

Suffering and Redemption in the Works of Fyodor Dostoevsky

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**Suffering and Redemption in
the Works of Fyodor
Dostoevsky**

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Philosophy

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I. Introduction

Suffering is abhorrent – most people would agree with this statement; yet suffering is all around us. We see it on the television, read about it in the newspaper, and experience it in our own lives. The world is full of war, crime, poverty, and meanness. Most of us at one point or another ask why this must be so. We feel it is not right that there is so much suffering in the world. Ivan Karamazov, one of Fyodor Dostoevsky's characters in *The Brothers Karamazov*, would agree with us on this point. Fyodor Dostoevsky was a 19th century Russian writer and *The Brothers Karamazov* remains, along with *Crime and Punishment*, one of his two most well-known novels. *The Brothers Karamazov* is the story of the Karamazov family. It depicts that family's struggles with faith, cynicism, and each other. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan Karamazov rejected this world because he was unable to accept a world with so much suffering in it. Ivan told his brother Alyosha:

And so, I accept God, not only willingly, but moreover I accept his wisdom and purpose, which are completely unknown to us; I believe in order, in the meaning of life, I believe in eternal harmony, in which we are all supposed to merge, I believe in the Word for whom the universe is yearning, and who himself was

“with God,” who himself is God, and so on and so forth, to infinity. Many words have been invented on the subject. It seems I’m already on a good path, eh? And then imagine in the final outcome I do not accept this world of God’s, I do not admit it at all, though I know it exists. It’s not God that I do not accept, you understand, it is this world of God’s, created by God, that I do not accept and cannot agree to accept.ⁱ

Ivan compared his inability to accept God’s world to his inability to accept non-Euclidean geometry. He noted that non-Euclidean geometers and philosophers, “even dare to dream that two parallel lines, which according to Euclid cannot possibly meet on earth, may perhaps meet somewhere in infinity.”ⁱⁱ Ivan could not see how it is possible that parallel lines could meet. Likewise, Ivan was unable to see how suffering, especially the suffering of children, could possibly be redeemed, or made right. Because of the existence of unredeemed suffering in the world, Ivan could never love the world but could only meet it with indignation.

Even if he were shown that the non-Euclidean geometers were correct, Ivan could not understand it and would not accept it: “Let the parallel lines even meet before my own eyes: I shall look and say, yes, they meet, and still I will not accept it.”ⁱⁱⁱ Likewise, even if all suffering was forgiven, and even if all suffering

was somehow shown to be justifiable, Ivan could not accept a world in which so much suffering exists. Ivan went so far as to concede that he, “had a childlike conviction that the sufferings will be healed and smoothed over, that the whole offensive comedy of human contradictions will disappear like a pitiful mirage, a vile concoction of man’s Euclidean mind, feeble and puny as an atom, and that ultimately, at the world’s finale, in the moment of eternal harmony, there will occur and be revealed something so precious that it will suffice for all hearts, to allay all indignation, to redeem all human villainy, all bloodshed; it will suffice not only to make forgiveness possible, but also to justify everything that has happened with men.”^{iv} Despite this conviction, he said, “let this, let all of this come true and be revealed, but I do not accept it and do not want to accept it.”^v

In short, Ivan did not think it was right that parallel lines should meet or that so much suffering should exist, and was convinced that nothing could change his mind – not even irrefutable proof that parallel lines *can* meet or that all suffering *can* be redeemed. While he did not venture to say that he was correct in holding that parallel lines cannot meet or that suffering cannot be redeemed, he vowed to never alter his convictions. In Ivan’s own words, “I’d rather remain with my unrequited suffering and my unquenched indignation, *even if I am wrong.*”^{vi} Ivan even granted that suffering might be part of God’s perfect plan, and that suffering might someday be shown to be a justified and essential part of

the road to eternal harmony. He knew that perhaps, “the universe will tremble when all in heaven and under the earth merge in one voice of praise, and all that lives and has lived cries out: ‘Just art thou, O Lord, for thy ways are revealed!’”^{vii} Even though this might happen, the suffering of children would remain unredeemed, and because that suffering remains unredeemed Ivan wanted no part of eternal harmony, regardless of whether that harmony justifies all suffering. To illustrate this, Ivan told a story in which a young girl’s parents smeared her with her own feces and locked her in an outhouse. They left her there while she cried and screamed for God to protect her.^{viii} Ivan then outlined his reasons for rejecting eternal harmony:

I absolutely renounce all higher harmony. It is not worth one tear of even that one tormented child who beat her chest with her little fist and prayed to “dear God” in a stinking outhouse with her unredeemed tears. Not worth it, because her tears remain unredeemed. They must be redeemed, otherwise there can be no harmony... They have put too high a price on harmony; we can’t afford to pay so much for admission. And therefore I hasten to return my ticket.^{ix}

We can now discover what Ivan meant when he said he did not accept God's world. Despite what might be revealed to justify all suffering, there is no justification for unredeemed suffering. Ivan did not believe that the suffering of children could be redeemed, or made right; yet such suffering continues to occur in the world. Ivan wanted no part of eternal harmony if it left suffering unredeemed. Consequently, he wanted no part of eternal harmony. Children suffer, and their suffering goes unredeemed. No justification is worth that price, not even one of necessity in order to achieve eternal harmony. The world contains unredeemed suffering. Therefore, Ivan could not accept this world and could feel nothing but indignation toward it, whatever justification there may prove to be for suffering. Simply put, Ivan was convinced it is not right that there is so much suffering in the world, and was convinced nothing could make it right. As a result he was left with no choice but to be indignant toward the world, which means he was indignant toward life in it.

Ivan's argument is difficult to refute. If we accept it, we too must reject the world and, consequently, meet life in it with indignation. That we must greet life with indignation is certainly a bleak proposition. Fortunately, Dostoevsky was able to present us with an alternative to Ivan's conclusion. With Dostoevsky's assistance, we can refute Ivan's argument. If we listen closely to what Fyodor Dostoevsky had to say in five of his works, *The Brothers Karamazov*,

Crime and Punishment, The Idiot, The Insulted and Injured, and Notes from the Underground, we will find a way in which we can accept the ticket, which is to say that we will find a way to love life. For to reject the world is to resent life, and to accept the world is to love life.

