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Philosophy

Kant, "Duty and Reason as the Ultimate Principle"- pp 506-512

1. Explain why Kant thinks the only thing truly good "in itself" is goodwill.

Kant says that benevolence is the only thing that is genuinely good "in itself" since it is the only good that is independent of external influence. Kant maintains that people can make moral judgments independent of extrinsic factors such as pleasure, money gain, and even the opinions of others. Instead, goodwill is founded on logic, and this rational decision-making is what makes it genuinely beneficial. Kant argues further that goodness is autonomous and self-determined, unaffected by extrinsic incentive. This makes it a reliable source of moral decision-making, as it is based on an individual's understanding of ethical principles. Kant concludes that kindness is universal and impartial since it applies to all rational creatures equally. Kant concludes that benevolence is the only thing that is genuinely good "in itself" and that it should serve as the guiding principle for moral.

2. What does Kant mean by doing our actions "from the motive of duty"? How is this different from acting out of self-interest, natural inclination, or even just in "conformity" with duty?

When we behave out of duty, as Kant defines it, we are driven only by our sense of moral responsibility rather than by any other considerations. Acting altruistically is distinct from self-interested behavior since the latter is driven by the expected benefits of an activity rather than any higher moral principle. It is also distinct from doing what comes naturally as the latter is driven by personal preferences and sentiments rather than any sense of duty or rightness. Responsibility is distinct from duty in that those who behave responsibly do so out of habit rather than any sense of compulsion to do the right thing. Instead, we do what we're obliged to do, regardless of whether or not we agree with it on a moral level.

3. What does Kant mean for an action to have moral worth based on its principle, not based on the end it achieves?

Kant believed that for an action to have moral worth, it must be done for its own sake not for any outcomes that may result from it. Kant argued that if an action is done solely to achieve a specific moral worth since it is not based on a sense of duty or obligation but rather on a desire to receive something in return. He believed that it was only an action done out of a sense of duty or obligation, not out of a desire for personal gain that could be considered moral worth.

4. Explain Kant's two formulations of the Categorical Imperative in your own words on 510 and 511-512.

Guidelines for moral conduct can be found in Kant's two versions of the Categorical Imperative. According to the first formulation, we should only behave in a manner that we would like everyone else to act and should refrain from doing any actions that would be unfair or unjust if everyone else took them. According to the second version, we should never disrespect others or use them as a tool to further our own agendas. It highlights how crucial it is to respect

everyone autonomy and treat them with decency, whether they are ourselves or someone else. Both formulations are intended to serve as a universal standard for moral conduct and to provide a moral framework for making choices.

Mill, "Happiness as the Foundation of Morality" pp. 512-517

1. Write out and explain Mill's "Greatest Happiness Principle."

John Stuart Mill's "Greatest Happiness Principle" states, "Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness." Mill argues that a person's morality should be determined by how much enjoyment they bring into the world. For example, if an action creates more pleasure than pain in the world it is morally right, and if it creates more pain than pleasure, it is morally wrong. This principle is also refers to utilitarianism, as it relies on utility or usefulness to determine the morality of an action. Because it is founded on an objective measure of results rather than on subjective opinions or ideals, Mill contends that this principle is the most appropriate foundation for morality.

2. What does Mill mean when he writes, "Better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied"?

Mill suggests that living a life of virtue and reflection, even if it's not a life of comfort and pleasure, is better than living in blissful ignorance. Assigning the label "fool" to Socrates, the great ancient Greek philosopher. Mill argues that a life of ease and pleasure without a sense of moral purpose is preferable to a life of difficulty and dissatisfaction in the pursuit of meaning. According to Mill, individuals who choose simple pleasures for more complex ones are just ignorant; the idiot is content because he cannot fathom what it would be like to be Socrates.

3. How does Mill discuss quality and kinds of happiness in contrast to calculating the quantity of happiness?

Mill tries to clarify utilitarianism by addressing common misunderstandings of the philosophy. Mill points out that a common misconception of utilitarianism has people seeing usefulness as opposed to pleasure. According to Mill, the intensity and length of pleasure are only half the story; the other half is the pleasure's quality. According to this theory, the quality of one pleasure may make it superior to another, regardless of its relative quantities.

4. What role does all of previous human history and the experience of wise and competent people play in figuring out what will bring the most happiness in our actions?

Previous human history and the experience of wise and competent people play an essential role in helping us to understand the effects of our actions on our happiness and the happiness of others. History can provide examples of successful and unsuccessful ways of living giving us a better understanding of which behaviors are likely to lead to greater well-being. The insights of wise and competent people can also help us better understand how our behavior can impact our happiness and the happiness of others. Such individuals can provide us with an understanding of the complexities of human behavior, allowing us to make more informed decisions about our behavior.