

No Legacy is so Rich as Honesty

OUTLINE

1: Introduction

Thesis Statement: Man, a mortal being, perishes after leading a life where he pushes everything - his morality, ethics and honesty - for attaining success and felicity. However, those who remain steadfast on these attributes prevail. Therefore, honesty must be prioritized, for it immortalizes the mortal man.

2: Honesty prevails whatever the situation may be

3: Philosophical perspectives that reiterate that honesty always triumph despite adversities blocking its way

- a- Transcendentalism by Emerson
- b- Sartre's Existentialism
- c- Absurdism by Camus
- d- God is Dead of Friedrich Nietzsche

4: Honesty wins over worldly temporal desires for its spectacular implications

- a- People are remembered in good words
- b- Set a unanimous example
- c- Increase the worth of 'trust'
- d- Make world a better place to live

5: Literary works that present the worth and perks of being honest even though it takes a lot of things on stake

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- a- Showing honesty even if causes others to become your enemy - To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
 - b- Remaining steadfast on beliefs despite the odds of society - Little Women by Alcott
 - c- Uniting truth to reveal the misogyny of society - A Room of One's Own by Woolf
 - d- Importance of honesty amidst the hypocrisy of materialistic society - The Great Expectations by Charles Dickens
 - e- Realizing the truth of real value of a man in material world - Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka
 - f- Giving voice to inner self is honesty - A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce

6: Legacy of Prophet Muhammad as the world's most honest man

- a- Honest in worldly affairs
- b- Truthful in carrying pledges
- c- Love for the whole Mankind

7: Conclusion

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hatred cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." (Martin Luther King Jr.)

Similarly, the looming shadow of hypocrisy as indicated by darkness and hatred has wreaked a havoc in the world. Only honesty and good morals referred to as light and love in the quote can help to make world a better place to live.

Philosophical ideas that reiterate that honesty and honest people always stand out in a crowd include Emerson's Transcendentalism and God is Dead by Nietzsche. Albert Camus' Absurdism and Existentialism by Sartre further shed light on the firm legacy of honesty. To free the heart from temporal desires, honesty has spectacular implications such as it increases the notion of trust and sets a finest example. Moreover, people who lead a life of honesty are always remembered in good words and altogether, they make world a better place to live. Furthermore, the literary works also present the rich legacy of truthfulness despite the hurdles of life. Among them, Dicken's Great Expectation, Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird reinforce the impacts of honesty. Virginia Woolf, Alcott, Kafka and Joyce further stamps the notion of honesty being ^{the} best

policy. In the last, the personality of Prophet Muhammad whose life is full of treasure house of wisdom and experiences is analyzed to explore his honesty in worldly affairs, carrying his pledges and his love for whole mankind. Therefore, despite the inner desires of a man for attaining triumph by forsaking morals and honesty, one should embrace the trait of truthfulness to prevail in the world.

The foundation of today's philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and all other disciplines are dated back to Greeks who laid the foundation. Socrates, the most wise man, was persecuted for 'asking questions' that shook the walls of Greece built on fallacies and falsehood. Even though Socrates did not write anything, his pupil wrote for his ardent teacher and let the world know who Socrates was. Socrates was an honest man who questioned and because he contradicted to the values of his society, he was poisoned to death. Despite dated back to thousands of years, Socrates is still remembered not for his conformity but for his honesty to challenge his society.

To begin with, the most crucial philosophical perspective to reiterate the rich legacy of honesty despite adversities of life is Transcendentalism by Emerson. Emerson gave the idea of challenging the traditional norms of society that focus on mundane following. He strives to tread a new path of reconciliation where one would touch his inner desires honestly and nurture one's individuality to achieve self-attainment and contentment. Emerson said, "What lies behind us, and what lies before us are tiny matters compare to what lies within us." (Ralph Waldo Emerson). Thus, honesty with oneself by following what inner-self desires - as advocated by Emerson - prevails.

Second, the philosophy of Existentialism by Sartre also sheds lights on being honest with oneself. Sartre challenges the perceived notion that essence precedes existence and says that this philosophy is made by man to make an excuse of his failure. Sartre says that it is existence which precedes essence and one makes own essence through the choices one makes and he lives his own life. Sartre through existentialism explains one to be honest in life by taking the responsibility of life. He

says, "Existence precedes and rules essence". To sum up, Sartre tells people to be honest in their lives rather than letting others to drive his life steering.