In this paper, we will endeavor to elucidate what Dostoevsky had to say regarding suffering and to discover how we can accept the ticket. Dostoevsky's handling of the problem posed by suffering can be broken up into four parts. We will deal with each of these parts in a separate section. In Section II, we will examine the problem: In light of the existence of suffering, must we follow Ivan's example and return to God the ticket for this world? In Section III, we will explore the cause at the root of this problem: What causes suffering? In Section IV, we will search for the state we must reach in order to keep the ticket: How can we accept this world? In Section V, we will discuss how we can redeem ourselves: What must we do in order to get to the point at which we can embrace the world, suffering and all? In Section VI, we will conclude.

II. Must We Return the Ticket?

In each of the five works by Dostoevsky we previously mentioned – *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Notes from the Underground*, *The Insulted and the Injured*, and *The Idiot* – suffering is a major theme. Each of these works presents examples of what Ivan Karamazov would characterize as irredeemable suffering. If we look closely at each one, we can reach an understanding of the argument that led Ivan to return the ticket.

Let us begin with the novel in which Ivan Karamazov himself put forward his argument, *The Brothers Karamazov*. We mentioned previously that Ivan said eternal harmony is not worth the unredeemed tears of a child. In Ivan's words, "Listen: if everyone must suffer, in order to buy eternal harmony with their suffering, pray tell me what have children got to do with it? ... I understand solidarity in sin among men; solidarity in retribution I also understand; but what solidarity in sin do little children have?"^x The suffering of children – innocent children – is both unjustifiable and irredeemable. There seems to be nothing that would make us say the suffering of a child can be made right or okay.

Ivan gave several examples of irredeemable suffering. We have already touched on the suffering of the young girl whose parents locked her in an outhouse. The girl's only crime was that she had not yet learned to get up and ask to go to the outhouse in the middle of the night. This girl was innocent. She had done nothing wrong; she merely had yet to learn not to wet her bed. Such

innocence did not deserve to be smeared with feces and locked in an outhouse in the freezing cold. That her parents subjected her to such treatment makes us ask *why* – why do such things happen? Can any justification redeem such treatment? Ivan could find none.

Nor could Ivan find any possible redemption for the suffering of the young boy whose story he told. While playing one day, the boy threw a stone that hit a dog's paw. As fate would have it, the dog was owned by a general who was quite upset when he saw his dog limping. When the general was told that a young boy had thrown a stone at his dog, he ordered the boy to be taken away. The next day, he had the boy stripped naked and ordered his dogs to attack. The boy was mauled to death. When asked what should be done with this general, even Alyosha Karamazov, one of Dostoevsky's gentlest characters, replied, "Shoot him!"^{xi} The boy had been playing, did not mean to hit the dog with his stone, did no serious harm to the dog, and in return was torn to pieces. Like Alyosha, we may desire vengeance, or justice, for this heinous act. However, as Ivan stated, not even subjecting the general to the harshest punishment imaginable is enough to redeem the suffering of the child whose violent death he ordered:

Can they be redeemed by being avenged? But what do I care if they are avenged, what do I care if the tormentors are in hell, what can hell set right here, if these ones have already been tormented? And where is the harmony, if there is hell? I want to forgive, and I want to embrace, I don't want more suffering.^{xii}

Vengeance does not redeem an innocent's child's suffering; it merely leads to more suffering. The young boy's suffering is not lessened if his tormentor goes to hell; the young boy has still suffered a horrible death. Justice does not make up for suffering.

Ivan also relayed a story told to him by a Bulgarian who was visiting Russia. The Bulgarian told of atrocities committed by the Turks in Bulgaria. These Turks tortured prisoners, raped women, and killed children. They were fond of tossing infants in the air and catching them on their bayonets. Ivan was struck by one particular story that the Bulgarian told him:

Imagine a nursing infant in the hands of its trembling mother, surrounded by Turks. They've thought up an amusing trick: they fondle the baby, they laugh to make it laugh, and they succeed – the baby laughs. At that moment a Turk aims a pistol at it, four inches from its face. The baby laughs gleefully, reaches out its little hands to grab the pistol, and suddenly the

artist pulls the trigger right in its face and shatters its little head. .

. Artistic, isn't it?^{xiii}

Is it possible to redeem the suffering of this infant? What about the suffering of the mother who had to watch her baby get shot in the head? The innocence of a baby is unrivaled. This baby surely had no solidarity in sin with the rest of humanity – he had not yet grown old enough to sin. No punishment could be meted out to the murderer that would take back the murdered baby's suffering. The baby did not deserve the fate he met. This infant's suffering certainly seems irredeemable.

Ivan chose to focus on the suffering of children:

I meant to talk about the suffering of mankind in general, but better let us dwell only on the suffering of children... I will not speak of grown-ups because ... they ate the apple, and knew good and evil, and became 'as gods.' And they still go on eating it. But little children have not eaten anything and are not yet guilty of anything.^{xiv}

However, it is not only children who suffer for seemingly no reason. To see this, we need only look at Dostoevsky's other works. In *Crime and Punishment*,

Raskolnikov brutally murdered Alyona Ivanovna and her sister, Lizaveta, with an axe. He robbed Alyona and killed Lizaveta only because she came home and found her sister dead while he was still in their home. Alyona was a pawn dealer who, while not the most popular or kind individual, had done no harm to Raskolnikov. Her sister was a sweet lady without many enemies. Neither deserved the fate they met at the hands of Raskolnikov. Raskolnikov was eventually convicted of their murders, but Raskolnikov's conviction did not take back his deed; the two women remained dead. Alyona and Lizaveta were grown-ups, but it is still difficult to find a way in which their senseless suffering could be redeemed.

Perhaps none of Dostoevsky's novels featured suffering as prominently as did *Notes from the Underground*. The narrator of this short story suffered his entire life with feelings of isolation and inferiority until those feelings finally drove him insane. He told the story of a dinner he attended with some of his former schoolmates. He offended them, angered them, challenged one of them to a duel, and was left isolated from the group. The narrator lamented, "But alas, they did not address me! ... They paid no attention."^{xv} The narrator wanted only to feel camaraderie with his fellow human beings, and was left isolated. His emotional pain was great; anyone who has ever felt lonely can empathize. The narrator certainly was not innocent – he acted badly; however it is still difficult to

say he deserved his pain, or to answer the question of why he should be socially inept and doomed to be alone. Pity demands that his suffering be redeemed. But what good could come of it; what could make it okay? Ivan would certainly say that no redemption is possible.

