



Some think that tolerance is possible when we eliminate all kinds of security, certainty, dogmatism; When we are convinced that any behavior, personal choice, way of life, political or religious belief is worth the same as the others. For these same people, intolerances arise from the thought that one possesses the "absolute" truth, of living as a "dogmatic", of feeling "superior" with those who think differently. In other words, the violence that threatens tolerance would be born from believing that the point of view itself is true.

The previous theory contains a small contradiction. On the one hand, it considers as true (as "absolute") that violence is something bad, something that we must pursue and eliminate. On the other, he affirms, also as something "absolute," that dogmatism is the source of intolerance, violence, and the inquisitorial spirit of those who persecute or oppress those who think differently. With these two statements, which seek to defend a tolerant attitude, it falls into that dogmatic position that the defenders of those ideas want to avoid. This contradiction is summarized with a simple formula: tolerance must be intolerant to intolerance... is tolerance tolerant then?

To avoid this paradox, we could imagine another way to understand tolerance. Tolerant would be many types of people: those who possess firm convictions, or those who only defend provisional truths or those who live among more or less profound doubts and errors of different kinds (sometimes everything is given mixed). But to this diversity of viewpoints, one has to add something to give tolerance: to have sufficient grounds to respect those who think in a way other than their viewpoint. In other words, one can be dogmatic, he can believe and say that the other is wrong and be deeply tolerant because he respects those who think differently from his own because he has reason to do so.

The point is precisely to explain: why do we believe that the other is worthy of respect, also when we think he is mistaken? Where does true tolerance start? The answer will be clearer and stronger if we can discover that others are worth for themselves, above their ideas, the color of their shoes or the number of candles that turn off the day of their birthday. That is if we can understand that every man, every woman, from the embryo to the old man who has exceeded the 100 years, is

worth by themselves, above the conflicts and the different opinions that may occur between the different human groups.

This does not remove the behavior (and theories) that society cannot "tolerate." If someone murders, steals, insults or just has fun breaking the crystals of cars, we can (we) intervene so that it does not harm others so that it does not injure social coexistence. Likewise, if one preaches ideas to instigate hatred towards whites or Indians, Christians or Muslims, white party or Colorado Party, it is clear that his word has no right to be heard. Even sometimes we will have to forbid him to speak, precisely in the name of tolerance...

Therefore, true tolerance is built upon the defense convinced of the value of every human life and all that we need to be deeply respected. This is possible only from non-relativistic theories because for the relativistic there are no "absolute" truths, not even the value of the other. We need to build a thought that is clear and strong enough to be able to defend everyone's right to be free to choose the lifestyle they want, as long as it does not harm others, and defend this right as "absolute" truth.

However, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, do not agree on how to establish the value of each man. Even there is no shortage of thinkers who say that between us and the animals there is no big difference. If that were true, then the law of society would be the same law that is worth in the animal world: The Stronger one imposes (intolerantly) on the weaker. From here to Nazism and other dictatorial systems there is only one step...

Is it possible to prove that we are different from animals? Almost the same question holds the answer: we can think, to understand, to argue, to seek the truth, the good, the just, the most perfect. That is only possible if the strength of the spirit shines in each one; If we have an immortal soul, as already sensed (among his doubts) Socrates. A soul capable of thinking and loving in a way far superior to that of animals. A soul that is present in all, even in the criminal (who does not stop being a man, also when we have to punish him justly...).

Of course, many spiritualists have been intolerant, because they believed, mistakenly, that the "different", the contradictor, the one who thought differently, could be persecuted in the name of misused values (even if they were words as sonorous as "homeland", "tribe" or "social class"). But the correct thing is to argue with reason to convince, in the dialogue full of respect, those who have other points of view, and to respect them if they are not persuaded with our words. Intolerance is sometimes only the frustration of someone who has not been able to accept that someone else thinks differently, the effort to succeed with force, according to the biological laws that reward the strongest and not the one closest to the truth...

Some people are right, but they "lose" because of their intolerance. Two plus two is always four, even if Juanito says no. But to hit Juanito so that, out of fear, he

submits to a mathematical truth is an act of "intolerance" that is only explained from the lack of humanity of the one who uses violence to correct harmless errors...

Building a tolerant world is easy if we know how to deepen every day on what it means to be men. It is much more what unites us than what separates us. In that sense, Christianity should be the most universal religion, because it teaches us that all human beings are children loved by the same God, above the history and sins committed. In other words, God is the most tolerant person, because he loves us as we are (many times, despite what we are) while inviting ourselves to be what we should be. Will we be able to imitate him in his respect for all, in his infinite tolerance called Love and mercy?