

The Need to be Needed!

When Moses addressed the children of Israel he warned them, saying, “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to wrest justice: neither shalt thou favor a poor man in his cause” (Exod. 23:2-3).

It is evident, just from general observation, that individuals tend to “follow a multitude” whether it involves good or evil. When observed (seeing or hearing of) from a singular news source, an individual may view the mob mentality with a negative, or positive note: generally negative. Think about it! What emotional benefit is there to hearing about, as one local news outlet devotes a short section to “Something Good”, when the negative, evil, violent, or illegal is more stimulating? There is no doubt that what makes laws are responses to the unrighteous actions of a few that generate anger among the many: what motivated the Brady Bill? According to www.bradyunited.org, “After Jim Brady survived a bullet to the head during the 1981 assassination attempt of President Reagan, he and his wife, Sarah Brady, knew our country urgently needed common-sense solutions to prevent guns from falling into the hands of those who intend to cause harm.

The path to pass the Brady Bill was neither easy nor short. It took Jim and Sarah seven years, six votes, and three presidents to finally pass the Brady Bill. They worked with a committed team of advocates who lobbied members of Congress relentlessly, systematically, and comprehensively. Their efforts were entirely bipartisan, lobbying both the House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats alike, working across the aisle. They convened a broad and diverse coalition that united every corner of American life: law enforcement, medical professionals, civic leaders, civil rights organizations, educators, and more.”

On the other hand, according to www.phychcentral.com, “If you’ve ever felt a drive for action after being angry, you’ve experienced a positive aspect of this human emotion. Anger can be a great motivator, whether it’s after feeling wronged, being beaten in a challenge, or anything else.

This drive for action after a surge of anger can be incredibly useful and productive for helping you make changes in your life and identifying what is most important to you. You can think of anger as a useful piece of information.

However, you may have also seen the other side and felt anger’s interference in your life. Perhaps the feeling of anger makes you too reactionary and causes you to act in ways you regret later.”

In either case, negative or positive, those who are motivated will attempt to encourage others to join them in the fray.

The initial knee-jerk reaction, or being influenced by the many is an easy direction to fall. Therefore, the warning given by God, through Moses: “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil” (ibid.).

Consider the following from an episode of “American Thought Leaders”?

[Start] “Mr. Jekielek: I didn’t realize the importance of our need to belong, and how it could be a central organizing principle.

Ms. Morabito: This hardwired impulse to conform has a huge effect on society, especially when people keep falling in line with a megaphone that only creates an illusion of consensus and when people aren't really talking to one another because they're fearful of saying the wrong thing. It can be operated by tyrants of all stripes.

The only way around this is to have strong relationships in private life, family or good friends. This is why the private sphere of life becomes a target for tyrants and totalitarians. Loyalties on a personal level threaten those who want to achieve power and social control. So they weaponize our fear of being alone and threaten us with loneliness if we don't go along with their agenda.

In my book, I discuss the machinery of this loneliness. It has three main components, and I would add those to the megaphone. The first component is identity politics, which erases us as individuals and pigeonholes us according to victim or oppressor status. Second, there's political correctness, where one-sided propaganda can control discussion and induce self-censorship by our fear of rejection for saying the wrong thing.

The third component is mob agitation, like the mobs on social media and street mobs like Antifa. These mobs take different forms, but serve to enforce political correctness, identity politics, and the propaganda driving the agenda.

Mr. Jekielek: You wrote, "Pretending to go along with the belief you don't actually hold creates a ripple effect." You cite some work done on availability cascades. Please explain this to us.

Ms. Morabito: The availability cascade is a term that comes up in an article co-authored by Cass Sunstein, Obama's regulatory czar in his second term, and Timur Kuran, a social economist.

They explain that you can create the illusion of a consensus on just about anything if people keep quiet about what they truly believe. They said that it doesn't even matter how fringy an idea is. If you keep injecting it into public discourse over and over again, you create this cascade of public opinion.

If you look at some of the absurdities we're dealing with today, that's exactly what happened. Certain issues get injected time and again. I keep coming back to the transgender issue because it's so fascinating.

In 2014, Time magazine came out with a big article, "The Transgender Tipping Point." Then, Caitlin Bruce Jenner had that Vanity Fair article, and he was a star and athlete. So you had this intersection of popular culture and Hollywood, and a lot of academics repeatedly injecting this idea into the public discourse. That's really all it took before people said, "OK, so this is what I should believe."

"That's the availability cascade, and it influences a public opinion cascade. It doesn't matter what people really believe, it's all about what they say they believe. Quite often, they say they believe certain things because they're fearful their reputation might be affected if they go off script."

"When you live as if you are free, you pull back the curtain, as Vaclav Havel said, and you show others that it's possible to live with truth, as much as the oppressors want to make that impossible. And we can do it. There might be punishment, but the cost of not doing it is far greater. This is what every tyrant or totalitarian fears"
[End].

Throughout the scriptures, the people of God are told to “be not afraid” or encouraged to “not be afraid.” How does being “not afraid” manifest itself? When the apostle Paul was in Corinth and encountering opposition from among the Jews: “And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles” (Acts 18:6). Whatever apprehensions were created, as a result of opposition Paul encountered, “the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city.” (Acts 18:9-10).

In the exercise of evil, evil men do not remain silent: “the Jews that were disobedient stirred up the souls of the Gentiles, and made them evil affected against the brethren” (Acts 14:2), and as it was in the days of the apostles, i.e., efforts are made to silence the furtherance of the gospel, saying, “that it spread no further among the people, let us threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:17-18). In such cases the reply of the godly must remain the same, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye” (Acts 4:19).

Persecutions will come. The reality of which was a portion of Paul’s message to believers, saying, “when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know” (1 Thess. 3:4).

“Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For, He that would love life, And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips that they speak no guile: And let him turn away from evil, and do good; Let him seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, And his ears unto their supplication: But the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good? But even if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against, they may be put to shame who revile your good manner of life in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God should so will, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.” (1 Pet. 3:8-17). ret