

Basic Christian Ethics – PHMO 531

What is Ethics?: The study of morality – Big M and little m

Precept: Attribute a moral property to an act type (type of action)

Principle: All actions done divided into 2 categories: permissible and impermissible

Moral Rule: How a moral precept is incorporated into a particular culture – application of principle and precept – rules vary, but precepts never vary!

2 Concepts of Christian Ethics:

1. *Christian communitarian ethics* is the study of what is right and wrong for Christians / how Christians ought to conduct themselves as revealed by God.
2. *Christian philosophical ethics* is the Xian view of morality understood as a system of universal principles and precepts – universal obligations / how every person must conduct themselves as revealed by God.

Different Senses of God:

1. Good Works – only Christians can do
2. Saving Work – only God can do
3. Moral or Common Good – done by all – non-Xians can do good out of superficial conforming to God's law.

Why must Christian do good:

1. Assurance that you are saved
2. Win your neighbors to Christ
3. Gratitude to God
4. To praise God

God's Will:

1. Performative – when God is the agent of it – He does it
2. Permissive – what He permits and does not do (evil things occur but God does not do it)
3. Prescriptive – what God desires or wants His people to do
 - particular will – like call to ministry (can be individual or communal)
 - universal (moral) will – for all (to accept Christ) – (can be religious (holiness - 1st table) or moral (righteousness – 2nd table)

3 Uses of the Law:

1. Teacher (Convict People of their Sin) - warns, informs, convicts, and condemns every man of his own unrighteousness
2. Civic – it regulates humans and their sin in order to make civic community possible
3. Principle Use – how to respond to the grace of God in our lives

3 realist Metaethical Views (Ontological Question):

1. Divine Command Theory – An act is morally obligatory because God commanded it & an act is morally impermissible because God forbid it. God's character is ground for God's command, which is ground for the moral order.
2. The Necessity View: Each act is morally obligatory or morally impermissible b/c it is logically impossible that it be otherwise. God and Moral Order are both eternal and are not dependent on each other.
3. Creation Orders View: An act is morally obligatory because it is in accord with the design plan of the creator. An act is morally impermissible b/c it is inconsistent with the design plan of the creator. God's being grounds God's creation, which grounds the Moral Order, which grounds God's commands.