

October 26, 2019
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Philosophy
WK 5

Plato, "Morality and Happiness" - pp. 487-492

1. Explain the three different ways Socrates believes we consider things to be good.

First, harmless Pleasures enjoyments. Second, knowledge, sight, and healthy, and third, gymnastics (exercise), care of the sick, the various ways of money-making.

2. Present in your own words the "Ring of Gyges" story that Plato's brother Glaucon discusses. What is the ultimate point Glaucon is trying to make about why we behave justly?

Glaucon told the story of the Ring of Gyges in attempt to illustrate his point that justice has a relative value due to our inability to do wrong. Gyges used this power of invisibility to commit unjust acts. Glaucon, challenges Socrates to defend the life of virtue.

3. What do Glaucon and Adeimantus ultimately think is the best life for a man, and how should we pursue it? Do you agree or disagree, and if so, then why?

The best life for a man, is to pursue happiness. Happiness is a by product of choosing to do the good that God commands of us. So, I would choose to disagree that the best life for a man is to be happy. The best life for a man is to pursue God; it is what man was created for. The result will be then, Happiness.

Aristotle, "Ethical Virtue" - pp. 492-495

1. Characterize the "happiness" (Greek: eudaimonia) that Aristotle thinks is the ultimate end for man's pursuits.

Aristotle consistently argued the good for mankind is consistently living in accordance with virtue - two by products: intellect and ethical behavior, as the key to achieving happiness.

2. What does Aristotle argue is the function of a human being?

The function of a human being is to develop virtue, by creating virtuous habits.

3. What does Aristotle mean by saying virtue is a disposition, and not just a feeling or a capacity?

Aristotle meant that virtue involves an ingrained pattern of action and desire that is manifested over a whole lifetime.

4. How do we gain virtue?

We gain virtue because it is taught to us as children, the same way we do with our own children.

5. Explain how virtue is like a mean, or balance point between extremes. Present an example of such a virtue.

The idea is that a person is hanging in the balance of going in either directions - the good choice and the bad choice.

A simple example is when we are at the cinema, our movie has finished, and there is another starting. The question arises, do I sneak into the other movie starting, without paying or do I go and pay again for the new movie. We are hanging in the balance of the good and the bad choice.