

Hannah Roos

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

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

The reason that Kant believes this is because everything else can fail or turn to bad, or fail because of a problem.

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

That we are acting out of duty then what we are doing is truly worthy. It is different then acting out of self interest because acting out of duty does not mean it will always be beneficial for you.

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

All moral things must be intentional and formal so the action of doing something based on it being intentional serves more purpose than what it achieves.

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

a) I ought never to act except in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law

I should not do or act on things which can not become a universal law because then what if those things batteries or fails me. Kant is basically saying if you are doing things just to do them what is the point whether you should do things because they are known to not fail.

b) Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end

Always act in hopes to see humanity learn how to act when it comes to the known universal rather than these unknowns.

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

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

Mill believes that for the world to be perfect all of society must be happy and free of pain.

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

He means it is better to continue to look for true meaning and joy from life, than to think you have it all together and in reality you never find your true happiness.

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

No matter the amount of time that happiness is brought to you, what truly matters to Mill is the quality of the happiness. Even if you are happier for a longer time that is not as important because the true importance is the quality of happiness.

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?

I don't remember this part of the reading