

UNIT 7: ETHICS

Study Guide Review

ETHICS

1. The study of right and wrong
2. It proposes a way to think through what life is about
3. Because God is everywhere, an ethical system based on His character will reside in everyone, across all cultures, across all time.

ETHICS

4. Christians see common ethical systems among vastly different cultures as evidence of universal law and a universal law giver.
5. Ethics seeks to answer the question, “How should we live?”

2 CATEGORIES OF ETHICS

I. **Teleological theories**: (What is the good life?)

Teleological theories judge actions as right or wrong by their end results.

- Example: abortion will lead to a better life in the future
- Example: Divorce will help spouses end a difficult marriage

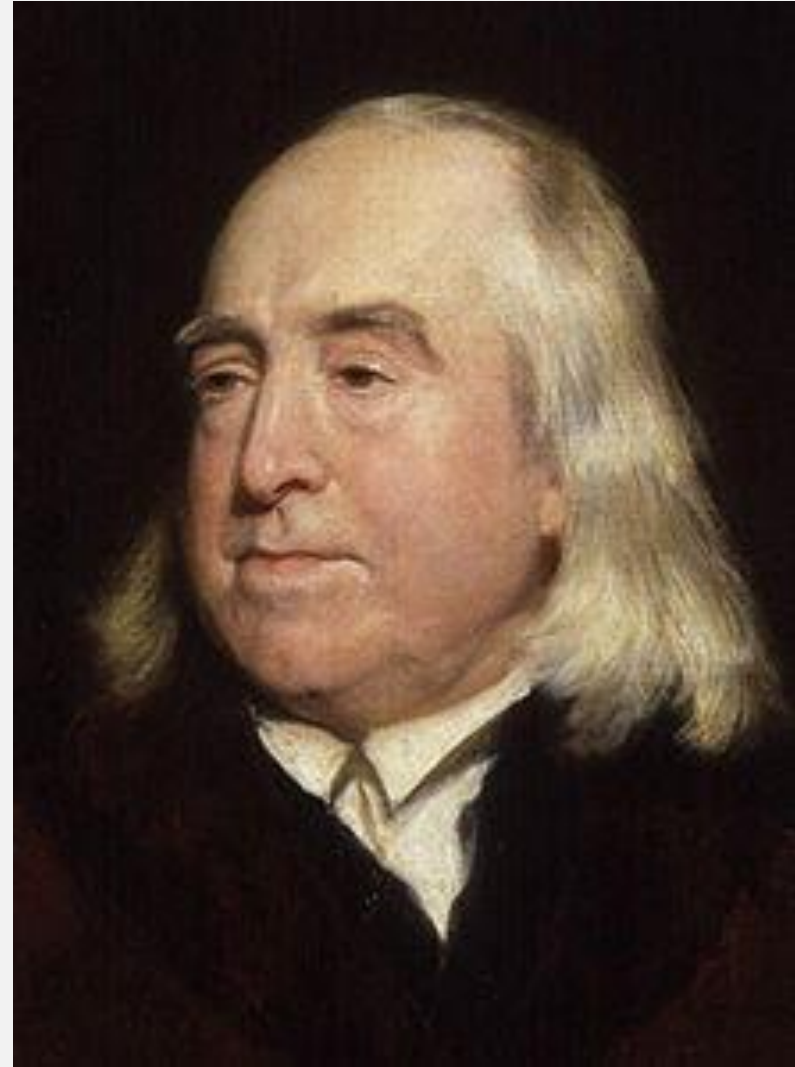
ARISTIPPUS: HEDONISM

Human being should
maximize their own
personal pleasure



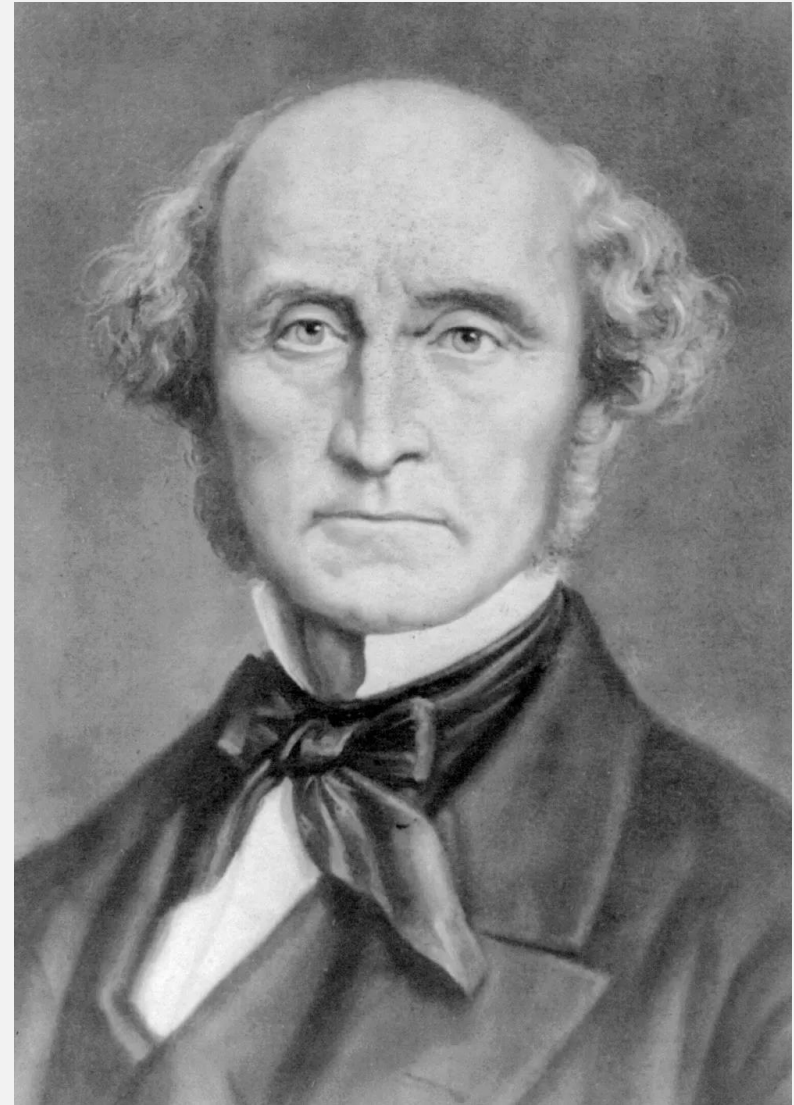
JEREMY BENTHAM: UTILITARIANISM

What is ethical is to
pursue the greatest
good for the greatest
number of people



JOHN STUART MILL: ETHICAL LIBERTARIANISM

People live best when
they have liberty but
agree not to harm
others



JOHN DEWEY: PRAGMATISM

Since truth is
whatever works,
morality is
whatever is
useful to society





JEAN-PAUL SARTRE: EXISTENTIALISM

Since we create
our own meaning,
we ought to do
whatever helps us
become our most
authentic selves.

WHY ARE THESE THEORIES CONSIDERED TELEOLOGICAL?

- All of these theories judge their actions by the end result. “The ends justify the means.”
- Example: You are acting rightly in hedonism if your actions bring you pleasure

2 CATEGORIES OF ETHICS

2. **Deontological theories**: (What ought we to do?)

We ought to do what is right because it is the right thing to do regardless of the consequences. It rests on the belief that there is absolute truth.

- Example: Jean Valjean confessing to his guilt
- Example: Returning money you found

IMMANUEL KANT: TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM

