

The Difference between an Extremist and a Moderate Person

The Communist Movement was a reactionary movement. In 19th century, the Capitalistic system of Europe and Russia was based on exploitation and manipulation of the poor class. Karl Marx raised his voice against the exploitation of this system. As a result of that, the Communist Movement was established. Although some positive people joined this movement, but later on, this movement was hijacked by a group of extremists. The group was convinced to establish a system according to their views by using violence and persecution.

اسلام نے انسانوں کو برابر قرار دیا ہے۔ ان میں مختلف قسم کے امتیازات کیسے پیدا ہوئے؟ ان امتیازات کو کیسے ختم کیا جا سکتا ہے؟ ان سوالات کا جواب حاصل کرنے کے لئے اس تحریر کا مطالعہ کیجیے۔

In 1917, Russia experienced a revolution after a great civil war. Millions of people were killed in the revolution. In the aftermath of this revolution, communist activists established their organizations around the world. The revolution was exported to other countries. The communist leaders adopted the method of 'armed revolt' in many countries. As a result of that millions of people faced death, disability, poverty and other forms of agonies.

Wherever the communists established their governments, they declared a death sentence for the people keeping different views. During the reign of Joseph Stalin, a large number of people were punished in the ice lands of Siberia due to having views different to the communist theory. These people were forced to work hard and were not provided with enough food to survive. As a result of that, millions of these captives were killed.

The movement of Muslim Extremists is also a reactionary movement similar to that of communists. European conquests and subsequent manipulation by the United States and Soviet Union resulted in development of extreme views, rage and hatred throughout the Muslim world. The extremists, in contrary to the teachings of the Almighty God and His Prophet, declared that in addition to the soldiers of enemy, it is permissible to kill innocent people.

If we compare the mentality of the Communist as well as the Muslim extremists, we will find various common attributes in both. Extremist or moderation is not related to any specific religion, philosophy or point of view. It is the name of human attitudes which can be established in personality of a person related to any religion or philosophy.

"Greatest sins are: To join partners in worship with Allah; to kill a soul which Allah has forbidden to kill; and to be undutiful or unkind to one's parents." The Prophet added, "Shall I inform you of the biggest of the great sins? That is the forged statement or the false witness."

Prophet Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وآلہ وسلم reported by Bukhari

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An extremist is trained from the beginning that he has to kill others even at the cost of his own life. He has to enslave others even at the cost of being enslaved by his own leaders. He has to defame others at the cost of defaming himself. He has to cause others to suffer at the cost of his own sufferings. Entire life of an extremist is led under the slogan 'do or die'.

Another attribute of extremists is that they are committed to a totalitarian philosophy. Their focus is 'collectivity'. By 'collectivity', they do not understand the collectivity of entire society or its governing structure. They have a special version of 'collectivity' limited to their own organization. As a result of that, their organizational leader enjoys extraordinary privileges. Deviation from the instructions of the leader is considered a great sin. Sacrificing one's life is considered a routine practice in order to obey the leader. On the other side, members of an extremist organization are often disobedient to their parents, teachers and the real message of Quran and Sunnah.

In contrary to that, a moderate person is taught to respect other's life in order to protect entire humanity. He respects other's freedom to secure his own freedom. He protects others from losses in order to protect himself. He respects others to gain respect for himself. Entire life of a moderate person is a practical example of the philosophy of 'live and let live'.

Out of these two philosophies, which one is more beneficial to the mankind? To answer this question, it is not necessary to be a scholar or intellectual. All divine religions of the world teach the moderate approach. Just read the Quran from the beginning to its end without referring to any biased commentary, you will find the teachings of being moderate in your life. Therefore, we should live and let other people live according to their own beliefs. If we consider that other people beliefs are not correct, we should try to convince them with clear arguments in a decent manner. Quran does not allow us to impose our views on others. It is a clear message from the Quran:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ.

There is no coercion in (selecting a) religion. True guidance has been made clearly distinct from error. Therefore, whoever renounces 'Taghut' (forces of Satan) and believes in Allah has grasped the firm hand-hold that will never break. Allah, (Whose hand-hold you have grasped,) hears all and knows all. (Al Baqarah 2:256)

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Think about it!

- Why do people become extremists? Identify the reasons for extremism in religious matters.
- Identify three differences between the mentality of an extremist and a moderate person.

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