The narrator is not the only character in *Notes from the Underground* who was subjected to great emotional suffering. The narrator gave Liza, an impoverished prostitute, hope that she could turn her life around. He told her, "There still is time. You are still young, good-looking; you might love, be married, be happy ..."^{xvi} She was even told, "This is my address, Liza, come to me."^{xvii} When Liza did as she was told and went to the narrator, her hopes were crushed. He told her he had been laughing at her when he offered her hope that her life might be saved and, "I am laughing at you now."^{xviii} Liza was crushed. According to the narrator, "She turned white as a handkerchief, tried to say something, and her lips worked painfully; but she sank on a chair as though she had been felled by an axe. And all the time afterwards she listened to me with her lips parted and her eyes wide-open, shuddering with awful terror."^{xix} Liza's hopes were raised only to be dashed. She was guilty of wanting a better life, of wanting to be a better person, and possibly of being naïve. In exchange for these crimes, her heart was crushed. A hopeful young woman had her dreams cruelly destroyed; she was not innocent, but she did desire to repent for her sins. The

chance to do so was taken from her, and she was punished for her noble wish.

Again, it is difficult to imagine that suffering such as this could somehow be redeemed or made right.

In *The Insulted and the Injured*, Nellie, a young, sickly girl, died while still only a child. Nellie and her mother had been abandoned by Nellie's father, a wealthy man named Prince Valkovsky. After Nellie's mother died, the child was left to fend for herself until she was taken in by Vanya. By then, it was too late; her fate was sealed. Nellie did not have to die. Her death could have been prevented if her father had not cruelly and selfishly abandoned her and her mother. Why should a child be sentenced to death by the cruelty and selfishness of an uncaring father?

The Idiot presented a particularly poignant example of undeserved and possibly irredeemable suffering. Prince Lyov Myshkin, Dostoevsky's main character in *The Idiot*, was a morally perfect young man. He cared for his fellow man and could not stand to see others in pain. Myshkin felt great pity when confronted with the suffering of others. Two examples of Myshkin's suffering stand out: He was persecuted because he befriended an outcast and succumbed to mental illness when an unfortunate woman was murdered by one of his companions.

Myshkin had once known a woman named Marie. Marie's story was a sad one. "A French commercial traveler seduced her and took her away, and a week later he deserted her and went off on the sly. She was a week walking back, spent the nights in the fields and caught a fearful cold."^{xx} When Marie returned to her mother's home, she was shunned by both her mother and her fellow townsmen. According to Myshkin, "The old people blamed and upbraided her, the young people laughed; the women reviled and abused her and looked at her with loathing, as though she had been a spider."^{xxi} Myshkin pitied Marie and sought to help her. He gave her some money and some sympathy. Myshkin then began to talk to the town's children about Marie, in order to persuade them to stop tormenting her. As Myshkin recalled, "They listened with great interest and soon began to be sorry for Marie."^{xxii} The children started to be kind to Marie. In return for his kindness and for his efforts to teach kindness to the children of his village, Myshkin was persecuted by the villagers. Their children were told they were not allowed to see Myshkin anymore. Myshkin was blamed for "talking to [children] like grown-up people and concealing nothing from them."^{xxiii} Myshkin loved children, but was isolated from them because he was honest with them and taught them to be kind even to an outcast. How is that right?

Nastasya Filippovna had endured much suffering in her life; Myshkin felt very sorry for her. She loved Myshkin, but felt unworthy of him. Rogozhin wanted to marry Nastasya, but she played with his heart and their romance ended tragically when he murdered her. The horror and sorrow Myshkin felt when this occurred was too great for him to handle. As the narrator of *The Idiot* recounted, "But by now he could understand no questions he was asked and did not recognize the people surrounding him; and if Schneider himself had come from Switzerland to look at his former pupil and patient, remembering the condition in which Myshkin had sometimes been during the first year of his stay in Switzerland, he would have flung up his hands in despair and would have said as he did then, 'An idiot!'"^{xxiv} Myshkin's selfless care for his fellow human beings was turned against him. The pain and suffering in this world was too much for him; is it not also too much for us?

Returning to *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dmitri Karamazov had a dream in that novel which is particularly relevant to our present discussion. He dreamt of a village full of peasants:

And there is a village nearby – black, black huts, and half of the huts are burnt, just charred beams sticking up. And at the edge of the village there are peasant women standing along the road, many women, a long line of them, all of them thin, wasted, their

faces a sort of brown color. Especially that one at the end – such a bony one, tall, looking as if she were forty, but she may be only twenty, with a long, thin face, and in her arms a baby is crying, and her breasts must be all dried up, not a drop of milk in them. And the baby is crying, crying, reaching out its bare little arms, its little fists somehow all blue from the cold.^{xxv}

Dmitri, who was occasionally called Mitya, was told by one of the peasants that the baby cried because it was cold. The exchange that followed explicated Ivan's argument quite powerfully:

“But why is it so? Why?” foolish Mitya will not leave off.

“They're poor, burnt out, they've got no bread, they're begging for their burnt-down place.”

“No, no,” Mitya still seems not to understand, “tell me: why are these burnt-out mothers standing here, why are the people poor, why is the wee one poor, why is the steppe bare, why don't they embrace and kiss, why don't they sing joyful songs, why are they blackened with such black misery, why don't they feed the wee one?”^{xxvi}

Our entire discussion about suffering thus far comes to a head with Dmitri's question. Why is the wee one poor? Why do children suffer? Why do adults

suffer? Why did even the model of humility and selflessness, Prince Lyov Myshkin, suffer? *Why must human beings suffer?* This, ultimately, is the question Ivan Karamazov asked, and the one for which he saw no satisfactory answer. It may be that those who cause suffering will be punished, but this does not answer Ivan's question. Perhaps we must suffer in order to buy eternal harmony, yet Ivan found this also to be an unsatisfactory rationale for the existence of suffering. Ivan questioned Alyosha, "Imagine that you yourself are building the edifice of human destiny with the object of making people happy in the finale, of giving them peace and rest at last, but for that you must inevitably and unavoidably torture just one tiny creature, that same child who was beating her chest with her little fist, and raise your edifice on the foundation of her unrequited tears – would you agree to be the architect on such conditions?"^{xxvii} Ivan refused to accept the ticket on such conditions. Unless we can answer the questions posed by Ivan and his brother Dmitri, perhaps we must do the same.

III. Egoism Causes Suffering

There are two senses in which we can attempt to answer the question of why human beings suffer. We can attempt to determine what causes human beings to

suffer, and we can attempt to determine whether human suffering can be redeemed, i.e. is there a reason for suffering that makes all suffering right or okay. Before we seek to answer the question in the second sense, which is the sense in which Ivan and Dmitri intended it, it will be helpful if we first seek to answer it in the first sense. An examination of Dostoevsky's works will allow us to see that egoism causes suffering. This will become clear once we take a closer look at some examples of suffering presented by Dostoevsky. Before we do this, however, we should first define exactly what we mean by egoism.

