

WE'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER

Contributed by Jim Jordal
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By Jim Jordal

"No man is an island, entire of itself...any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

John Donne, 1572-1631

Two are better than one...For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls, and doesn't have another to lift him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have warmth; but how can one keep warm alone?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-11, WEB

Rain and sunlight fall on both rich and poor. So does the final equality of death. Prince and pauper alike share in the travails and tribulations of this world and its ungodly systems. Potentate and peasant share their need for food and clothing. We are—whatever our degree of wealth or power—all in it together. As John Donne said, we are all interconnected and are separated only at great cost to both individuals and societies. When one suffers we all suffer. When one is freed from slavery, we are all become freer from oppression and injustice.

But there's at least 1 percent of our society that evidently doesn't believe this. I'm referring to the small but powerful group recently identified and exposed by the other 99 percent—the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement and its army of adherents around the globe.

That there can be any one small group powerful enough to trample unreservedly the rights of the vast majority is one of the tragedies of our time, but again, What's new? It has always been the lot of humankind to be subjected to the will of a few exploiters having the money and power to make it happen.

Does a truly egalitarian society exist anywhere on earth? Has there ever been a society of truly equal people who cared for and protected each other at any cost? Yes, it has happened in a few places. Societies like this tend to be small, isolated clans or indigenous tribes that have somehow managed to avoid contact with civilization and the commercial corporate domination system now oppressing the earth. But they will not escape the greed of oil drillers, gold miners, and timber companies now zeroing in on their natural wealth no matter how great the costs in cultural and ecological destruction.

We today have nothing close to what most of us understand as true democracy, with power balanced equitably between owners and workers, rich and poor, with a government capable of aiding the needy while at the same time protecting political and property rights of all classes. Instead we have an increasingly corrupt and oppressive system owned and controlled by the 1 percent that pits us one against another, person against person, household against household, city against city, and nation against nation.

Some, however, because of their favored economic positions, have opportunity to soften the blows of natural disaster and economic debacle. They somehow believe that lies and propaganda will always be able to pacify the masses, lulling them into political slumber. And if the inevitable occurs---the masses arise in revolt---they trust in their Swiss bank accounts, gated enclaves, vast political power, and private jets to whisk them away to somewhere away from the trouble.

Somewhere back in history humans learned to classify everything into classes. At first it was simple things: fire, water, earth, birds, animals, fish and people. Soon we began to classify people according to sex, skin color, intelligence, physical strength, skills, adherence to group expectations, and so on. But with classification came comparison, then assessment of worth, and finally separation into socially stratified classes based upon whatever attributes were easily identifiable and considered to be somehow deviant. The final culmination of this process of separation and discernment of personal worth is what we call the domination system, or rule over the 99 percent by the 1 percent who possess power to evaluate, judge and separate people to their satisfaction.

It's time to stop separating people according to socio-economic class. We are all victims of poverty, even though some of us---at least for now---don't know it. We think that because of our favored economic positions we can ignore the suffering of others. We continue to isolate and insulate ourselves by geography, legal discrimination, social stratification systems, religious differences, political party affiliation and military might.

But God is rapidly removing this ability of the favored few to avoid the reality of world poverty. Watch it happen.