

Morals

1. Absolute Values

- a. What is morality?
 - i. Morality is good in itself. Morality is the end itself.
Morality is not good because it is a means to an end
 - ii. Morality is prescriptive meaning it is what we “ought” to do.
Morality is not descriptive or an “is”.
- b. Absolute moral obligation is:
 - i. Objective, not subjective
 - ii. Eternal, not temporal
 - iii. Universal, not local
- c. Without an absolute nothing is measureable. Words such as “better”, “worse”, “best” would become meaningless morally.
 - i. What does “Less than perfect” mean if perfection does not exist
 - ii. Moral judgments require an absolute moral standard for judgment to take place.
 - iii. Moral absolutes are unavoidable. Even people who deny they exist will use them.
- d. Moral disagreements require objective standards. Without an absolute moral standard to measure both opinions by there could be no debate and both sides would be right. This is logically impossible. Contrary moral positions or actions cannot both be moral. There must be an absolute morality by which we can evaluate opinions, choices, positions, etc.
- e. Moral absolutes are unavoidable. Moral relativism will reduce itself to illogical statements such as:
 - i. “Never say never.”
 - ii. “Always avoid using always.”
 - iii. “You absolutely ought not believe in moral absolutes.”
- f. Why do some people reject absolute moral values?
 - i. People fail to distinguish the difference between:
 1. Fact (is) and Value (ought)
 - a. The difference between what is and what ought to be
 - b. What people do will change. What people ought to do is constant.
 - c. Sociology is descriptive; Morality is Prescriptive
 2. Value and Instance of Value
 - a. There are absolute moral values that do not change and then there are changing attitudes regarding what actions violate the absolute values.
 - i. It has always been and still is understood murder is wrong.
 - ii. It was believed that witches existed and could murder someone with a curse, but this is no longer understood to be the case.
 3. Values and understandings
 - a. There are unchanging values and then there are changing understanding of those values.
 4. End (value) Means
 - a. Confusing the end (which is the value itself) with the means to attaining that value.
 - b. All want justice and peace, but...
 - i. Politicians disagree how to attain justice

ii. The military and pacifists disagree on how to establish peace

5. Command and Culture

- a. There is a difference between an absolute moral command (decree) and how a culture will manifest that command (decree).
- b. All cultures recognize the importance of modesty, but they all manifest modesty in a different way.
- c. All cultures recognize the importance of a polite greeting, but that greeting will be displayed differently.

2. Origin

- a. Even Bertrand Russell wrote in his book "Why I Am Not a Christian" said, "What the world needs is Christian love or compassion."
- b. Humanistic psychologist Erich Fromm said that all psychological problems come from a lack of love
- c. The concept of "love" would seem to be a universal expectation. If Love is an absolute requirement of humanity then there must be some unchanging, unlimited love that is the source and example of all other love. Since humans are not perfect the source of love must come from God.
- d. We have love. God is love.
- e. C.S. Lewis said the key to Christian love is the Trinity. God has one nature that explodes into three Persons. God is not like a human who is one nature and one person. The Father is the Lover. The Son is the Loved (Beloved). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Love flowing from Them. Love itself is a trinity. If God were just one person he could not be love.

3. Moral Relativism

- a. Moral relativism needs absolute morality to exist. By simply asking, "Relative to what?" indicates moral relativism is inadequate. Something cannot be relative to something that is relative because relative would not exist.
- b. Relativism is necessary to openness. And, openness is the only virtue of relativism. Relativism and its virtue of openness are a threat to every claim to absolute morality
- c. The concept of relativism is not new.
 - i. Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, "No one ever steps into the same river twice, for fresh waters are ever upon him." This meant to say we live in constant change and everything, every decision and every moral decision is unique.
 - ii. Joseph Fletcher's 1966 book "Situation Ethics" popularized these old views of moral relativism that led to the conclusion that Values are not made by God or society, but by the individual:
 1. Pragmatism – the end justifies the means
 2. Relativism – only love is absolute and all other values are relative
 3. Positivism – moral principles are believed, but not proven
 4. Personalism – people are more important than things
- d. Refuting Moral Relativism
 - i. In order to deny absolutes a person must imply that there are absolutes to use to absolutely deny absolutes.
 - ii. Nothing can be relative by itself. There must be an absolute
 - iii. Even someone who claims that there are no absolutes still believes it is their absolute right to have an opinion and most likely expects you to respect that right of theirs also.

4. Emotionalism