belief called "tolerance." It sounds like a great belief to hold and to practice towards others. However, there are some important distinctions to be made about the idea. Sadly, those who preach tolerance the loudest are some of the most intolerant people. What this means is that these people hold a contradictory, self-serving belief that only makes them hypocritical and brings no light to others.

Following are three versions or possible definitions for a "tolerant person":

Version 1 - The Most Popular

To be a tolerant person, you must accept all other people's beliefs or behaviors, and if you cannot accept something, you must not express disapproval towards the person(s) who hold the view or engage in the practice.

A belief that includes this principle - "you must accept all other people's beliefs or behaviors" - is a self-defeating statement which means it is impossible to practice. The person who says they hold to that belief and encounters a person who "believes they should not accept all other people's beliefs or behaviors," *will contradict their own belief by rejecting that person's belief and judging it as wrong.*

So, for example, let's say person 1 is a person who says they hold to this version of tolerance. Let's say person 2 comes along and says, "I believe that homosexual marriage is wrong." Person 1 reacts to person 2's statement and says, "oh, your belief is wrong, you are a bigot." Person 1 has not accepted Person 2's belief and in so doing is in contradiction to their own stated tolerance belief. Please reread this slowly to understand it.

In essence, this belief is promoted by those who desire to believe that there is no universal moral standard by which people should live - just *their* standard. In so doing, they practice hypocrisy regarding not applying their tolerance belief to others who disagree.

Version 2 - Better Than Version 1 But Still Deficient

To be a tolerant person, you must accept your culture's majority views/beliefs of acceptable human beliefs or behaviors, and if you cannot accept them, you must not express disapproval towards the person(s) who hold the view or engage in the practice.

This statement is better than the first self-contradicting and thus false statement just examined, but it still contains two fatal flaws. First, who decides what the "majority" views/beliefs are, and by what standard do you judge them as right or wrong? For example, let's say most people in a nation/society other than the United States believe that American people are generally evil. Are the majority of people in that society "tolerant" of American people? According to the above belief, yes they are if they do not *express* disapproval of American people. However, the truth is that human belief drives human behavior, thus exposing the second flaw. If a group of people believes that American people are generally evil, then they will very likely manifest behavior that aligns with that belief (Most Islamic Jihadists are a good example). It is unreasonable to believe that people who hold a belief like, "those people are evil" will not somehow manifest that belief with consistent behavior when opportunities arise.

Thus, the best this version of being a tolerant person can do is to leave people confused and unsure with no standard to reasonably sort things out.

Version 3 - The Truly Tolerant Person

To be a tolerant person, you should not want to cause harm to others, nor desire they be harmed no matter how different they are from you or no matter how much you disagree with their non-ethical (not unethical, but non-ethical meaning not addressing how people ought to treat each other) beliefs. The genuinely tolerant person will be careful or sensitive in the way they seek to discuss an issue with the person with whom they disagree. (If they are engaged in a harmful behavior

towards others, you should want them to stop and attempt to stop them. If they express an unethical belief, you should try and correct them.)

This statement is not self-contradictory and does not contain the significant flaws of the prior statements. Thus it should be adopted as the only valid definition of a “tolerant” person. It is not. Instead, people hold to some version of the first two definitions of “a tolerant person” above, and they do this due to relativism.

The qualifier's in the genuinely tolerant definition above of "ethical" and "non-behavior impacting" beliefs means we ought to desire to cause no harm to others nor desire harm come to them based on their ideas that would not produce wrongful behavior. However and for example, if someone shares a belief me that, “I think it is good to have sex with young children,” I should want to stop them from acting upon that belief, even as I try not to harm them in that process.

At the most basic level, the popular concept of “tolerance” (version 1 above) is false. If a “tolerant” person judges another person as “intolerant,” then their belief is self-defeating, meaning they contradict themselves. The moment a person proclaiming to be “tolerant” claims or castigates another as “intolerant,” they have no reasonable basis to proclaim or believe that they are tolerant!

What many who proclaim “tolerance” the loudest are saying is that they believe and behave in a right and good manner and others must accept their beliefs and behavior. Those who disagree with their viewpoint are “intolerant bigots” or some other such intolerant label. As we have seen, this practice is illogical and thus false. This practice is also arrogant and virtually guaranteed to cause wrongful conflict. Despite these truths about this practice and way of thinking, it is one of the primary tools that is being used to shut down free speech or free expression of ideas in western cultures.

For example, some homosexuals seem to be eager to proclaim the “tolerance” belief - they want others to tolerate their beliefs and behavior regarding human sexuality. They say that it is intolerant for a person to say (or believe) that a homosexual belief or practice is wrong or harmful. They say that their ideas or behavior are good, right and acceptable and those that state or even believe otherwise are at a minimum intolerant.

It seems to this author that many outspoken homosexuals seem to be unable to refrain from more severe judgments against people who disagree with their beliefs or behavior, and use terms like “hateful,” “bigots,” “homophobic” and the like to label those who disagree with them. Do you see the problem? Even if a person is kind and caring and would never think of harming someone including a homosexual, they are judged as at least “intolerant” by people who hold to the belief - or practice it - and who want others to believe the same way. Even if a person is virtually perfect in gently and sincerely expressing their view

that homosexual behavior is wrong and harmful, they are called "full of hatred" by many homosexuals.

