**Is Privacy Overrated?**

A new law proposal in Israel wants to place face detecting cameras in public spaces. The goal of the initiative is to help police reduce crime and violence levels. On the other hand, human rights organizations say that such cameras severely breach people’s right to privacy since they’ll effectively allow police to track us anywhere.

When I was first told about the idea, my gut reaction was “So what?” And indeed, what can the state find about me, that I’m human? I admit that I don’t find it scary since I think this is how we have to relate to people to begin with: as complete egoists. “The inclination of a man’s heart is evil from his youth” (Gen. 8:21) is not a Biblical adage; it is the truth; this is really who we are, so what can the police find, that we are who we are?

In fact, it is not that we are afraid of our secrets being known; it is that we don’t trust the people who will know them. Several times in my life, I found myself lying stark naked while ten or more doctors stood around me, looked at me, and discussed what to do with me. I didn’t feel any shame from them; I knew that they wanted my best. The problem is that since we don’t believe that the government wants our best, we don’t want it privy to information about us. And since we are evil from our youth, we have good reasons to want to keep our actions hidden from the public eye.

So, how do we solve a situation where the police want to prevent crime, and therefore need better means of surveillance, but in order to track criminals, they also install instruments that allow them to track regular civilians? To solve it, we need to change both the government and the citizens. In other words, the government needs to work for the citizens, and the citizens need to develop a nature that is not inherently negative and detrimental to others.

Since the citizens elect the government that represents them, it means that it reflects them. In other words, the fact that the government does not want our benefit is because we don’t want each other’s benefit. Not surprisingly, we elect representatives who are made in our own image: evil from their youth.

For the most part, we still deny that we are like that. The world around us is crumbling, societies are falling apart in the free world and in dictatorships alike, a global plague is running amok but we are reluctant to cooperate in order to defeat it, nature is raging throughout the world and threatens to drown us, burn us, melt us, and devastate our economies until we starve, yet we don’t feel that any of it is our fault.

Perhaps if we do place cameras in plain view, and place them everywhere so we can see our behavior for what it is, we will see who we really are. Perhaps then we will realize that we have no choice but to change, that we must become better people, kinder to each other, more considerate, and less imposing. Perhaps then we will choose leaders who have our best interest in mind, instead of their own power and wealth. Then, for sure, we will have nothing to hide.