Egoism has several distinct meanings. For our purposes, egoism means an inflated sense of one's abilities or being. It is the equivalent of thinking that one is greater than one really is; it is putting oneself on a pedestal. Excessive pride, selfishness, and self-centeredness are all derivatives of egoism.

Raskolnikov's extraordinary man theory offers a sterling example of how egoism leads to suffering. Raskolnikov contended, "an 'extraordinary' person has a right ... not an official right, of course, but a private one, to allow his conscience to step across certain ... obstacles."^{xxviii} Raskolnikov espoused the belief that if an extraordinary person "finds it necessary, for the sake of his idea, to step over a dead body, over a pool of blood, then he is able within his own conscience to give himself permission to do so."^{xxix} This theory caused a great deal of suffering. It was this theory that spurred Raskolnikov to murder Alyona

and Lizaveta. When Raskolnikov confessed to Sonya that he was a murderer, he explained to her why he killed Alyona and her sister:

What I needed to know, and know quickly, was whether I was a louse, like everyone else, or a man. Whether I could take the step across, or whether I couldn't. Whether I could dare to lower myself and pick up what was lying there, or not. Whether I was a quivering knave, or whether I had a *right* ...^{xxx}

Alyona and Lizaveta were brutally murdered because Raskolnikov thought he might be an extraordinary man with a right to kill ordinary humans, who, in his view, were merely louses. Alyona and Lizaveta were casualties of Raskolnikov's egoism.

However, the victims of Raskolnikov's extraordinary man theory were not the only ones who suffered because of it; the theory also caused its proponent great suffering. Raskolnikov suffered after the murders. He did not suffer because he was caught and punished for his crimes; "He had been ill for a long time; but it was not the horrors of life in penal servitude, not the work, not the food, not his shaven head nor his ragged clothing that had worn him down: oh, what cared he about all those suffering and torments!"^{xxxi} Rather, Raskolnikov's suffering was the result of his shame at the realization that he was not, in fact, an

extraordinary man. "What really made him ashamed was that he, Raskolnikov, had gone to his doom so blindly, hopelessly, in deaf-and-dumb stupidity, following the edict of blind fate, and must submit and resign himself to the 'nonsense' of a similar edict if he were ever to know any rest."^{xxxii} Raskolnikov was haunted and dismayed by the realization that he "had no right to take the step [he] did."^{xxxiii} Raskolnikov's egoism caused him suffering because grave disappointment and shame set in when he was unable to live up to the great image he had of himself as an extraordinary man.

We earlier discussed some of Ivan Karamazov's examples of suffering. Egoism was at the root of all of that suffering. Take the example of the young girl whose parents locked her in an outhouse: She suffered because of her parents' egoism. The child was punished because she did not ask to go to the outhouse in the middle of the night. The parents expected more of their child than she was capable of. As Ivan said, "as if a five-year-old child sleeping its sound angelic sleep could have learned to ask by that age."^{xxxiv} The girl's parents did not care about their daughter, but only about their expectations for her. One could say that they expected her to be an "extraordinary child." These parents projected their egoism onto their daughter, and she was made to suffer it.

Likewise, the boy we spoke of earlier who was killed for hitting a general's dog with a stone was the victim of egoism. The general "was the sort

of man... who, on retiring from the army, feels all but certain that his service has earned him the power of life and death over his subjects."^{xxxv} This general apparently felt he was an extraordinary man and was so superior to his subjects that even his dog's paw was worth more than one of their lives.

Egoism also caused the atrocities committed by the Turks in Bulgaria. The Turks were "committing atrocities everywhere, fearing a general uprising of the Slavs."^{xxxvi} The egoism of these Turks was twofold. First, they were so fond of their power that they were willing to go to horrible lengths to prevent a Slavic uprising. Second, the Turks were so convinced that their culture was superior to that of the Slavs that it justified them doing whatever was necessary to maintain power. Furthermore, they felt themselves to be so superior to the Slavs that they found it permissible to treat them like sub-humans. In this, we can see shades of Raskolnikov's extraordinary man theory. We can also see that Turkish egoism caused the horrors previously described.

The suffering of the narrator and Liza in *Notes from the Underground* was also caused by egoism. The narrator made a fool of himself during the dinner with his former schoolmates because his pride was wounded when they did not accept and respect him. The narrator recalled that, during the dinner, "how I wished, how I wished to be reconciled to them!"^{xxxvii} While they ignored him, he thought, "Oh, if only you knew what thoughts and feelings I am capable of, how

cultured I am.”^{xxxviii} The narrator’s pride would not allow him to overlook the refusal of his associates to accept him. Because he perceived that he had been slighted, he felt the need to strike out against those who had hurt his pride. This reaction brought him nothing but resentment and further isolation.

The narrator’s injured pride also hurt Liza. The narrator was embarrassed of his poverty, embarrassed of the lack of control he had over his servant, and embarrassed of the tears he shed in front of her. “I was ashamed,”^{xxxix} he recounted. The narrator’s pride was excessive. This excessive pride was based in his egoism. He could not bear any injury to his pride because he felt he was owed reverence. Because of his excessive pride, he could accept no shame or insult. The narrator’s own words lucidly express his mindset: “I had been humiliated, so I wanted to humiliate.”^{xl} When his pride was hurt, he felt the need to take it out on others, hurting both them and himself.

The Idiot also contains examples of the ways in which egoism causes suffering. Aglaia Ivanovna was in love with Myshkin. A dispute broke out between her and Nastasya Filippovna, and Aglaia berated Nastasya. Myshkin loved Aglaia, but also pitied Nastasya. When Myshkin looked at Nastasya, “He only saw before him the frenzied, despairing face, which, as he had once said to Aglaia, had ‘stabbed his heart forever.’”^{xli} When Myshkin saw the immense suffering in Nastasya’s face, “He could bear no more, and he turned, appealing

and reproachful to Aglaia, pointing to Nastasya Filippovna."^{xlii} Myshkin was then "petrified by the awful look in Aglaia's eyes... She could not endure even the instant of his hesitation."^{xliii} In this case, Aglaia's egoism caused her great suffering. She could not bear for the man she loved to pity her enemy, but needed him to immediately and without hesitation come to her aid. Aglaia was self-centered. She wanted Myshkin to take into account only her feelings, not anyone else's. Nastasya's feelings did not even enter Aglaia's mind. Myshkin's initial reaction of pity for a clearly unhappy woman would not have hurt Aglaia so deeply was it not for Aglaia's egoism.