What is the homosexual's standard to justify their beliefs and behavior? They have none other than where relativism leaves people - "because what I believe is right and true for me"; or "because this person or group of people believe it is acceptable." Unfortunately, it also makes the homosexuals who promote the "tolerance" belief, just as hypocritical as the religious people they appear to hate. As can be seen in the behavior and words of many outspoken homosexuals or those homosexuals who actively promote their lifestyle, they do not practice what they preach - they are among the most intolerant people (by any definition) towards others who don't agree with their beliefs and practices. The reader might want to question why that is. For a framework on human sexuality, see *Appendix 4, A Basic Framework for Human Sexuality*.

(Lest you think the author to be biased against homosexuals, I would also say that most religious people do not practice what they preach and also seem to have great difficulty avoiding hypocrisy. In fact, this author would say that we all as humans have difficulty avoiding hypocrisy to some degree. This author believes that a life well lived has two components: First, having the right beliefs to guide one's life, and second, consistently practicing or living out those beliefs. (Of course, this author will argue that the beliefs we ought to adopt as our standard are those given by the Creator's Messenger.)

Concerning avoiding hypocrisy, it is critical to make the distinction between a person's failures to live out what they say they believe in contrast to a person saying the standard they believe needs to be changed to accommodate their behavior. For example, I can say ('preach') that I believe that all high saturated fat food is unhealthy. My standard could be medical or scientific reports or data that demonstrate that indeed high saturated fat diet is bad for human health.

If, however, you catch me eating a high saturated fat food, my response will be telling. If I say, "Oh, well, the evidence that high-fat foods are bad for human health is suspect," then I am justifying my behavior and wrongly attacking the standard to do so. If, however, I said, "well, yes, high-fat food is bad, and I should never eat it, but I fail and occasionally eat it because I enjoy the flavor," my response is not attacking the standard, and thus my answer is more objective and humble.

Unfortunately, we as humans seem to lack clarity when it comes to seeing our faults, and we would rather get what we want (in this example, the flavor of high saturated fat foods), defend ourselves and attack the standard rather than being seen as wrong. What exactly accounts for that? Perhaps self-pride? How does that tendency fit into the physicalist's beliefs? In other words, what physical thing causes self-pride?

Here are some additional examples to illustrate the erroneous nature of the popular "tolerant" belief.

Example A:

An adult person believes that it is good to have sexual relations with 12-year-olds and lives in a nation where that behavior is not “illegal.” The adult's belief is, “It is good and right for me to have sexual relations with 12-year-olds”.

According to the popular tolerant belief, it would be intolerant to attempt to change or correct that adult's viewpoint.

Example B:

A person believes that teaching young children that people group X (Jews, Indians, Black People, etc.) is less valuable human beings than my flesh or “my people” is good and right.

That person's belief ought to be “tolerated,” and to try to convince them otherwise would be intolerant.

Example C:

Adult person A believes that God exists and has given humanity a moral standard both by which to live, and by which they will be held accountable, including that the only acceptable expressions of human sexuality are between a husband and his wife (a man and woman committed to caring for each other for life).

Is this belief “tolerated” and “respected” by the many people who currently live in the US? Here is a very realistic scenario to test if Person A's is treated with tolerance.

Person B, a person who proclaims their “tolerance” belief regularly to others, yells at person A (as person A states his belief publicly calmly and appropriately) and accuses person A of “proclaiming hate speech.”

Does the reader get the point? Will the reader use reason to conclude what is evidently and undeniably true? What is evident is that reason or truth does not play a part in Person B's reaction to Person A, and it is also apparent that Person B is contradicting his own stated “tolerance” belief and thus is acting hypocritically. As such, Person B's corrections of Person A should be ignored, and his hypocritical statements regarding the topic should be seriously questioned, in this case, his “tolerance” belief.

What happens in reality? Person B's words get published by the “objective press” while the same press paints Person B's words in a favorable light and context while subtly (increasingly not so subtly) supporting Person B's contention that Person A is in the wrong or even “full of hate.”

When the laws are changed to support the homosexual view that believing or stating the belief that homosexual behavior is morally wrong is “hate speech” or “evil intolerance,” what do you think is going to happen to those people who speak out their belief that homosexual behavior is wrong? Do you think they will be treated with tolerance?

When the LGBT “community” and those who support them and call people who oppose their agenda “hateful bigots” get the political power to

enforce their view, how do you think those people are going to act towards we who disagree with them? Do you think calm and respectful reason is going to be the path? Do you think "tolerance" is going to characterize their actions towards us? Or do you think that the hatred expressed in their voices as they call us "hateful bigots" might escalate into persecution?

The widespread belief of "tolerance," while sounding good is built on the erroneous foundation of moral or existential relativism. This chapter has demonstrated the error of that widespread belief by showing people who hold to the incorrect definitions of "tolerant" contradict themselves and pronounce self-defeating statements. When people say things that are false - self-defeating or contradictory - those statements ought to be rejected, and reason should be used to find the truth of the matter. Or, at worst, people should civilly agree to disagree.

So, we saw what a truly tolerant person is in this chapter. What about the belief that I need to respect other people's views to be a good person? Let us examine that belief in the next chapter.

Chapter Summary:

- To be a tolerant person, you ought to desire to cause no harm to others, nor desire harm come to them no matter how different they are from you or no matter how much you disagree with their beliefs;
- The genuinely tolerant person will be careful or sensitive in the way they discuss something with the person they disagree with;
- Those who claim to be "tolerant" yet who call others "intolerant" or other negative labels because they don't like their beliefs are contradicting themselves, being hypocritical and thus their claims or judgments that caused them to be hypocritical or contradictory ought to be carefully examined, and usually one will find that reason does not support their judgments.