

The Effects of Prejudice and Stereotypes

We would be free of so many things if we dealt with this issue of prejudice and stereotyping.

He has that hairstyle therefore this is the type of person he is. But who actually gathers together and says “as people with this hairstyle this is our value system.” I saw a video of some legalists attacking women with high heels saying it was not modest. If you are at the receiving end of this how would you feel? Now this is to do with things you can change but what if its targeted at what you can't change e.g. the colour of your skin? (Microaggressions).

So let's explore the impact of stereotypes and prejudice on both the perpetrators and the victims. We end up being victims of prejudice whether we are the perpetrators or the so called victims.

1. **Discrimination** – Whereas prejudice is an attitude, discrimination is an action or behaviour. Studies indicate that prejudice frequently leads to discrimination. *Though prejudice is often and rightly considered a key cause of discrimination, discrimination can cause prejudice, too. Discrimination means one group enjoys an undue or undeserved advantage over another group possessing the same qualifications based on arbitrary, or random, standards or criteria. As a result the disadvantaged group faces unjustified penalties or barriers.*

2. Violence

- genocide: A deliberate destruction of a political or cultural human group.
- hate crime: A violent attack against a person or group because of their race, ethnicity, religion, or gender.
- Insulting language and name calling: Be careful what you call people. You will relate to them accordingly.

We should come in the opposite spirit and practise hospitality. (*Hebrews 13:2*). *Do not forget to practise hospitality toward strangers. Some did so and entertained angels unaware.*

This is what happened to Abraham, Lot, Samson's parents and Gideon.

3. Psychological Impact

Prejudice can create feelings of shame, anger, and sadness in victims. Prejudice and discrimination may have far-reaching effects. There is also the hidden cost of people not living up to their true potential. How many people at your school, church or workplace have low self esteem or an inferiority complex based on internalizing the prejudice? How many blame themselves for it?

4. **Inner vows** – I will never do business with those type of people. Unfortunately, the result is often lost opportunity. E.g. Entrepreneurial friend. *A prejudice often becomes a habit after having it for a time. Once formed, prejudices can have great persistence. The person comes to believe his opinion is well thought out, regardless of the amount of objective information provided to suggest otherwise. Prejudices become locked in a person's thought processes.*

Heb. 12:14 -15 Pursue peace with all men, as well as holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. 15 Be careful that no one falls short of the grace of God, so that no root of bitterness will spring up to cause trouble and defile many.

Are you bitter toward the rich or toward politicians? You need to appreciate and honour something if you want it in your life. If you want to become wealthy don't hate the wealthy.

5. Missing out on your Purpose

John 1:43-46

43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Torah and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." 46 Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Instead of staying in the mode of assuming rather come and see. God will use people that have been written off by your ingroup. *Jesus was Jerusalem-centered, Temple-centered Galilean Jew who was not accepted by his own, not in Jerusalem and not in Jerusalem-controlled settlements in Galilee such as Nazereth. It fact according to archeological conclusions it boasted no more than 150 residents. Dr. Eli Lizorkin-Eyzenberg.*

We often have a negative mindset about small towns and small town people. Nazereth was a small farming village high on a hill separate from major trade routes. Nathanael almost missed this yet it had been prophesied by Isaiah 600 years earlier. Matthew reflects on Isaiah 11:1 when he says "And came and resided in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He shall be called a Nazarene'" (Matthew 2:23). Isaiah prophesied that "a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit" (Isaiah 11:1) The root word for Nazareth is branch. Is God trying to saying something to you but you can't see it because of your prejudice?

Are there people you look down upon? Are there towns that you look down upon? Are there professions or callings you despise?

Your prejudice can blind you to prophecy.

6. Missing out on Kingdom Blessing

Mt 13:53-58

When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. 54 Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. 55 "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? 56 Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" 57 And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own town and in his own home." 58 And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

Stereotypes squash curiosity and block relationship. Have a Come and see attitude like Philip. Many people miss out on God's blessing because of familiarity.

7. **Poor career choice** – never seen it modelled, lack confidence, think its unnatural for someone like you. This is a sad perceptual distortion because the person associates competence with skin colour and internalises it. Caucasian rhythmic disorder has nothing to do with skin colour but more to do with culture and upbringing.

8. Poor Spousal Choice

E.g. Praying for future spouse to be a specific colour. The colour is just the package. If you want an iPhone X you are not too worried whether the box it comes in is black or white. Be careful what you pray for, the version you have requested might only come in a particular colour. Its sad that some have been against cross cultural or “inter-racial marriages” and they try to quote scripture, but look how God celebrated Moses, who was in a cross-cultural marriage. Look also at the consequences of Miriam and Aaron’s prejudice.

Numbers 12:1-15

Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. 2 “Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?” they asked. “Hasn’t he also spoken through us?” And the Lord heard this.

