

5-3-1 Assignment Week 2: Character or Virtue Ethics

QUESTIONS

1. What are the positive and negative aspects of Character Ethics?
2. Provide a brief summary of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics?
3. According to Craig Dykstra, in addition to psychological, sociological, and anthropological questions, the study of moral development requires _____ and _____ answers.
4. What does the "golden mean" for Aristotle?
5. According to Prog. Carol Gilligan, there are two approaches that some base ethical decisions. What are they?

ANSWERS

1. Positives: Christians must understand that ethics is more than doing the right thing. Character ethics are also good for reaffirming those ethics and always reflecting a larger vision. Negatives: overemphasis on character. Downplays the importance of doing something. It also narrows ethical resources by overemphasizing narrative (too much emphasis on stories for ethical traditions.) it also presents an overemphasis on community. (Pg. 56/Pg. 58)
2. It is named after Aristotle's son. In Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle asserts that every inquiry and art aims at some good or end. The end of various actions and arts are not the same: for medicine, it is health, for architecture, it is a house, The end of human happiness, for humans always choose it for itself and never for the sake of something else. (Pg. 47)
3. philosophical and theological (pg.49)
4. An individual's moral behavior is the mean between two extremes - at the one end we are in excess, and at the other we are deficient. When you take a middle position between these two extremes, you will be acting morally. (pg. 48)
5. The justice approach and the care approach (pg. 50)

TERMS

1. Character (pg. 46) - a person's inner and distinctive core from which moral discernment, decisions, and actions spring. It is an enduring configuration of any particular self's intentions, feelings, disposition, and perceptions.
2. Virtue (pg. 47) – According to Aristotle, there are two types of virtue: intellectual and moral. Virtue is the activity of the soul that displays excellence within the sphere of its activity.
3. Eudaimonia (pg.57) – best translated as blessedness, happiness, prosperity which according to Aristotle is the state of being well and doing well.

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

Chapter 2 explores the concepts of character and virtue ethics. Character ethic is the idea that people advance based on their character. It depends on changes within each of us, while virtue ethics deals with an individual's character. It does not provide any stringent rules or regulations on what a person should do in a given situation, rather it focuses on the kind of person one should be.