The Essence of Personhood: Yesterday, Today, and Forever

In a world gone mad, there is a controversy for every topic under the sun. We have sadly, become a global ball of Confusion, as the Temptations sang in 1969.* If they only knew the prophetic portrait of those words. In 2015, we are still cogitating over what is a human being. For there to be over seven billion people on the planet today and billions more who have preceded us, the question remains but the answers have gotten out of hand. The law now proclaims that corporations, firms, organizations and other non-sentient entities can be considered persons.

* People movin’ out, people movin’ in.

For, why, because of the color of their skin.
Run, run, run, but you can’t hide.

Two U.S. Supreme Court Justices contributed to this error in comprehension. In 1857, Justice Roger B. Taney said in Dred Scott v. Sandford, ‘That blacks were inferior beings and had no rights.’* Holding behind the 5th Amendment, he justified retaining slavery and indeed, expanding it, by virtue of the notion that slaves were the property of their owners and they could not be deprived of ‘their property’.

* Dred Scott was not an option for my great-grandparents, Harriet and Dread Scott, according to the new law, as it was being interpreted on that day. And not only them, but anyone (one what?) who was of African descent. Although there were thousands of Blacks who were born free, lived free, voted, were never slaves and were considered citizens, however, their fate was tied to this notorious decision. Were those who were once persons, after March 6, 1857, no longer persons?

One hundred and sixteen years later in 1973, Justice Harry Blackmun declared in Roe vs. Wade that the baby in the womb was the property of its mother with no rights nor, any citizenship, therefore without protection from potential loss of life.

And who or what gives anyone or any entity the right to demand by definition, law or impression the value and worth of another human being? We can say or print anything we’d like, but that doesn’t make it so.

One can say I am 5’11” tall, but that statement would be a lie.

What is true, is that ‘like begets like’ as the Good Book says, meaning that each seed replicates after its own kind. humankind brings forth humans. Unborn humans would be protected if they were pronounced to be what they are, human.

Some famously once argued, ‘A baby is a baby when the baby is born.’ Presumably, what was it up until then and mere seconds before its birth?

‘The man is only the creature that refuses to be what he is.’ — Albert Camus

We as people can look at some people and have absolutely NO idea if they are of one race or another. So what really does it matter? It matters only when some who fancy themselves in the place of God, make determinations and/or broad statements that CREATE differences. There are references to languages and nations in the Bible, but nowhere did it refer to race except the implication of the human race by virtue of one progenitor. Race is an illusion; a construct to create differences in class.

Consider these statements from Acts 17:28 which should be familiar to many of you but don’t miss the expositional conclusion of the matter. It is the key to the madness. (“Men” refers the creator God).

King James Bible
From one man he made every nationally to live over the whole earth and has determined their appointed times and the boundaries of where they live.

Christian Standard Bible
And the Lord made one of all the nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.

International Standard Version
From one man he made every nation of humanity to live over all the earth, fixing the seasons of the year and the national boundaries within which they live.

NET Bible
From one man he made every nation of the human race to inhabit the entire earth, determining their set times and the fixed limits of the places where they would live.

average Bible in plain English
And from one blood he made the whole world of humanity to be dwelling on the whole surface of the Earth and he marked out the times in his decrees and set the coasts of the dwelling places of humanity.

Jubilee Bible 2000...
and has made of one blood all the lineage of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.

Now notice this expositional treatment:
Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible
And hath made of one blood, ... That is, of one man’s blood, the Vulgate Latin version reads, “of one,” and the Arabic version of De Dieu reads, “of one man” of Adam, the first parent of all mankind, and who had the blood of all men in his veins: hence the Jews (u.s.) say...

* the first man was, ‘the blood of the world’

* the reason why man was made alone (or there was but one man created) was, on account of families, that they might not be stirred up one against another

... that is, strive and contend with one another about one existence. (emphasis mine)

and they added ... that the law which follows upon that, that no man has any reason to vaunt over another, and bestow of his blood and family, ... when all belong to one family, and are of one man’s blood, whether Adam or Noah.

Hence, the pretense exposed in the Dred Scott Decision, is of men’s devices and base no marks of fact or of sanity. It certainly lays no claim to truth. To deny a human being of their God-given right of existence with the assurances proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence is an affront to all that is righteous and all that of divine origin. Justice is such a thing, for which we still seem to be in search of humans. Righteousness and Justice are indeed akin to each other. Righteousness stands alone and Justice is inherent in it.

Likewise, Wisdom and Understanding (or Knowledge) are inseparable twins. You won’t find one without the other in Scripture. Hence is the message from its Author.

Knowledge is available, in which we find Understanding with which we are given Wisdom. Without these, we have the ball of confusion mentioned earlier. As that ball of wax, as it were, unwraps more and more, we find ourselves beset of confusion sense. It is said that a lies told often enough is soon believed to be the truth.

Consider science, medicine, logic, theology, math and common sense. All play a role in learning what is and what is not true. A studied research of the issue of personhood leaves us with one conclusion.

Everyone abhors the outcome of the Dred Scott case because inherently, even when people do not know the legal ramifications and the back issues, such as the usurping renovation of established law to slow and temper the spread of slavery, there is a gut wrenching reaction to hearing such a decision and the termination of a promised child. As a society, we had better get it right and soon. Time is no longer on our side to sit idly by and say or do nothing. Dred Scott was overturned by the 14th Amendment because the issue became citizenship and personhood. Will this generation have the courage to do the same?

*Human beings are too important to be treated as mere symptoms of the past. They have a value which is independent of any temporal process - which is eternal, and must be felt for its own sake.” — Lytton Strachey, Eminent Victorians

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