Aglaia was not the only character in *The Idiot* whose egoism led to suffering, however. Rogozhin's egoism caused him to murder Nastasya, which caused Myshkin to lapse into mental illness. As Ippolit told Myshkin, Rogozhin was "a man who will never give up his object."^{xliv} When it became clear to him that Nastasya did not love him and would not marry him, Rogozhin decided to murder her rather than give her up. If he could not have her, he was determined that no one else would, either. Rogozhin's selfish egoism cost Nastasya her life and Myshkin his sanity.

We have thus far seen that suffering is a problem. We can understand why Ivan returned the ticket. We have also seen that egoism is at the root of all suffering. This can best be explained by reference to Ivan's extraordinary man

theory. When an individual puts himself above others as if he is extraordinary while they are mere louses, has extraordinary expectations of himself or of others, expects others to revere him as if he were extraordinary, or otherwise places himself, his interests, or his feelings on a pedestal, suffering results. All this has now become clear to us, but we still have no satisfactory answer to the question of why people must suffer. We are now prepared to begin searching for that answer.

IV. Accept the Ticket

Why must people suffer? Because of people. People suffer because of the egoism of people. The little girl in Ivan Karamazov's story was locked in the outhouse because of her parents' egoism, Alyona Ivanovna died because of Raskolnikov's egoism, the narrator of *Notes from the Underground* suffered because of his own egoism, Nellie died because her father was selfish – because of her father's egoism, and Myshkin succumbed to mental illness because of Rogozhin's egoism. Ivan likely knew this much, but did not realize that in this knowledge lies the answer to his question.

Ivan told Alyosha Karamazov that when the Lord's ways are revealed, "I myself will perhaps cry out with all the rest, looking at the mother embracing her child's tormentor: 'Just art thou, oh Lord!' but I do not want to cry out with them."^{xlv} As a result, he hastened to return to God the ticket for His world. What Ivan did not know was that it was not God's world he was rejecting, but man's world. God does not cause suffering; God's egoism is not the problem. Man causes suffering. It is because of man's involvement that humans suffer in this world. Therefore, when Ivan rejected the world because of unredeemed suffering, he rejected the work of man – not the work of God.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Father Zosima said, "Each blade of grass, each little bug, ant, golden bee, knows its way amazingly; being without reason, they witness to the divine mystery, they ceaselessly enact it ... for everything is perfect, everything except man is sinless."^{xlvi} Man, however, is not perfect and is far from sinless. Father Zosima's dying brother, Markel, acknowledged as much when he said, "Each one of us is guilty before everyone, for everyone and everything."^{xlvii} It is obvious that man is guilty of causing suffering. This point we have already discussed at length. What is less obvious is that *all men* are guilty. In order to understand what Father Zosima's brother meant when he said this, we must take the time now to examine this point at length.

As we noted earlier, Ivan Karamazov claimed to understand solidarity in sin. He also asked what solidarity in sin little children have. That he asked this question demonstrates that he did not in fact understand solidarity in sin. Ivan did not think that little children had any solidarity in sin; Ivan was wrong. Even little children are not innocent. They are not perfect.

Solidarity in sin applies to children because they too are granted freedom. Children possess freedom, reason, and the ability to distinguish good from evil. But children do not always choose to do good; they do not always act in accordance with the will of God. They hit dogs with stones and have accidents in the middle of the night because they did not ask to go to the bathroom. It is true that children seem innocent to adults, but thinking it does not make it so. Adults see children as innocent because their imperfections have not yet had time to show up clearly and their sins have not yet become grave or repetitive. Children do not ceaselessly enact the divine mystery like plants, animals, and all the rest of God's creations excepting humans do. Compared to adults, children are innocent. Compared to Jesus, "the only sinless One,"^{xlviii} as Ivan called him, children are sinners, and they like us are guilty before everyone. Children are only comparatively more innocent than adults; they are not truly and utterly innocent.

Furthermore, solidarity in sin is a concept that originates with original sin. Because Adam and Eve defied God and ate an apple from the forbidden tree, they were expelled from the Garden of Eden and all human beings are born with original sin. Original sin is not something that is somehow “earned” by each human being as he or she commits sins; original sin is with us all at birth. It is equally present for the eldest member of society and for the youngest child. Hence, children do indeed share solidarity in sin with the rest of us.

Let us for a moment remember that one of the mistakes of the parents who locked their daughter in an outhouse: They expected more from their daughter than she was able to give. We should avoid this mistake; we should not expect children to be perfect. Just like adults, children sin. Like adults, they fall prey to egoism; they can be selfish, self-centered, and overly proud. All of us have at one time or another been around a child who was concerned only with what he or she wanted. Because children are not innocent and are subject to original sin, they share solidarity in sin with the rest of the human race.

At this point, the question may be raised of how solidarity in sin translates into the notion that we are all guilty before everyone, for everyone and everything. This is a fair question, and one that we will now attempt to answer. As all men are imperfect, all men are sinners and all men contribute to and share the guilt for suffering in this world. None can claim innocence. When

confronted with an individual who has sinned, we cannot condemn him. Rather, we must remember the words of Father Zosima:

Remember especially that you cannot be the judge of anyone.
For there can be no judge of a criminal on earth until the judge knows that he, too, is a criminal, exactly the same as the one who stands before him, and that he is perhaps most guilty of all for the crime of the one standing before him... However mad that may seem, it is true.^{xlix}

That we could be guilty of a crime someone else committed is a difficult concept to understand. Fortunately, Father Zosima simply and lucidly explained how it is true when he said, "For if I myself were righteous, perhaps there would be no criminal standing before me."¹ In other words, we all bear responsibility for each other's crimes because our own imperfections contribute to them. If we were perfect, or righteous, we would dissuade the criminal from committing any crime. Hence, when the criminal commits a crime, not only is he responsible for committing the crime, but we are also responsible because we allowed him to commit the crime and our own failings even contributed to the crime.

The involvement of Smerdyakov and Ivan Karamazov in the murder of their father, Fyodor Karamazov, demonstrated the veracity of Father Zosima's

words. Smerdyakov suggested to Ivan that he leave town and go to Chermashnya. Ivan agreed to do so and Smerdyakov killed Fyodor.