3 (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.) 4 At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, “Come out to the tent of meeting, all three of you.” So the three of them went out. 5 Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When the two of them stepped forward, 6 he said, “Listen to my words:

**“When there is a prophet among you,
I, the Lord, reveal myself to them in visions,
I speak to them in dreams.**

**7 But this is not true of my servant Moses;
he is faithful in all my house.**

**8 With him I speak face to face,
clearly and not in riddles;
he sees the form of the Lord.**

**Why then were you not afraid
to speak against my servant Moses?”**

9 The anger of the Lord burned against them, and he left them. 10 When the cloud lifted from above the tent, Miriam’s skin was leprous[a]—it became as white as snow. Aaron turned toward her and saw that she had a defiling skin disease, 11 and he said to Moses, “Please, my lord, I ask you not to hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed. 12 Do not let her be like a stillborn infant coming from its mother’s womb with its flesh half eaten away.” 13 So Moses cried out to the Lord, “Please, God, heal her!” 14 The Lord replied to Moses, “If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been in disgrace for seven days? Confine her outside the camp for seven days; after that she can be brought back.” 15 So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on till she was brought back.

Kush = Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. Sudan (Soudan) in Arabic means black. Aithipia is Greek for black. So Moses’ wife was probably quite dark skinned. The Kushites also spread and started kingdoms in West Africa eg the Ashanti kingdom in Ghana. This Kushite wife was probably a recent event that took place as Moses had married Zipporah about 40 years earlier and she was the daughter of a Midian Priest (Midians were offspring of Abraham through another wife Keturah). Perhaps Zipporah had died by now.

How do you think God feels about the racial remarks that are being made in SA today?

9. Overcompensation

This is one of the main traits that develops amongst the victimised. e.g. Jewish people, oppressed black people in career choice and education. Overcompensating and trying to excel in the area you have been said to be weak. Growing up in Zimbabwe we saw many people regarding highly the subjects that would get them into careers that black people were not allowed in previously. Maths, Physics, Biology etc. Everyone wanted to study medicine, There was prestige associated with certain careers. Sadly, a lot of doctors were actually entrepreneurs running multiple practices and did MBAs.

Poet and Critic Samuel Johnson said “*Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities he does not possess.*”

10. **Stereotype Threat - This is a type of self-fulfilling prophecy that occurs because of fear of it occurring.** The result of it is disengagement, lack of effort and poor results. Stanford research. *Stereotype threat is a situational predicament in which people are or feel themselves to be at risk of conforming to stereotypes about their social group.* Since its introduction into the academic literature, stereotype threat has become one of the most widely studied topics in the field of social psychology. Stereotype threat is a term that was created by social scientists Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson. They completed an important early study in 1995 which defined stereotype threat as “being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one’s group.”[i] Black students are portrayed as less intelligent and less competent than White students. Because of this stereotype, Steele and Aronson wondered if Black students would “protectively dis-identify with achievement in school and related intellectual domains.” This desire to disengage from intellectual pursuits could possibly lead Black students to live up to their negative stereotype. The results of the study confirmed the researcher’s suspicion. When test instructors emphasized the role of race before the test, Black students performed worse than White students. When instructors did not emphasize race, Black and White students performed equally well. ***In essence, stereotype threat occurs when people fear that they will live up to a negative stereotype about their group. In response to their fear, they participate in disengaging and self-defeating behaviours that ironically cause them to live up to the feared stereotype.*** When a test was labelled an intelligence test, black students did not perform as well as white students. But Black students performed as well as white students when it was labelled a problem solving exercise.

Women had a lower score in maths when they temporarily embraced the stereotype that they were not as good.

Black students were stereotyped as more naturally athletic and white students as more sport intelligent. What’s the impact of this? To what extent are black students then taught aspects of sports intelligence? E.g. Obi must just catch the ball and run

11. **Social groups and cliques –** jocks and cheerleaders, nerds and geeks (yet you have John coaching sport and also running music lessons), Many times as parents we assume our kids can’t do both. Blessed to see Southdowns College (my kids school) breaking the mould (top sportswoman also doing Marimba, piano etc) c.f. when we were at school and choir boys were teased yet at junior school the top sportsmen were also in the choir. Headmaster at some point spoke down on those who were not cultural (enjoying orchestras etc). People avoid certain groups due to the connotations and stereotypes associated with the group.

Low academic performance – if you are a jock you might do poorly at tests because you don't want to be seen as a nerd. However, you are actually very clever and sporty. My kids are like this and they have friends like this too. What mindset is limiting you? Are you a good musician but you don't work hard at it because in your circles it's not seen as cool.
Stanford University test – we tend to internalise the stereotype.

12. Entrapment by the enemy

Mt 7:1-3 Do not judge, or you will be judged. 2 For with the same judgment you pronounce, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but fail to notice the beam in your own eye?

Stereotypes and prejudice cause the enemy to trap you. The enemy wants you to judge others from a bitter root so that he has legal right to mess up your life. Stereotypes cause prideful judgment – with the same measure you judge you will be judged. The enemy will use your prejudicial behaviour to limit you. This is a trap, beware.

13. Subconscious use of Stereotypes?

We use them for status e.g. Jaguar driver is like this.....

We embrace the role type for our advantage e.g. damsel in distress that needs to be rescued; strong guy pretending to fix things

We are often looking to be in a category. I see this when assessing behavioural profiles. People are confused when they come out a creative type who has his top two “insights colours” as opposites i.e. can be sociable at home but at work is happy to work alone.

We play into them in this way and in so doing we reinforce the stereotype.

Are you in the matrix?

Another example of this is when you children change their voice into something more babyish because they want something from you. They are playing into a stereotype; kids are given things but not mature children. This can result in manipulation and dishonesty.