

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

He believes we consider things to be good when there is good in themselves such as happiness, knowledge, and virtue regardless of how they are perceived by others. The second is when things are good for their consequences, meaning that it is not good in itself but the outcome of it is good. The third is when something is good because of its appearance, it looks good or it is popular, it appears to be good but it's actually not.

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?

Gyges was a shepherd who discovered a ring on a giant in a cave and when he put on the ring he became invisible. He started to do all kinds of immoral acts without getting caught. The point of the story that Plato is trying to make is that people are selfish and that if they are given the power to do whatever they wanted without consequence they would. The reason why people behave morally is because they are afraid of punishment, or they are trying to keep their reputation. "he was astonished at this, and again touching the ring he turned the bezel outwards and reappeared; he made several trials of the ring, and always with the same result - when he turned the bezel inwards he became invisible, when outwards he reappeared. Whereupon he contrived to be chosen one of the messengers who were sent to the court; where as soon as he arrived he seduced the queen, and with her help conspired against the king and slew him, and took the kingdom." (Pg. 489) This passage shows that once the shepherd was given the power of not getting caught, he started to do unjust things because he knew he could get away with it.

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?

They both have two different views on what is the best life for a man. Glaucon believes that people would commit immoral acts or do whatever they want when they know they aren't going to get caught. He believes the best life for a man is maximum pleasure where anyone gets their desires satisfied without punishment. On the other hand Adeimantus believes that a man should live by good morals and that a man will be happier if he is just rather than someone who is doing unjust things. I agree with Adeimantus because I think doing the right things brings more order but also brings more meaning in your life because if you try to gain so many things from the world and you try to get whatever you want it only satisfies you temporarily because it can't fill you up. It will leave you with just wanting more with emotions of feeling miserable and unsatisfied. In their argument one of the brothers says that being moral can bring some reward Glaucon also adds on that it can be good to be moral because it can build your reputation. "Glaucon's argument about the praise and censure of justice and injustice, which is equally required in order to bring out what I believe to be his meaning. Parents and tutors are always telling their sons and their wards that they are to be just; but why? not for the sake of justice, but for the sake of character and reputation; in the hope of obtaining for him who is reputed just some of those offices, marriages and the like which Glaucon has enumerated among the advantages accruing to the unjust from the reputation of justice" (Pg. 490)

### **Aristotle, "Ethical Virtue" – pp. 492-495**

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

In order to achieve eudaimonia you have to live a life full of virtue. They have to be virtues that are moral and intellectual. Eudaimonia isn't just a feeling of happiness, Aristotle believes that it can only be achieved by those two virtues and there has to be a mean in between. "Virtue is of two kinds, intellectual and ethical. Intellectual virtue owes its origins and its growth more to teaching, and so needs experience and time; but ethical virtue comes about from habit - hence even its name derives (by a slight modification) from the word 'ethos', custom or habit" (Pg. 493)

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

Aristotle argued that the function of a human being engages in rational activity. Humans are so different from animals because of our reasoning and our capacity of rational thought. Plants are alive like we are and animals are alive and have survival instincts but people do not just live and have survival instincts we are able to gain knowledge and rationalize things. "Living seems common to plants, but we are looking for something special to humans, so we should set aside the life of nutrition and growth. Next would come some sort of sentient life, but this is common to horses, oxen and every animal. There remains some sort of active life of the rational part of the soul . . . Suppose, then, that the function of a human being is an activity of the soul in accordance with, or involving, reason" (493)

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

Aristotle defined a virtue as a habit, meaning a stable characteristic or tendency that reflects a person's moral character and their habitual way of behaving. We aren't born with our characteristics by nature but habit because of how we can repeat certain behaviors. "but ethical virtue comes about from habit - hence even its name derives (by a slight modification) from the word 'ethos', custom or habit. It is clear from this that none of the ethical virtues arises in us by nature; for none of the things that exist by nature can be radically altered by habituation." (493)

4. How do we gain virtue?

We gain virtue by habituation, by acting in accordance with a moral virtue it starts to become second nature to us. We have to keep practicing moral behavior so that it can keep developing. There also has to be a balance when it comes to extremes or deficiency of a characteristic. This can be found on page (493)

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

An example of a virtue is, for example, for moral let's say the word courageous, there has to be a mean in between so a person isn't cowardly, but they also aren't reckless. "I call the mean with respect to the object that which is equidistant from the two extremes, and this is one and the same for everyone; but the mean in relation to us is what is neither excessive nor deficient, and this is not one and the same for all" (Pg. 494)