Our duty as humans is
to figure out what is
good without
qualification and then
pursue it.



RENE DESCARTES: RATIONALISM

God has made us as
thinking beings, so we
must use our
reasoning ability to live
virtuously



WHY ARE THESE THEORIES CONSIDERED DEONTOLOGICAL?

- All of these theories judge their actions regardless of the end result.
- Example: You are acting rightly if you seek what is good and do it; not matter what the consequences might be.

SECULARISM

1. The fundamental question of ethics is, “Who makes the rules? God or man?”
2. The theistic answer is that God makes the rules.
3. The secular answer is that men make the rules.

SITUATION ETHICS

1. The belief that the morality of an action is determined by the unique situation of that action.
2. Example: Lifeboat ethics

ALFRED
HITCHCOCK'S

PRODUCTION OF

Lifeboat

JOHN
STEINBECK

TALLULAH
BANKHEAD

WILLIAM BENDIX WALTER SLEZAK MISS ANDERSON JOHN HODIAK JAMES HULL MICHAEL ANGELO JOHN CRONYN LEE J. COLEMAN

MARXISM AND ETHICS

1. Everything capitalist is immoral. Therefore, everything done to oppose it is moral
2. The Marxism ethic is teleological. The ends justify the means.
3. Hatred is good as long as it is directed toward the property owners.

INCARNATION

The biblical view is incarnation: enter into the brokenness of the oppressed. Care personally, walk alongside, bring change through the power of redemption.

NEW SPIRITUALITY AND ETHICS

1. In NS, only one ethical absolute is possible.
2. You attain higher consciousness by having complete freedom to act in harmony with our own understanding of the truth.
3. To New Spiritualists, ethics is something that happens inside a person, not the result of divine commands.

NEW SPIRITUALITY AND CHRISTIANITY

- **New Spirituality**

- Refrain from the 10 non-virtuous actions
- We will continue a cycle of reincarnation to save ourselves
- You are the truth and it is inseparable from who you are.

