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**TOPIC- RACISM: ALL LIVES MATTER**

Have you ever been humiliated or made fun of because of your belonging to a different nation, or simply because of your skin color? If the answer is yes, this act is considered to be racism. Here are clearer definitions of race and racism culled from the Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary:

A race is a group of sentient beings, particularly people, distinguished by common ancestry, heritage or characteristics such as; skin color, hair type etcetera.

Racism is prejudice or discrimination based upon race or ethnicity. It is also the belief that there are distinct human races with inherent differences which determine their abilities, and generally that some are superior and others inferior.

Racism exists in almost all spheres of life. Some people are still not aware of such issue, admitting they are not racists while their actions and words prove another point of this deal. Unfortunately, even now, there are lots of people who believe their race to be better than others, making the relationships unequal in all aspects. That is the way racism prospers in human civilization. I am of the opinion that all people regardless of their nationality and skin specifications should be treated in the same way; equally. We are all born without the choice of picking our nationality, physical characteristics and some other prominent features. It is therefore difficult to understand why people support the idea that these different characteristics make some better than others. In fact, there is no reason and excuse for racial discrimination, especially in these modern times. It is wrong in all senses. Racism is a worldwide problem for all civilizations, which is caused by many people, who recognize the differentiation and specifications of various individuals. This problem can be solved by people only with conscious and continuous education. Actually, the only thing racism produces is the division which results in ‘us’ and ‘them’ points of view. Both of these categories are based on what our origin and skin color. It all happens, when people forget about tolerance and think that it is normal to treat others badly based on appearance and origin. There are four types of racism:

1. INDIVIDUAL/INTERNALIZED RACISM- This is racism that exists within individuals. It is when one holds negative ideas about his/her own culture, even if unknowingly. Xenophobic feelings or one’s internalized sense of oppression/privilege are two examples of individual or internalized racism.
2. INTERPERSONAL RACISM- This is the racism that occurs between individuals. It is the holding of negative attitudes towards a different race or culture and often follows a victim/perpetrator model.
3. INSTITUTIONAL RACISM- Recognizing that racism need not to be individualist or intentional, institutional racism, institutional racism refers to institutional and cultural practices that perpetuate racial inequality. Benefits are structured to advantage powerful groups at the expense of others.
4. STRUCTURAL RACISM- It refers to the ways in which the joint operation of institutions (i.e., inter-institutional arrangements and interactions) produce racialized outcomes, even in the absence of racist intent. Indicators of structural racism include power inequalities, unequal access to opportunities, and differing policy outcomes by race. Because these effects are reinforced across multiple institutions, the root causes of structural racism are difficult to isolate. Structural racism is cumulative, pervasive and durable.

Racism is always awful. But it happens in different ways. It is racism when;

* People play jokes about some particular ethnic groups;
* Express their negative comments concerning another nation;
* Intimidate people because of their skin color;
* Leave bad comments online, on social media;
* Abusing someone physically because of ‘not belonging’;
* Exclude people from groups because of their nationality.

However, not all forms of racism are visible to ordinary people. The simplest example is when an employer refuses to interview a person with an Arabic name. It is an act of racism mixed with stereotypical prejudice. The same is about a dark-skinned boy from Africa, who is followed around by security in supermarket because they think he may desire to steal something.

Racism at school is also a problem of significant importance now. It is experienced in all forms, like verbal abuse, name-calling and even physical abuse. Students at schools with a mixed population of students usually socialize with those of their race only, thinking bad of others, what seems to be not normal at all and this because they have been thought to do so; the lesson plan should be changed.

The reason why mankind is so influenced by racism issue is ignorance and lack of knowledge. People are not so different. The only differentiating thing is the color of the skin. Nothing else. In fact, we all are humans. We all should be treated equally in all spheres of life regardless of the origin, nationality and skin. Nelson Mandela said, “No one is born hating another person, because of the color of his skin, or his background or his religion. People must learn to hate and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

Biblically, racism is frowned upon. Acts 17:26a says, “From one man, he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth.” Furthermore, John 7:24 says, “Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead, judge correctly.” Also, 1 Samuel 16:7 says, “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” If as a Christian you do not see anything wrong with racism, I advise that you change your faith because the Christian God is against racism and favoritism.

The best way to limit the extent and expansion of racism is continuous education, movements against racism and legal actions. I believe that if we all are well-educated, we would think twice before saying something offensive concerning people’s race, nationality, culture, language, ethnicity etcetera. In all, we should know that “All Lives Matter” regardless of our race, nationality, skin color, hair type, culture, language, etcetera.

“We hate because we are thought to hate. We hate because we are ignorant. We are the product of ignorant people who have been thought an ignorant thing, which is, that there are 4 or 5 different races. There are not 4 or 5 different races. There is only one race on the face of the earth and we are all members of that race, the human race.”- Jane Elliott

Nowadays, in our world at large, racism cases and problems only increase. It is presented almost all over the world. In the popular case of George Floyd, he was accosted by police officers and later died due to the way he was manhandled. In the video he was pleading for his life because he couldn’t breathe, but his pleas fell on deaf ears. There was also a video of a minor who was arrested. When did minors start being arrested or detained without parental/adult supervision? Or was it because he was black? From the video of the two cases, people around were begging the police officers to not act in such a way but they were threatening them and saying, “we’re just doing our job”. Well, they’re jobs led to the loss of George Floyd and many others who have died due to the racist act. It led to investigation of the officers involved and it turned out that George Floyd was not the only victim of their assault, others had died at the hands of those officers. It also led to the protest of Black Lives Matter which has been ongoing, not just on social media with the #BLM tags, but on the streets with street protests. This is very impressive because in the history of black lives protest, a lot of the protesters were not black. Celebrities, Human rights activists and all manner of people from different parts of the world came together to protest this evil. They were of different social backgrounds, different physical characteristics but they came out to support a black individual. This is the reason I am saying that All Lives Matter, not just black lives. #ALM.