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Philosophy

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### **Plato's Perspective on Morality**

1. Three different ways people consider things as good

a) Some things are good in themselves. These things only appear good and enjoyable, but the outcomes of doing or using them may be catastrophic (Dhiman, 2021). For instance, some trees produce fruits that are attractive to the eye but poisonous for consumption.

b) Others are good in themselves and for their consequences. Dhiman (2021) states that these things are pleasing and produce satisfying results. Socrates points out that such things are just. People should engage in just things.

c) The rest are good only for their consequences. These are unpleasant but have satisfying outcomes (Dhiman, 2021). For example, losing an infected limb is not good, but it may save the patient's life.

2. Gyges was one of the king's shepherds. While grazing the king's flock, an earthquake occurred, opening an aperture inside where he found a magical ring that could make him disappear. With his newly acquired powers, Gyges killed the king and took charge of the kingdom with the queen's help. He argued that any man with a similar ability to commit a crime

that favored their progress in life and go unnoticed would act as he did. Glaucon uses this story to argue that people only act justly for fear of being caught and facing the consequences of acting unjustly.

3. Glaucon and Adeimantus, in the end, think that a man can live the best life by being just and doing as they please. Glaucon states that as long as men can do whatever they want without hurting or being unjust to others, they can be viewed as virtuous people. Leading a just life is far more pleasing and fulfilling for the soul (Berg & Chang, 2023). This is because, as Socrates posits, such a life is driven by reason, not carnal desires, and brings the truest happiness.

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

1. Happiness, according to Aristotle, is being able to attain all that is good throughout an entire lifetime, including knowledge, health, riches, and friends that make human life perfect and fulfilled. It is a life spent nurturing and cultivating virtue (Abakare, 2020). A truly happy life depends on the individual's ability to fulfill physical and mental needs. Nothing is as satisfying as someone looking back and seeing that they did the best they could with their lives.

2. Aristotle posits that the function of the human being is to act rationally. By this statement, Aristotle implies that people are meant to act with a reason as directed by their virtues. People do things by engaging reason in every decision they make. According to Dhiman (2021), rationality expresses what we stand for and the tradeoffs we are willing to do to achieve whatever we believe is worth.

3. Aristotle means that virtue reflects the values and characters inherent in people. It forms the reference point where people make decisions and act in response to stimuli. Abakare (2020) explains virtue is not a feeling because feelings are circumstantial or capacities that are

dependent on our abilities. Instead, virtue is a cultivated state of mind that directs individual choices and actions.

4. Aristotle points out that virtue is acquired through consistent practice leading to long-lasting habits (Abakare, 2020). If an individual practices doing good things to others, people will look and say, "That man treats others well, and he has virtue," and vice versa.

5. Virtue is a state of equilibrium between opposite stresses. This is not a call to apply moderation in all things but to establish a balance between two vices (Abakare, 2020). For example, justice is the balance between giving or getting too much and giving or receiving too little.