Furthermore, Absurdist philosophy of Albert Camus reinstates the need to be honest and not wait for any messiah to rescue oneself. Absurdism philosophy revolves around the idea that life is meaningless and even though man tries to take the steering of life in one's own hands, he would gain nothing. So the man waits for something to happen to give meaning to his life. Albert Camus reinforces the idea that life itself is absurd with no meaning and man has to put his own efforts to fill colours in his life. Boxer Muhammad Ali says, "He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life." (Boxer Muhammad Ali) To conclude, Albert Camus reinforces the idea that this life is absurd with no aim and one has to take reigns to make his own life.

Additionally, Friedrich Nietzsche's God is Dead also reinforces the idea of being honest by revolting against the typical norms of the

society. Nietzsche did not negate God, but he perceived death of God as a liberating force. He said that God cannot be perceived objectively but rather God is an objective reality. Nietzsche says that old traditions based on fables must be given away to make a way for new beliefs and values with one's own rational thoughts. Nietzsche said, "God is Dead. God remains dead and we have killed him." (Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, 1882). Therefore, Nietzsche one has to take shelter in the cloud of honesty to get away from the scorching heat of sun.

Among the number of spectacular implications of honesty as a rich legacy, a person remembered in good words remains the crucial one. The person who practices honesty and truthfulness in life remains alive even after his death. Even though his body perishes, but his essence embraces the veil of mortality and his legacy treads a path of honesty for others. For example, Nelson Mandela, the flagbearer of humanity in South Africa, remains an influential for his honest hardware for his people. Thus, honesty always make man to stand against the barriers of time.

Second, those who walk on the path of honesty with unflinching bravery sets a finest example for others to follow it. Honesty leads a new path of reconciliation where one nurtures one's individuality through his inner-self and negates the following of prevalent norms. For example, almost all the philosophers from the Greeks are remembered for their unflinching desire to stand against the odds of life. For example, Socrates, Galileo, Plato, Nietzsche, Sartre to name a few. To conclude, those who do not forsake honesty for temporal worldly desires set a platform for others to follow suit.

Moreover, when people make honesty the motto of their lives, they make others to trust on them and contributes in increasing the worth of trustworthiness. In the postmodern world of isolation and depression, people tend to seek help from others and when they find someone worthy of trust, it helps them to believe in humanity. For example, if one is honest and saves others from falling into the deep hole of misery, that person would remain indebted of honesty. Thus, honesty of one person helps others to follow the same path and believe in others.

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Last but not the least, honesty as a best policy makes this world a better place to live. The woes of today's world is that people cannot trust another friend let alone an enemy. Amidst this if someone encounters a person rich with honesty, integrity and impeccable manners, one would instantly be connected and seek each other's help. This would ~~not~~ help world to become a better place with people practicing honesty in their lives. Therefore, honesty as a motto of life helps to deal with miseries and woes of life adequately.

Literature is a reflection of life. It depicts social, political, economic, psychological and prevalent norms belonging to an era. Similarly, literary works have been used to explore the perils of honesty despite ups and downs of life.

To start with, literature has explored that one should remain honest even if it causes others to turn against you. Harper Lee in her famous novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" has sketched the character of Atticus Finch who shows impeccable honesty in his lawyer profession and takes up the case of a black person accused of rape. Atticus

Finch negated the concept of racism and shunned the belief that Black people are not equal to whites. Atticus says, "You never really understand a person until you walk in his skin and walk around in it." (Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*). Thus, Harper Lee, through Finch, emphasized on belief that one should remain steadfast even if it causes others to hold a knife against you.

Second, literature has also illustrated that one should remain firm and honest in one's own beliefs despite the odds of life. Louisa May Alcott draws the character of Jo March in her classic novel 'Little Women' who is independent and would not let anyone belittle her and cage her in traditional gender norms. Jo March stood against the accepted norms set for women by society and worked honestly to defy them and set example for other women. She says, "I am happy as I am, and love my liberty too well to be in a hurry to give it up for any mortal man." (Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*). To conclude, Alcott explains that one remain honest in beliefs to rival against stereotypical beliefs.

Furthermore, literature has also been used to say that one should make honest use to writing to reveal the misogyny of society. Virginia Woolf in her book 'A Room of One's Own' embarks on the journey where she writes about the prevailing patriarchy, phalloscentric views and misogyny of society. Woolf remains honest while taking off the veil over the concealed truth of society's way of keeping women in a cage. She says, "The history of men's opposition to women's emancipation is more interesting perhaps than the story of that emancipation itself." (Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own, 1929). To sum up, Woolf utilizes the attitude of honesty to reveal the patriarchal norms of society.

