

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Do the Right Thing

“Those who follow the crowd usually get lost in it.” Anonymous

“Make yourselves sheep and the wolves will eat you.” Benjamin Franklin

“Most people might be doing the same thing, but that doesn’t mean that it is the right thing to do. Aren’t most people in this world unhappy and unsuccessful?” Edmond Mbiaka

“It’s better to walk alone than with a crowd going in the wrong direction.” Diane Grant

Some people need others to join in before doing something, even though it may be the right thing. We want to remember that our jinn wants us to walk in the wrong direction. The direction away from worshipping GOD alone.

So, what makes people choose based on what others think? Author Malcom Gladwell and sociologist Mark Granovetter feel that it has something to do with thresholds.

“Why do otherwise law-abiding citizens suddenly throw rocks through windows? Before Granovetter came along, sociologists tried to explain that kind of puzzling behavior in terms of beliefs. So, the thinking went—you

and I have a set of beliefs. But when you throw the rock through the window, something powerful must have happened in the moment to change your beliefs. Something about the crowd transforms the way you think ... that when people got into a crowd their independent judgment went out the window, and that they somehow became creatures of the crowd, and that there was some kind of miasma of irrationality that would settle over people. And they would act in ways that they would never act if they were by themselves or they weren’t influenced by the mob mentality.”

He doesn’t think that being part of the mob casts some kind of spell that makes everyone irrational. He says it’s all about thresholds. What does Granovetter mean by “threshold”? A belief is an internal thing. It’s a position we’ve taken in our head or in our heart. But unlike beliefs, thresholds are external. They’re about peer pressure. Your threshold is the number of people who have to do something before you join in.

Granovetter makes two crucial arguments. The first is that thresholds and beliefs sometimes overlap. But a lot of the time, they don’t. When a teenager is driving 100 miles an hour at mid-

night with three of his friends in a Toyota Camry, it’s not because he believes that driving 100 miles per hour is a good idea. In that moment, his beliefs are irrelevant. His behavior is guided by his threshold. That person has a really, really low threshold. It doesn’t take a lot of encouragement to get him to do something stupid.

Granovetter’s second point is just as important. Everyone’s threshold is different. There are plenty of radicals and troublemakers who might need only slight encouragement to throw that rock. Their threshold is really low. But think about your grandmother. She might well need her sister, her grandchildren, her neighbors, her good friends, all of them to be throwing rocks before she would even dream of joining in. She’s got a high threshold. The riot has to be going on for a very long time and has to involve a whole lot of people before grandma will join in.

How does this relate to Submission and the worship of GOD alone? Are submitters apt to throw rocks through windows? No, it’s more about not following the mob mentality. We should not join the bandwagon if the mob is disobeying God. Neither should we wait to do the

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right thing until everyone else is doing the right thing. God rewards those who do the right thing early:

[57:10] Why do you not spend in the cause of GOD, when GOD possesses all wealth in the heavens and the earth?

Special Honor

Distinguished from the rest are those among you who spend before the victory and strive. They attain a greater rank than those who spend after the victory and strive. For each, GOD promises salvation. GOD is Cognizant of everything you do.

Author Malcom Gladwell in a podcast talks about basketball, and a legendary player named Wilt Chamberlain, who could score at will no matter the defenders around him. But he was a poor free throw shooter. One season, he changed tactics and shot his free throws underhand. Some people call this a “granny shot,” and it’s generally ridiculed. But it’s effective, and for that season Chamberlain went from 40% to 60%. Then, inexplicably, he switched back to overhand shooting and went back to being a terrible free throw shooter.

Chamberlain commented on it: “I felt silly, like a sissy, shooting underhanded. I know I was wrong. I know some of the best foul shooters in history shot that way. I just couldn’t do it.” He doesn’t want to look foolish. He’s a high-threshold guy. He needs everyone to be doing something new before he’s willing to join in.

What about the low threshold guy? Another basketball player, Rick Barry, shot all his free throws underhand. When his father first encouraged him to do it that way, his response was: “they’ll make fun of me.” But he tried and became one of the best free throw shooters of all time, sometimes shooting over 95% at a stretch.

Submitters should not be high threshold people. We should not need others to do the right thing before we do it. Because most people may not even know what the right thing is when it comes to worship (30:30, 40:57, 45:26, 34:36). And blindly following the ma-

ajority can divert us from the path of God (6:116). Instead, we need to follow what God says.

[30:30] Therefore, you shall devote yourself to the religion of strict monotheism. Such is the natural instinct placed into the people by GOD. Such creation of GOD will never change. This is the perfect religion, but most people do not know.

[40:57] The creation of the heavens and the earth is even more awesome than the creation of the human being, but most people do not know.

[45:26] Say, “GOD has granted you life, then He puts you to death, then He will summon you to the Day of Resurrection, which is inevitable. But most people do not know.”

