

Gloria Park

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TH604

*Choosing the Good*, Ch. 1

1. What are the two primary ethical foundations introduced in Chapter 1, which “vied for ascendancy throughout much of the modern world” (Hollinger 25)?
2. What is the ultimate standard of right or wrong according to consequentialism?
3. What are the two primary schools of thought under consequentialism?
4. Why is ethical egoism a “dead-end” street (Hollinger 31)?
5. Why is principle ethics ultimately lacking from a Christian perspective?

Answers:

1. Consequentialism and principle ethics.
2. Results, typically nonmoral results, such as happiness or pleasure.
3. The two primary schools of thought under consequentialism are ethical egoism and utilitarianism.
4. Ethical egoism is a dead-end street because it is self-contradictory. Namely, human experience reveals that pursuing one’s self-interest does not ultimately lead to “the best for all” and in fact, that the human heart is the cause of “personal, societal, and international evils” (31).
5. From a Christian perspective, principle ethics is ultimately lacking because it does not account for the existence of God. In other words, Christian ethics cannot be based on reason alone, but rather directly related to “the ultimate good,” that is God Himself (41).

Terms

1. Deontological ethics - another term for principle ethics, which refers to the measurement of the moral good according to intrinsic principles or values.
2. Ethical egoism - the school of thought underneath consequentialism which measures the moral good according to that which results in the highest amount of pleasure or happiness for the individual.
3. Utilitarianism - the school of thought underneath consequentialism which measures the moral good according to that which results in the happiness for the greatest number of people.

Summary

Two primary ethical foundations which present themselves in this chapter and throughout the modern era are: consequentialism and principle ethics. Under consequentialism fall ethical egoism and utilitarianism, both of which are found to be ultimately insufficient due to their self-contradictory nature and difficult in determining “nonmoral” results, respectively. So too principle ethics is ultimately deemed morally lacking from a Christian perspective due to its lack of accounting for the existence of God and by extension, grace.