

"In matters of truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same."
- Albert Einstein

Applying the "Four Way Test" to matters of justice would aid as a moral guide in our, oftentimes, thoughtless world. Aware of the ancient phrase "justice, justice shalt thou pursue," one can begin to identify the benefits of the "Four Way Test" in today's society. As these fundamental words from the Old Testament are repeated, it is possible to interpret it as "justice, shall you justly pursue," meaning that each justice should be considered and analyzed with respect to each of Rotarian Herbert J. Taylor's four questions.

The first question to ask oneself, "Is it the truth?" involves the meaning of "truth." This word is translated into Hebrew as "emet." Interestingly, "emet" is spelled with the first, middle, and last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. From this, it can be inferred that, for real "truth," the beginning, middle and end of the truth is required. Our American judicial system is built upon several principles, including an impartial judge without a personal or hidden agenda, testimony that is "the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," presumed innocence until proven guilty beyond any reasonable doubt, among others.

The second question, "Is it fair?" to all concerned, should be of high importance to our lawmakers. Laws must be fair. This is to say, they need to functionally apply to all citizens equally, not selections of the population. For example, the State of New Mexico and the Department of Health are making some changes in the Developmental Disabilities Program which are not equitable. The changes impact the Family Living providers but do not apply to the Group Home providers. This discrepancy is not fair and should not be tolerated.

The penultimate question, "Will it build goodwill and better friendships?" can best be determined by individuals. Laws are made and enforced by our government but how people react and internalize the laws is unique. As a child mirrors his parent, community members will mirror their leaders in government. Therefore, individuals will emulate the justice observed in their leadership.

Taylor's final question, "Will it be beneficial to all concerned," is a synthesis of the three questions discussed above. If truth, fairness, and goodwill have been conscientiously considered and applied, then it will follow logically, to be beneficial to all.

In conclusion, the "Four Way Test" is not only simple and straightforward, but the questions it poses are valid and indispensable to those in our branches of government, in the business world, as well as to each citizen. In my own life, taking an interest in social justice, I must remain true to my morals. In my future, working towards achieving justice, my decisions will represent the principles of my country. By careful examination of the four-way questions and their implementation as a code of ethics, justice will be justly pursued.