[34:36] Say, “My Lord is the One who controls all provisions; He grants the provisions to whomever He wills, or reduces them, but most people do not know.”

[6:116] If you obey the majority of people on earth, they will divert you from the path of GOD. They follow only conjecture; they only guess.

Returning to the example of Rick Barry, Gladwell observes that he had the same initial reaction as Wilt Chamberlain—they both didn’t want to look like a sissy. The difference was that Barry thought about it and accepted the new technique because it produced better results. In other words, his drive to be a better free throw shooter was stronger than his worry about how people saw him. Barry had a low threshold. If your threshold is 0, you don’t need support or approval to do what is right. At the end of the day, according to Gladwell, someone like Rick Barry stood for “perfectionism.”

What does it mean to be a “perfectionist” submitter? It means we follow the perfect religion, one of strict monotheism (30:30). We do our very best not to pollute our belief with any kind of idol worship (6:82, 6:161). We devote our worship, our life and death absolutely to God alone (6:162, 30:43, 98:5). It’s about what God thinks and not what people think.

[6:161] Say, “My Lord has guided me in a straight path—the perfect religion of Abraham, monotheism. He never was an idol worshiper.”

[6:162] Say, “My Contact Prayers (Salat), my worship practices, my life and my death, are all devoted absolutely to GOD alone, the Lord of the universe.

[30:30] Therefore, you shall devote yourself to the religion of strict monotheism. Such is the natural instinct placed into the people by GOD. Such creation of GOD will never change. This is the perfect religion, but most people do not know.

[30:43] Therefore, you shall devote yourself completely to this perfect religion, before a day comes which is made inevitable by GOD. On that day, they will be shocked.

[98:5] All that was asked of them was to worship GOD, devoting the religion absolutely to Him alone, observe the contact prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat). Such is the perfect religion.

We want to constantly be checking on our performance as submitters to God alone and asking for His guidance. We want to do the right thing simply because it’s the right thing to do.

Rizwan

Reference: revisionisthistory.com/episodes/03-the-big-man-cant-shoot

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Only dead fish go with the flow

[5:100] Proclaim: “The bad and the good are not the same, even if the abundance of the bad may impress you. You shall reverence God, (even if you are in the minority) O you who possess intelligence, that you may succeed.”

We, human beings, are social creatures. We seek to fit into our societies, we care

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about our reputation / how others view us, and seek the approval of people around us. We want “respect” from the people we consider our friends. It’s in our nature.

So, what happens when the people around us are misguided, adhering to corrupt values and standards? As believers, we are not immune to peer pressure, but we have been blessed with a scripture from God that highlights the dangers, reminds us, strengthens and reassures us:

[6:116] If you obey the majority of people on earth, they will divert you from the path of God. They follow only conjecture; they only guess.

[47:14] Are those enlightened by their Lord the same as those whose evil works are adorned in their eyes, and they follow their own opinions?

Our human tendency to “go with the flow” is so strong, avoiding it is a challenge even for appointed messengers:

[17:73-4] They almost diverted you from the revelations we have given you. They wanted you to fabricate something else, in order to consider you a friend. If it were not that we strengthened you, you almost leaned towards them just a little bit.

We learn that Muhammad feared the people instead of God (33:37, 80:1-10). We know that Satan & Co are always going to use their human assets to entice us to go astray and try to revert us.

[7:201-2] Those who are righteous, whenever the devil approaches them with an idea, they remember, whereupon they become seers. Their brethren ceaselessly entice them to go astray.

[3:100] O you who believe, if you obey some of those who received the scripture, they will revert you, after having believed, into disbelievers.

(See also 2:109, 2:217, 3:72, 4:89, 4:119-120, 15:39, and 17:64).

Knowing the dangers and magnitude of the challenge, what are we to do?

There are many verses where God reminds us that we are not to be impressed by the disbelievers, how they appear, what they say, or their apparent success in this worldly life (2:204-6, 9:85, 63:4):
[3:196-7] Do not be impressed by the apparent success of disbelievers. They only enjoy temporarily, then end up in Hell; what a miserable destiny!

God repeatedly lets us know we will be mocked and ridiculed for believing in Him, in the Last Day, and leading a righteous life; it is to be expected, and He informs us who the real winners are, in the hereafter (23:109-111):

[83:29] The wicked used to laugh at those who believed.

[83:30] When they passed by them, they used to poke fun.

[83:31] When they got together with their people, they used to joke.

[83:32] Whenever they saw them, they said, “These people are far astray!

[83:33] “They have no such thing as (invisible) guards.”

[83:34] Today, those who believed are laughing at the disbelievers.

[83:35] On luxurious furnishings they watch.

[83:36] Most assuredly, the disbelievers are requited for what they did.

