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Week 5 Reading Questions

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

There are 3 different classes.

First-class: harmless pleasures that don't produce good things rather just simple enjoyment (eating a candy bar)

Second-class: pleasures that also bring pleasurable outcomes (eating really tasty healthy food)

Third-class: Things that aren't enjoyable in themselves but bring pleasure with their outcome (working out)

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?

The simplest version of the story is that a shepherd found a ring that no one else knew about that could turn him invisible. Without anyone knowing he couldn't be held accountable for his actions. So he started to act unjustly because that's our true nature in Glaucon's mind. The question it comes up with is if we did not have any accountability or any social structure to enforce goodness would we choose to be just? Yet Glaucon believes we would not.

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?

Their concept of the best life would be to be able to live a life of unjust. Because they don't think that justice is a part of our nature and simply forced by appearance. So without the pressure of appearance and ego, we could live a life fulfilling to our true nature. I personally completely disagree with their opinions because their opinions stem that we are solely unjust in our nature. I believe that because we are made in the image of God we actually naturally possess a lot of justice. Of course, because of sin, we are also naturally unjust in ways yet I believe that hurts our soul more than satisfies it. I believe the natural flaws we act on hurt us more in the end which means if we lived a life of unjust actions it would be the opposite of fulfillment.

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

The word eudaimonia isn't just happiness it is finding joy in purpose. It consists of more than just the enjoyment causing happy feelings. It has to do with true lifelong happiness. Happiness is achieved by completing the virtues and functions of life. So functions such as purpose. Finding

your function to fulfill your life. Then the virtues are the expansion and skills of that function. So becoming good at something. Through those achievements, you learn of true happiness.

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

The function of a human being doesn't come down to one specific thing because the function is finding purpose. Human's in his mind have many purposes in life. Purposes such as being a builder, a musician, a nobleman, a fisherman, and so on. The purpose is to find what you are gifted at then learn virtues that apply to that and virtues that will help you enjoy life. Through experiences, we learn virtues making life a big compilation of events all designated to learning virtues different than each other for your function.

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

He says that virtues shape us. If we are put in a situation where we are to lean either towards bravery or cowardice, the virtue we choose is deepened in our character. So it isn't just an adjective to our function because it is a characteristic of us making it more valuable and more descriptive than just a feeling or capacity.

4. How do we gain virtue?

Through experiences, we learn virtues making life a big compilation of events all designated to learning virtues different than each other for one's function. The experiences in our lives shape us to be different than each other so the moldings of life are the virtues. Virtues can be good and bad because again it is up to the person's reaction to life.

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

Just as many recognize, there are good responses to life and bad responses to life. So an example would be when you are asked a question do you lie or do you tell the truth? The virtue options are honesty or dishonesty. If you constantly choose dishonesty then you learn that virtue. Making it a part of your character which feeds into your function.