In addition to these, literature has also presented the importance of honesty amidst the hypocrisy of materialistic world. Charles Dickens sketches the character of Pip in his famous novel 'The Great Expectation' to critique the materialist ideology of society. Dickens through Pip shows the importance of innocence and honesty when he gets to live in upper class society and forsakes all morals and ethics to attain social mobility only to lose everything at the end. He says, "In a word, I was too

courageously to do what I knew to be right, as I had been too cowardly to avoid doing what I knew to be wrong. (Charles Dickens, *The Great Expectations*) Thus, Dickens emphasizes the importance of honesty in the hypocritical and material world.

Moreover, literature has also explained the truth of man's real value in a material world. Franz Kafka, renowned writer, writes in his novella about Gregor Samsa who spends all his life like a commodity to earn and serve his family. What he did not realize that he was not being honest with his own life and living life like a man whose sole worth is how much money he is making. Gregor after realizing this says, "I cannot make you understand. I cannot make anyone understand what is happening inside me. I cannot even explain it to myself." (Franz Kafka, *Metamorphosis*) To conclude, Kafka emphasizes the need to remain honest with oneself to attain felicity.

In the last, literature has also revealed the importance of giving voice to inner-self is honesty to oneself. James Joyce, the pioneer of stream of consciousness, draws the character of

Stephan Dedalus who tries to get himself fit in the society and suppresses his inner-self. He joins various religious and political parties to stay relevant in the societal trends only to get existential crisis at the end of the book where he stands at the dead end. Stephan gradually realizes how dishonest he had been with himself and then treads on a new path where he would nurture his individuality and character. Therefore, Joyce reveals the importance of staying honest and truthful with inner-self.

Actions speak louder than words and Prophet Muhammad was a personality who was honest, truthful, well-mannered, soft-spoken and ardent supporter of acquiring knowledge. Prophet Muhammad is considered as world's most honest person who practiced honesty in all realms of life.

To begin with, Prophet Muhammad was honest in all worldly affairs and never compromised on his honesty. He was given the title of most honest and truthful who would never lie and would not budge to stand for truth while maintaining soft demeanor and never resorting to

violence. To illustrate, Prophet Muhammad was not only called honest by his companions but also by infidels of Makkah. For example, in Makkah, Prophet Muhammad was renowned for being the most honest that even his enemies would place their important materials, jewel or any other essential commodity in the keeping of Prophet Muhammad knowing that Prophet would never break their trust. To conclude, Prophet Muhammad was resilient in embracing honesty without any compromise.

Second, Prophet was honest in fulfilling his pledges and would never get back on what he said. He always enjoined people to honour their promises. During the conquest of Makkah, he took pledges from Muslims that they would not harm women, children, elderly people, people who accept Islam and even plants and trees. His honesty was laudable and consistent with the teachings of Islam. Quran says, "O People! honour your bonds" (Al-Quran). Therefore, Prophet Muhammad was truthful not only in worldly affairs, but also in keeping promises.

Last but not the least, Prophet Muhammad was honest not only in giving love and preaching Islam to only Muslims, but also teaching to all people of Makkah. Prophet Muhammad was Prophet of Allah who was honest, well-mannered and truthful in preaching Islam to all. He brought a legacy of honesty and set a finest example. Quran says, "And we have not sent you [O Muhammad] but as a mercy to mankind" (Al-Quran). Thus, Prophet Muhammad was a man whose legacy was rich with honesty and truthful and would remain relevant till the existence of world.

In conclusion, man is a mortal creation of God who dies and the cycle of life continues. However, those who lead a life of morals, ethics and honesty would not perish rather become immortal, for people remember them in good words. Philosophical ideas of Emerson, Nietzsche, Camus and Sartre stamp the claim that honesty always triumphs over miseries and misfortunes. It impacts the world in a good manner and sets a spectacular example for others. Moreover, honest people are always remembered in good words even after they

die. Moreover, the literary perspectives also present the impeccable legacy of honesty. The works of Dickens, Woolf and Harper Lee illustrate the importance of honesty to challenge the stereotypical norms.

On the other hand, classics of Alcott, Joyce and Kafka reveals the evils of not uplifting honesty. In the last, Prophet Muhammad's personality is an excellent example of a person who practiced honesty in all dimensions of life and set a legacy which is rich in honesty. Therefore, one should prioritize the trait of honesty in life to remain immortal despite being physically perished. Hermann Hesse rightly said, "Truth is lived not taught".