

Plato, "Morality and Happiness"

1. Socrates believes that things can be good in three different ways. Firstly, there are things that are good for their own sake and not for any other purpose. Secondly, there are things that are good for both their own sake and for the sake of their consequences. Finally, there are things that are good only for the sake of their consequences.
2. The "Ring of Gyges" story is about a shepherd who discovers a ring that makes him invisible. He uses this newfound power to do whatever he wants without consequence, including committing theft and murder. The ultimate point that Glaucon is making is that people only act justly because they fear the consequences of not doing so. If given the opportunity to act unjustly without consequence, people would choose to do so.
3. Glaucon and Adeimantus believe that the best life for a man is one of material abundance, power, and honor. They argue that one should pursue this life by being cunning and resourceful. However, Socrates disagrees with this view and argues that the best life is one of virtue and justice, not material wealth and power. He believes that one should pursue this life by engaging in philosophical inquiry and cultivating one's soul.

Aristotle, "Ethical Virtue"

1. Aristotle characterizes happiness (Greek: eudaimonia) as the ultimate end for man's pursuits. He defines happiness as an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue, and argues that it is the ultimate goal of all human action.
2. Aristotle argues that the function of a human being is to engage in rational activity, and that this activity is what distinguishes human beings from other animals. He argues that the highest form of rational activity is contemplation, and that this is what we should aim for in life.
3. Aristotle means by saying virtue is a disposition, not just a feeling or a capacity, that virtue is a habit or a learned behavior that becomes a part of a person's character. Virtue is not something that can be gained through feeling or capacity alone, but rather through deliberate practice and repetition.
4. We gain virtue by practicing it, just as we gain skills in other areas of life. Aristotle argues that we become virtuous by developing good habits through consistent practice and repetition. He also emphasizes the importance of role models and mentors in guiding us towards virtuous behavior.
5. Aristotle argues that virtue is like a mean, or balance point, between extremes. This means that a virtuous person avoids both excess and deficiency in their actions, and instead finds a middle ground. An example of such a virtue is courage, which lies between the excess of recklessness and the deficiency of cowardice. A courageous person is not reckless, but is willing to face danger when necessary.