

Kant: "Duty and Reason as the Ultimate Principle"

Given that other things like riches, power, and happiness can also be exploited for bad purposes, Kant thought that the only thing that is truly good «in itself» is a good will. Because it is motivated by the objective and universal moral rule and is driven by a sense of obligation to do what is right, despite the repercussions or personal gain, good will is important. Pursuing our own wishes and goals while acting in our own best interests may be inconsistent with moral standards. When we act instinctively, we do so without taking moral considerations into account.

And behaving «in accordance» with responsibility is carrying out what is required but without being driven by a sense of obligation to uphold moral standards. Only acts carried out «from the motive of duty,» in Kant's view, are truly moral, as they are driven exclusively by a sense of obligation to uphold moral standards, without consideration for other factors. Kant, says an action has moral value based on its principle when it is carried out out of obligation and in accordance with the objective and universal moral law as opposed to being driven by the result or consequence of the activity. In other words, a deed is morally good when it is done for the moral law's sake alone, rather than solely for the sake of reaching a certain aim or goal.

Kant held that an action's moral worth was determined by the underlying principle it was based on, not by the outcome it produced. The Categorical Imperative was initially formulated by Kant on page 510. In Mill's «Greatest Happiness Principle,» morally correct behaviors are those that increase happiness for the largest number of people, while morally wrong actions increase the

opposite of happiness or unhappiness. According to Mill, maximizing enjoyment and minimizing suffering are the two main goals of moral behavior.

He suggests that pursuing higher quality happiness is more important than merely maximizing the amount of happiness experienced. Mill believed that intellectual and moral pleasures are superior to physical ones, and that pursuing these higher pleasures leads to a more fulfilling life. Therefore, determining the morality of actions based only on the amount of happiness they produce is inadequate, and the quality and types of happiness they generate must also be taken into account. We can make better judgments and increase happiness for both ourselves and society at large by learning from history and paying attention to the counsel of the wise.