

Virtue Without Reward

Question : Why did not Mr. Hundert achieve his only one goal in life, to be a headmaster, even though he was a noble man while Mr. Bell, a cheater and a liar, became both socially and economically successful?

Statistically speaking, most of the richest people on this planet categorise themselves as self-made and entrepreneurs. They describe their success as a journey where they started with nothing and ended up with everything. It is as inspiring as it is a cliché. This makes me wonder why Mr. Hundert did not achieve his only one goal in life, to be a headmaster, even though he was a noble man while Mr. Bell, a cheater and a liar, became both socially and economically successful. Being altruistic and contributing to the "common good" is a noble goal to have, but it is not worth neglecting your own dreams.

Making a difference, in general, comes with prerequisites; a stable source of income, and enough influence. Without first acquiring these elements, a person is in no position to help anyone. With the help of his parents, the brand *Just Water* was founded by Jaden Smith in 2012 and officially came into the market in 2015. It immediately overpowered all of the other water brands. It is estimated to be worth over \$100 million now. The water bottle is made of 82% renewable resources.¹ He is not the first child who thought of eco-friendly products, but he had every resource one could need to make a dream come true. This shows that if you want to help other people, you first have to be in a position where you can actually make that happen.

A community is a collection of individuals and if each individual strived for success, the community would thrive. The US is one of the leading countries in space exploration and SpaceX is the leading manufacturer when it comes to space rockets. SpaceX is not owned by the US government, but by an individual with a dream, who was not even born in the US. When the world was shutting down and going into a period of darkness, the pandemic, a vaccine was the only hope. The Pfizer vaccine was designed by BioNTech, a company owned by a billionaire scientist couple. No matter how much people are willing to make a difference in this world, it is only an idea until they are actually able to make that difference.

As a counter argument, one could argue that Mr. Bell was selfish and that this argument encourages selfishness. Having too much of anything is dangerous and being too humble is the reason Mr. Hundert could not achieve his one goal in life; to

be a headmaster. The person who became the headmaster never taught at school and had no prior experience in running a high school, but he developed himself in such a way that he was in control. He was able to attract donors to the school. This makes me wonder, while everyone is willing to argue for humanity and having virtue, at the end of the day, the people who we look up to, the people who we say are successful are not heads of charity organisations or the social worker lady who spends day and night making a difference for inmates when they first get out of jail. Entire companies are inspired by Bill Gates. Bill Gates owns more than just Microsoft; he owns numerous organisations that come under the Gates Foundation. Bill Gates did not go to college so that he could co-found this organization; It was just a by-product of his success.

Finally, it is very obvious that making a difference comes after self-improvement and achieving one's goals. It takes more than just an idea to be able to contribute and have a good impact on a community. Mr Hundert spent his whole life giving back and producing a group of students who could make a real difference. As he mentioned at the end of the movie, his life could be shortened to a few sentences. Unlike the man who was chosen to become the headmaster and took away the only thing Mr. Hundert was looking forward to, Mr. Hundert did not have connections outside of school nor did he have the ability to attract donors who would then expand the school. Being a headmaster of a school is not a teaching position, the only thing Mr. Hundert knew how to, but rather, the face of the school. If Mr. Hundert spent his time outside of school, making connections and building a reputation for himself, he would have ended up with the career he wanted and still have his virtue.

Reflection:

Finding strong points for this argument was a bit hard. I caught myself second guessing every single point I wanted to make. The writing process went pretty well. However, I am not entirely sure how I structured my paragraphs is the correct way to do it. I still think my question is too broad and some of the premises do not necessarily back up the argument. I had a lot of fun writing this essay though.

Work Cited:

1. Locker, Melissa. "Jaden Smith's Just Water Just Hit \$100 Million Valuation." *Fast Company*, 4 Sept. 2019, www.fastcompany.com/90398045/jaden-smiths-just-water-just-hit-100-million-valuation.