Smerdyakov's plan to kill Fyodor would not have worked or even been put into action if Ivan had not left for Chermashnya. When Smerdyakov admitted what had happened to Ivan, Ivan initially accused Smerdyakov of being a "wretched, despicable man."^{li} Ivan at first did not believe Smerdyakov when Smerdyakov said to him, "I want to prove it to your face tonight that in all this the chief murderer is you alone, sir, and I'm not just the real chief one, though I did kill him. It's you who are the most lawful murderer!"^{lii} However, Ivan quickly realized that by agreeing to go to Chermashnya, he had permitted Smerdyakov to kill Fyodor. He conceded, "Perhaps, I, too, was guilty, perhaps I really had a secret desire that my father ... die."^{liii} It did not take long before Ivan concluded that he was not guilty merely of allowing Smerdyakov the opportunity to kill Fyodor, but was also guilty of encouraging Smerdyakov to murder his father by agreeing to leave town. Ivan fully recognized his guilt when he said, "[Smerdyakov] killed him on my instructions. ... I'm simply a murderer!"^{liv}

Ivan's actions helped lead to his father's murder. Ivan was therefore guilty of the crime. To use a term from criminal law, Ivan was an accomplice in the murder of his father. When it comes to causing suffering, we are all guilty because we are all accomplices. We contribute to suffering with our failings,

imperfections, sins, and egoism. As such, none are innocent; all are guilty.

Father Zosima noted that our actions need not contribute to suffering as directly as Ivan's trip to Chermashnya contributed to his father's murder in order for us to be guilty. He explained how even the mere act of exhibiting anger can bring guilt upon us when he said, "See, here you have passed by a small child, passed by in anger, with a foul word, with a wrathful soul; you perhaps did not notice the child, but he saw you, and your unsightly and impious image has remained in his defenseless heart. You did not know it, but you may thereby have planted a bad seed in him, and it may grow, and all because you did not restrain yourself before the child, because you did not nurture yourself in a heedful, active love."^{iv}

In Father Zosima's example, your anger had a negative effect on the child, and you are therefore guilty for any suffering or sin that results from the bad seed you have planted, whether it be internal suffering the child feels as a result of witnessing your wrath or a fight the child gets into because your anger has been passed to him. We can now understand how it was that Father Zosima's brother was able to say to their mother, "And I shall also tell you, dear mother, that each of us is guilty in everything before everyone, and I most of all."^{lvi} Markel was neither a robber nor a murderer, but he was a human being. As such, he knew that he shared the guilt for all the suffering caused by human beings.

We have established that none are truly innocent and all are guilty. At this point, we must inquire how this affects Ivan Karamazov's argument and the question he asked regarding how the suffering of human beings in general, and of children in particular, can possibly be redeemed. Does the fact that we are all guilty of causing suffering make that suffering redeemable, or right, or okay? The honest answer to this question is no, it does not. Ivan was right in this: There is no justification for all the suffering we cause. However, Ivan was wrong to say that he returns to God the ticket for this world. The world that God created is perfect. Nature is splendid in its perfections. It is humanity that is imperfect; it is human beings who have created a world full of suffering. Markel said, "There was so much of God's glory around me: birds, trees, meadows, sky, and I alone lived in shame, I alone dishonored everything, and did not notice the beauty and glory of it at all."^{lvii} We are all in the same situation as Markel. God's glory surrounds us, but we dishonor everything with our sins and imperfections. We alone cause suffering, so we alone must take responsibility for it. Ivan blamed God for creating a world full of suffering, but God created a world of glory and beauty. Human beings took God's world and out of it created the world Ivan rejected. Ivan's blame was misplaced; the guilt for creating a world with so much suffering in it lies with us, not with God. Consequently, Ivan himself shares responsibility for creating a world full of suffering with each one

of us and with every human being who has ever lived. The suffering of children does indeed go unredeemed, but we cannot reject the world on this basis because it is our fault that those children suffer. Before we judge either God or His world we must remember that we are the guilty ones.

The ticket God gave us was for His world. We have already tarnished it, and it is now too late to return the ticket. One cannot buy a ticket for the circus, proceed to kill all the elephants, cut down all the tightropes, and chase away all the clowns, then return the ticket to the box office because the circus is no good. You cannot reject something because it is loathsome if you yourself made it so. Ivan rejected the world based on the suffering within it, but he had no right to do so because he shared the guilt for causing the very suffering that he lamented. We have held the ticket long enough to corrupt the world, and we cannot return it now on the basis that we have caused suffering. Returning to God the ticket for this world represents nothing more than an attempt on our part to shirk the blame for creating suffering. Now that we know all are guilty, we can see that this is both dishonest and irresponsible. We have created the world we live in; now we must live in it. Hence, we have no choice but to accept the ticket.

This is not to say that we should accept everything about this world. The ticket God has given us is for His world, and this ticket we should accept. Father Zosima noted that, among God's creations, "All things are good and splendid,

because all is truth."^{lviii} We should accept God's world and God's creations because they exhibit beauty, truth, and perfection. Conversely, we should reject our creations because they are at the root of all we dislike about this world. We should reject suffering and the cause of suffering, which we have seen to be egoism. If we do so, we will accept the ticket not merely because doing otherwise would be dishonest and irresponsible, but because we know that accepting the ticket will improve our well-being and the well-being of all humanity.

V. How Good Life Is

It may be true that all suffering cannot be redeemed; however, as we shall soon see, this does not mean that the world cannot be redeemed. We must condemn suffering and the egoism that causes it, but we can at the same time embrace the world. In order to embrace the world, we must endeavor to make ourselves righteous. The world was perfect as God created it, but we have corrupted it. We can return the world to its previous innocent state if we improve ourselves and stop corrupting God's work. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Alyosha Karamazov provided us with all the advice we need in order to accept

and redeem the world. Alyosha said, "Let us first of all be kind, then honest, and then – let us never forget one another."^{lix} If we follow Alyosha's advice, we will lead a more righteous, fulfilling life and do our part to redeem the world we have corrupted.