- **Christianity**

- Follow God's commands
- Christ will save us and give us new life and eternity with God
- Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus."
(John 14:6)

POSTMODERNISM

- Cultural relativism: truth and morals are relative to one's community
- The overall postmodern mind-set does not allow anyone to be “right” on any issue, including ethics

ISLAM

- Divine command theory: the belief that right and wrong are determined by God's standards
- There is no division of law and ethics; the Islamic law is ethical by definition

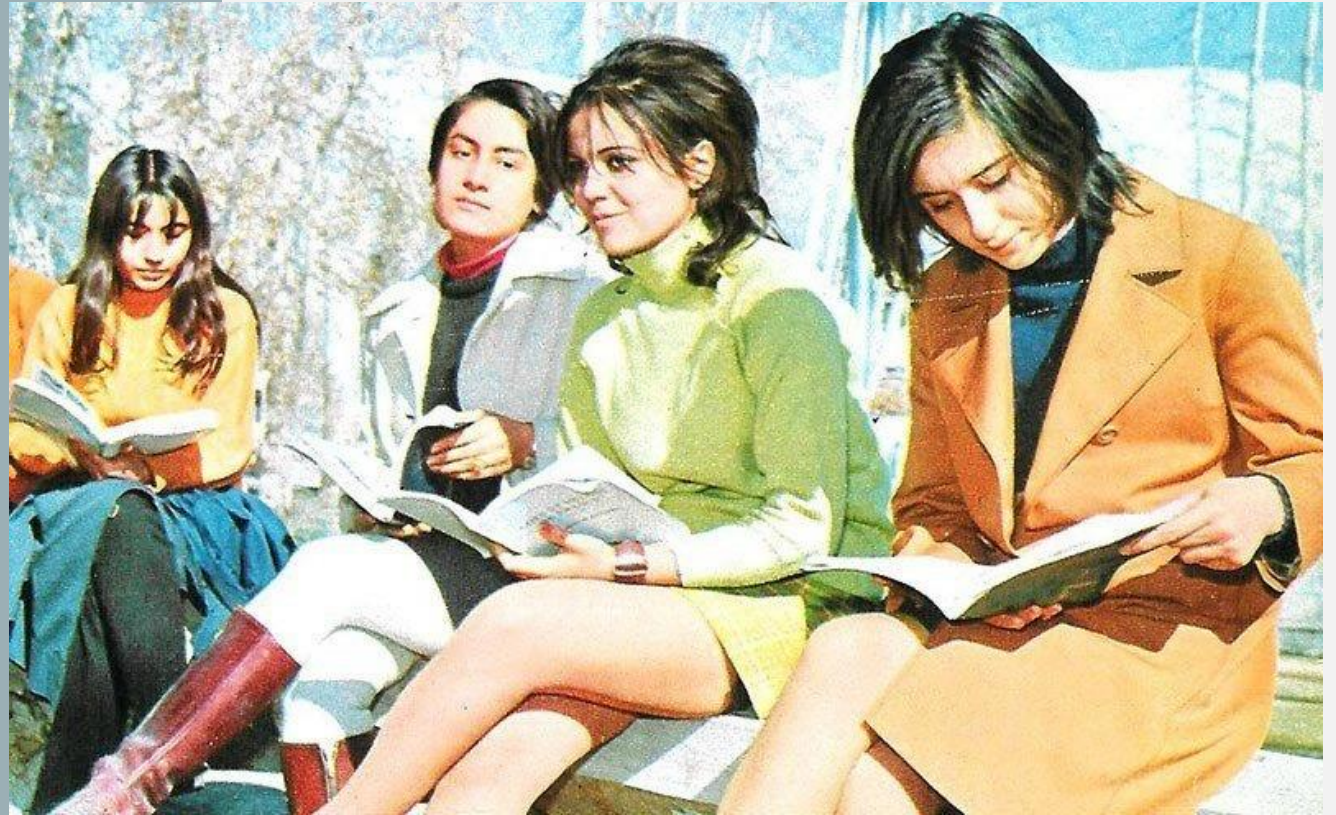
ETHICAL LAW?

God is not directly
knowable

Muslims only know God
through Muhammad

“What would Muhammad
do?”

Example: laws for women



ETHICAL LAW?

God is not directly
knowable

Muslims only know God
through Muhammad

“What would Muhammad
do?”

Example: laws for women



CHRISTIANITY

- Morals proceed from God's nature or character
- God has made us in His image to be His stewards on earth
- The task of Christian ethics is to determine what conforms to God's character and what does not

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Matthew 5-7

The apex of Christ's ethical teaching; Jesus is the role model for virtuous living



SERMON ON THE MOUNT

- You have heard that it was said....
- But I say to you.....
- Jesus brought a fuller picture of how we should live to our understanding of ethics

CHRISTIANITY

- Morals proceed from God's nature or character
- God has made us in His image to be His stewards on earth
- The task of Christian ethics is to determine what conforms to God's character and what does not

LUKE 10:27

- “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

MATTHEW 7:12

- “So whatever you wish others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

MICAH 6:8

- Mankind, He has told you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness (mercy), and to walk humbly with your God.

4 REASONS MORALITY IS GROUNDED IN A TRANSCENDENT MIND

- Morality must have its source in an intelligence
- Morality must also be from a transcendent source, outside of the universe, that is not dependent on anything else.
- The source of moral law must be self-existent, perfectly good being who has the authority to require we obey. It is fitting to call this being “God”
- The concept of moral law is unintelligible apart from God