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**“Empirical Judgments in Ethical Decisions” (5-3-1)**

Questions

1. **Where does Hollinger say the church stands on the issue of economic justice?**

Hollinger says Christians have no option regarding care for the economically disenfranchised and victims of economic justice within the world. Still, Christians occasionally disagree on the best method to solve poverty and what economic justice looks like in practice.

2. **What’s Hollinger’s view on how poverty can be overcome?** In Hollinger’s view,

poverty can be overcome only by addressing all the issues pertinent to the particular nation, geographical area, or society. He quotes David Landes, who says, “Economic analysis cherishes the illusion that one good reason should be enough, but the determinants of complex process are invariably plural and interrelated.”

3. **Who is most known for the notion of ideology?** Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels are

most known for the notion of ideology. Their definition was economic in nature and described false consciousness and the ideas of the ruling class that distorted facts to justify their position in society.

4. **Name the three types of personal dispositions, according to the text.** The three types

of personal dispositions, according to the text, are optimist, moderate, and pessimist.

5. **What are the three ways the church has traditionally responded to the issue of war?**

The three ways the church has traditionally response to the issue of war consist of pacifism, holy war, and just war.

Vocabulary

- **Social mores:** another word for consequentialism or an ethic of consequences
- **Ideology:** another word for the principle approach to ethics or an ethic of principles
- **Vested interest:** the belief that one ought to do what will produces one's own highest good, as determined by the amount of pleasure or happiness received from the action

Summary

In this chapter on empirical judgments in ethical decisions, Hollinger explains that not all Christians arrive at the same empirical judgments, even though they hold similar beliefs and ethical principles. Hollinger outlines critical aspects that influence this phenomenon, including social mores, ideologies, vested interests, and personal dispositions. To this end, Hollinger highlights, for example, issues such as war, the environment, and poverty. While Hollinger recognizes the complexities of formulating empirical judgments, in the end, he points to the “fallenness and finiteness of humanity” as the limiting factor before strongly advising Christians to practice humility in the pursuit of empirical judgments in ethical decisions.