Before we can abide by Alyosha's words, we must first fully understand them. We shall now explore their meaning. To begin with, we will consider the first part of Alyosha's advice, which was to be kind. While this seems simple on the surface, it is in fact more complicated than one might initially believe. Kindness is more than a few polite words; it is a demonstration of love. Hence, to be kind, we must demonstrate love to others. Jesus Christ set the ultimate example of how to love; He was always kind. His kindness is epitomized by His compassion and capacity to forgive. In Ivan Karamazov's poem, entitled *The Grand Inquisitor*, Jesus returned from the dead during the Spanish Inquisition and was berated by the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor, who told Him, "Why have you come to interfere with us now? ... I do not want your love, for I do not love you."^{lx} The Inquisitor ordered Jesus, "Go and do not come again ... do not come at all ... never, never!"^{lxi} Jesus did not get angry, as many of us would in a similar situation. Rather, He kissed the Inquisitor on the cheek in a show of compassion and forgiveness. This was the ultimate show of kindness, for it was a selfless act motivated by love. Being kind means striving to act with the same

compassion and forgiveness as Jesus did. In nearly every example of suffering we have mentioned, a show of kindness would have prevented the suffering from taking place. For example, the Turks would not have killed any babies had they been acting with compassion; nor would the general have had his dogs maul a little boy had he forgiven the boy for hitting his dog with a stone. Kind actions such as Jesus' kiss stem from love, and are at odds with egoism. Kind actions consider and strive to improve the well-being of others, while actions arising from egoism rarely take others into account at all. We can not be kind while at the same time acting in line with egoism. Therefore, being kind is a means of rejecting egoism.

Kindness prevents and mitigates the suffering of others. It can also end our own suffering and lead to our own happiness. Dostoevsky presented an example of this in *The Insulted and Injured*. In this novel, Nikolay Sergeevich was angry at his daughter, Natasha Nikolaevna, because she ran off with the son of his enemy, Prince Valkovsky. For a long time, Nikolay refused to forgive his daughter. Though it pained him greatly to be apart from her, his pride, which as we have already noted derives from egoism, would not let him forgive. Instead, "The old man began to reproach his daughter, describing her wickedness in the bitterest terms, indignantly reminding her of her obstinacy, reproaching her for heartlessness in not having once, perhaps, considered how she was treating her

father and mother."^{lxii} Fortunately for himself and his family, Nikolay was able to overcome his egoism and pride with love and kindness. After hearing Nellie's tale of how her mother became estranged from her grandfather and died before the two were reconciled, Nikolay turned from his pride toward kindness, and forgave his daughter. Nikolay's relief and happiness were palpable when he was reunited with Natasha, as he yelled, "My dear! ... My life! ... My joy!"^{lxiii} Acting in line with the words of Alyosha and the example of Jesus means acting out of love instead of egoism. It also means lessening the suffering of ourselves and others.

Now that we understand the meaning and benefits of being kind, we can move on to the second part of Alyosha's advice, which was to be honest. We all understand what it means to be honest. What we may not yet understand are the implications and importance of being honest. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Father Zosima explained the importance of being honest and the consequences of dishonesty to Fyodor Pavlovich:

Above all, do not lie to yourself. A man who lies to himself and listens to his own lie comes to a point where he does not discern any truth either in himself or anywhere around him, and thus falls into disrespect towards himself and others. Not respecting anyone, he ceases to love.^{lxiv}

An individual who does not love cannot be kind, since kindness comes from love, so he is unable to adhere to either of the first two parts of Alyosha's advice. However, it is not only because a dishonest man is unable to be kind that we should be honest; we should also be honest because honesty is a second way of rejecting egoism, while dishonesty leads to egoism.

In *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov lied to himself when he tried to make himself believe that he was an extraordinary man. This lie caused him to believe he had the right to remove any obstacles in his way, and this led to the deaths of two people. Had Raskolnikov not persuaded himself that he was an extraordinary man, his egoism would not have reached the point where it allowed him to take the lives of other people. Suffering was also caused by a man lying to himself in *Notes from the Underground*. In this short story, the narrator propped himself up and expected deference from his acquaintances. When he did not receive the respect he thought was his due, he took offense and acted crudely. This further isolated him and heightened his emotional suffering. As Father Zosima said, "A man who lies to himself is often the first to take offense."^{lxv} Had the narrator not been so convinced of the reverence he was due, his pride would not have been so great that he was ready to take offense at the first perceived slight. If he had not been so ready to take offense he would have

gotten along better with others, been less isolated and less lonely, and suffered less. Raskolnikov was not an extraordinary man and the narrator of *Notes from the Underground* was due no special reverence. However, each lied to himself and convinced himself otherwise. These lies led to death and loneliness.

Being honest with ourselves requires that we face the fact that none of us is an extraordinary man, none of us is above everyone else, and none of us is innocent. As we have already stated multiple times, we are all guilty of causing the suffering we see in the world around us. The consequences of this dawned on Ivan Karamazov as he faced punishment for the murder of his father, which was a crime he had not committed. During this time, Ivan remembered the dream he had about the wee one, a dream we have already discussed. Ivan told Alyosha why he was not worried about being punished for a crime he did not commit:

It's for the "wee one" that I will go. Because everyone is guilty for everyone else. For all the "wee ones," because there are little children and big children. All people are "wee ones." And I'll go for all of them, because there must be someone who will go for all of them. I didn't kill father, but I must go. I accept!^{lxvi}

One implication of being honest with ourselves and of facing our guilt is to accept our own suffering as a consequence of our actions. We expect criminals to

be punished. As we are all guilty, we are all criminals. Therefore, we should expect ourselves to be punished and accept the suffering that comes as our punishment. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing. Suffering can have a purifying effect and can thereby actually benefit the sufferer. In *Crime and Punishment*, Sonya told Raskolnikov something that applies to each one of us. She told him, "You must accept suffering and redeem yourself by it."^{lxvii}

Raskolnikov eventually took Sonya's advice. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to penal servitude. At first, he did not accept his suffering and was miserable. He quarreled with the other convicts, acted cold and distant whenever Sonya visited him, and was ashamed that he had proved not to be an extraordinary man. However, suffering eventually helped redeem Raskolnikov. Sonya continued visiting him until both fell ill. Raskolnikov worried about Sonya and realized how good she was and how he truly felt about her. When Sonya recovered and was able to visit Raskolnikov once again, he embraced his feelings for her; "He wept and hugged her knees."^{lxviii} Dostoevsky described them at that moment: "Both of them looked pale and thin; but in these ill, pale faces there now gleamed the dawn of a renewed future, a complete recovery to a new life. What had revived them was love, the heart of the one containing an infinite source of life for the heart of the other."^{lxix} Suffering can redeem us by teaching us what is really important. It can replace egoism with love. This was

the case with Raskolnikov. When he first went to penal servitude, he was still clinging to his egoism and his disappointment at not being an extraordinary man. When Sonya was ill and Raskolnikov faced the prospect of suffering without her, he realized how important her love was to him. He saw that love was greater and more fulfilling than egoism, and rejected egoism in favor of love. Sonya's love and his own suffering redeemed Raskolnikov and replaced his egoism with love.