God commands us to reverence Him alone, to put His commandments first, always (3:28, 5:49). The misguided will try to make us feel bad, and reprimand us, simply for pursuing righteousness. We must stay on God’s path, and strive in His cause, without fear of blame:

[5:54] O you who believe, if you revert from your religion, then God will substitute in your place people whom He loves and who love Him. They will be kind with the believers, stern with the disbelievers, and will strive in the cause of God without fear of any blame. Such is God’s blessing; He bestows it upon whomever He wills. God is Bounteous, Omniscient.

We must never go along with them, seeking to preserve some friendship:

[11:113] Do not lean towards those who have transgressed, lest you incur Hell, and find no allies to help you against God, then end up losers.

[47:25-7] Surely, those who slide back, after the guidance has been manifested to them, the devil has enticed them and led them on. This is because they said to those who hated what God has sent down, “We will obey you in certain matters.” God fully knows their secret conspiracies. How will it be for them when the angels put them to death? They will beat them on their faces and their rear ends.

[68:8-9] Do not obey the rejectors. They wish that you compromise, so they too can compromise.

Sadly, our social nature is not something we can just switch off. However, we can choose our friends and thus to an extent choose what kind of peer pressure we subject ourselves to (18:28).

God gives us an example of one who obeyed his transgressing friend:

[25:27-9] The day will come when the transgressor will bite his hands (in anguish) and say, “Alas, I wish I had followed the path with the messenger. “Alas, woe to me, I wish I did not take that person as a friend. He has led me away from the message after it came to me. Indeed, the devil lets down his human victims.”

And He gives us an example of one who did not obey his transgressing friend:

[37:51-7] One of them will say, “I used to have a friend. He used to mock: ‘Do you believe all this? After we die and turn into dust and bones, do we get called to account?’ “ He will say, “Just take a look!” When he looks, he will see his friend in the heart of Hell. He (will go to him and) say, “By God, you almost ruined me. If it were not for my Lord’s blessing, I would have been with you now.”

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God informs us that no friends will help in the hereafter, and they will be enemies of one another, except for the righteous (43:67, 44:40-41, 70:10). God does not forbid us from having non-submitter friends, as long as they do not fight us because of religion (60:8-9).

When subjected to peer pressure, it helps to keep in mind that just as our friends and other people are with us, watching and waiting for our response, more importantly, so is God and His recording angels:

[50:16-8] We created the human, and we know what he whispers to himself. We are closer to him than his jugular vein. Two recording (angels), at right and at left, are constantly recording. Not an utterance does he utter without an alert witness.

[58:7] Do you not realize that God knows everything in the heavens and everything on earth? No three people can conspire secretly without Him being their fourth, nor five without Him being the sixth, nor less than that, nor more, without Him being there with them wherever they may be. Then, on the Day of Resurrection, He will inform them of everything they had done. God is fully aware of all things.

And this worldly life with its vanities is not nearly as important as many people would have us believe – it's no more than a tem-

porary illusion: *[40:39] "O my people, this first life is a temporary illusion, while the Hereafter is the eternal abode."* (also 57:20, 20:131, 43:35).

Frank

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Letters from Prisoners

God makes sure that His message reaches everywhere. These are just three of the many letters we receive from prisoners all over the US, seeking the truth. May God help and support them in their quest for His guidance.

From Florida:

Praise be to Allah, Master of the universe. All glory belongs to Him. And because He found favor to allow me to worship Him alone, I was able to receive the Quran.

Because of His infinite power, working in each one of you, I'm able to be guided along the straight path. This is no small feat. 99% of the Muslims that I've encountered in prison are very misguided, Allah knows best.

I will continue to read and ponder the infinite power of Allah so that I may be used by Allah to warn the people, inshallah. However, I really wanted all of you to know that your work has not gone unnoticed, and God willing, one day we will meet face to face. Un-

til then, peace be upon all of you.

Mark

From Virginia:

Dear Submitters,

Greetings and peace, again! I would like to thank you for the Submitter Perspectives each month. I am learning a lot from the light and knowledge of the Quran that you sent, and other information! May Allah bless you abundantly and grant you peace!! I am enjoying and do appreciate all the knowledge you send!!! God is Great. Thank you.

In faith, hope and charity,

Christopher

From California:

To the good people who work at Masjid Tucson, salam-u-alaikkum and thanks for the work you do there to make pure Islam available to people who would choose it as a way of life.

I had the pleasure of reading a copy of the *Quran: The Final Testament* and was absolutely blown away by its ability to capture the English meaning in a way that the other translators have quite frankly been unable to do. As a result, along with other convincing evidence I'm absolutely certain that the late Dr Rashad Khalifa was martyred, and was the Messenger of the Covenant.

Thanks for listening,

Erick