Herein lies the benefit of suffering: It reminds us to act with love, rather than egoism, in our hearts. Raskolnikov had been ignoring the love between himself and Sonya until his suffering and her love showed him the value of that love. Once Raskolnikov embraced love, he became happy despite his suffering. Suffering can redeem us by turning us away from egoism, which causes us pain in times of suffering, and toward love, which brings us happiness despite suffering. Suffering reminds us to love life. There is an example of this in *The Insulted and Injured*. Myshkin recounted the story of a man who thought he was about to die. As he faced death, the man thought, "What if I were not to die! ... I would turn every minute into an age; I would lose nothing, I would count every minute as it passed, I would not waste one!"^{1xx} We often take love for granted, be it love of another human being in particular or of life in general. Suffering can

make us realize our folly and embrace our love and the love of others. When we embrace love, we reject egoism, which redeems us. All this flows from honesty.

We are now ready to explore part three of Alyosha's advice, which was to never forget one another. We need not suffer to avoid taking love for granted. Our memories can prevent us from doing that. Remembering our love and the goodness we have witnessed can be our salvation, as Alyosha himself pointed out, "And even if only one good memory remains with us in our hearts, that alone may serve some day for our salvation."^{lxxi} A memory of a time we acted kindly and with love in our hearts can strengthen us when we are tempted to surrender to our egoism. As Alyosha said, "Perhaps just this memory alone will keep [us] from great evil, and [we] will think better of it and say: 'Yes, [we were] kind, brave, and honest then.'"^{lxxii} In *The Insulted and Injured*, Nikolay Sergeyitch's memory of how much he loved his daughter allowed him to overcome his wounded pride and forgive her. It was Ivan Karamazov's memory of the pity and love he felt for the wee one that allowed him to accept his suffering in *The Brothers Karamazov* while shouting, "Hail to God and his joy! I love him!"^{lxxiii} Remembering one another, the good times we have had, and the good things we have done helps us to reject egoism and to be kind and honest even when doing so is not necessarily easy.

If we are kind and honest, we will act with love, accept our share of the guilt for causing suffering, and in the process reject egoism. As a result, we will become better and happier human beings, lessen suffering, and thereby redeem ourselves and the world we have created. Being kind and honest will not always be easy, but remembering one another will give us the strength we need to be so. Suffering and egoism are bad and cannot be redeemed, but we can be redeemed by following Alyosha's advice. We can strive to ceaselessly enact the divine mystery, as the rest of God's creations do. By so doing, we can redeem ourselves and our world. If we abide by Alyosha's advice and are kind, honest, and remember one another, the world will become a better place and humans will become happier beings. We will find that Alyosha was absolutely correct when he exclaimed, "How good life is when you do something good and rightful!"

VI. Conclusion

With so much suffering around us, the world does not always seem like a good place. It sometimes seems as though the world cannot be redeemed. Sometimes, we get fed up, and may wish to follow the example of Ivan Karamazov and return to God the ticket for this world. However, when we

consider that it is our own egoism that causes suffering, and that we all are guilty of contributing to suffering, it becomes apparent that we should not blame God for the evils of human suffering, but should ourselves take responsibility for suffering. This does not redeem suffering, but only acknowledges that suffering is our own fault. Suffering is a horrible thing, and Ivan was right that it is irredeemable. However, that does not mean that either human beings, the causes of suffering, or the world, in which suffering takes place, are irredeemable. On the contrary, suffering is the symptom of a disease that afflicts humanity. That disease is egoism. We can be cured of egoism, and hence redeem ourselves and the world, by being kind, honest, and remembering one another. In short, we can redeem ourselves with a medicine that will cure us of egoism and eradicate suffering. That medicine is love, which leads to kindness, results from honesty, and is reinforced by good memories.

ⁱ Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Brothers Karamazov*. Translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1990). Page 235.

ⁱⁱ Ibid. Page 235.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid. Page 236.

^{iv} Ibid. Page 236.

^v Ibid. Page 236.

^{vi} Ibid. Page 245.

^{vii} Ibid. Page 244.

^{viii} Ibid. Page 242.

^{ix} Ibid. Page 245.

^x Ibid. Page 244.

^{xi} Ibid. Pages 242-243.

^{xii} Ibid. Page 245.

^{xiii} Ibid. Pages 238-239.

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- xiv Ibid. Pages 237-238.
- xv Dostoevsky, Fyodor. "Notes from the Underground." *Short Stories of Dostoevsky*. Translated by Constance Garnett. (New York, NY: Dial Press, 1958). Pages 183-184.
- xvi Ibid. Page 193.
- xvii Ibid. Page 202.
- xviii Ibid. Page 215.
- xix Ibid. Page 215.
- xx Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Idiot*. Translated by Constance Garnett. (New York, NY: The Modern Library, 1935). Page 63.
- xxi Ibid. Page 64.
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- xxiii Ibid. Page 66.
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- xxvi Ibid. Page 507.
- xxvii Ibid. Page 245.
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- xxxviii Ibid. Page 184.
- xxxix Ibid. Page 217.
- xl Ibid. Page 215.
- xli Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Idiot*. Translated by Constance Garnett. (New York, NY: The Modern Library, 1935). Page 545.
- xlii Ibid. Page 545.
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- xlvi Ibid. Pages 294-295.
- xlvii Ibid. Page 289.
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- xlix Ibid. Pages 320-321.
- ¹ Ibid. Page 321.
- li Ibid. Page 631.
- lii Ibid. Page 627.

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- liii Ibid. Page 631.
liv Ibid. Page 686.
lv Ibid. Page 319.
lvi Ibid. Page 289.
lvii Ibid. Page 289.
lviii Ibid. Page 295.
lix Ibid. Page 775.
lx Ibid. Page 257.
lxi Ibid. Page 262.
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lxiii Ibid. Page 307.
lxiv Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Brothers Karamazov*. Translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1990). Page 44.
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lxviii Ibid. Page 629.
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lxxii Ibid. Page 775.
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ABSTRACT

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan Karamazov was convinced it is not right that there is so much suffering in the world, and was convinced nothing could make it right. As a result he was left with no choice but to reject the ticket for this world, or to be indignant toward the world, which means he was indignant toward life in it. If we listen closely to what Fyodor Dostoevsky had to say in five of his works, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *The Insulted and Injured*, and *Notes from the Underground*, we will find a way in which we can accept the ticket, which is to say that we will find a way to love life.