

CONGRESS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION 2024

COURSE: FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

FOCUS ON UNDERSTANDING THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND CHRISTOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS. ENGAGE IN BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR DECISION MAKING AND CONDUCT FOR LIVING

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OBJECTIVE

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR DECISION MAKING AND CONDUCT FOR LIVING.

OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS WE WILL EXPLORE CHRISTIAN ETHICS. ASK WHAT THE WHOLE BIBLE TEACHES US ABOUT WHICH ACTS, ATTITUDES, AND PERSONAL CHARACTER TRAITS RECEIVE GOD'S APPROVAL AND WHICH ONES DO NOT

COURSE MATERIALS: THE BIBLE

HOMEWORK: ROMANS CH 6-7-8

DEFINITIONS

ETHICS: PHILOSOPHICAL

MORAL PRINCIPLES THAT GOVERN A PERSON'S BEHAVIOR OR THE CONDUCTING OF AN ACTIVITY ON OUR LIVES

ETHICS: CHRISTOLOGICAL

IN A CHRISTIAN ETHIC THE BASIS FOR GOOD OR BAD IS FOUND IN THE WILL OF GOD. IT IS A SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF THE LIFE EXEMPLIFIED AND TAUGHT BY JESUS

ETHICS FOUNDATION

THE ULTIMATE BASIS FOR CHRISTIAN ETHICS IS THE MORAL CHARACTER OF GOD

GOD IS OMNIPOTENCE: HE IS ALL POWERFULL (GEN 17:1/PS 115:3)

GOD IS OMNIPRESENCE: HE IS EVERYWHERE PRESENT (PS 139:7/12)

GOD IS OMNISCIENCE: HE KNOWS EVERYTHING (PS 147:5/1 JOHN 3:20)

GOD IS ETERNAL (HEB 13:8)

GOD IS LOVE, SO HE COMMANDS US TO LOVE (1 JOHN 4:19). HE IS HOLY AND HE COMMANDS US TO BE HOLY (1 PETER 1:15) HE IS MERCIFUL, AND HE COMMANDS US TO BE MERCIFUL (LUKE 6:36) HE IS TRUTHFUL, AND HE COMMANDS US NOT TO BEAR FALSE WITNESS (TITUS 1:2; EXODUS 20:16)

GOD'S MORAL CHARACTER LIES IN THE FACT THAT HE HAS GIVEN US MORAL COMMANDS TO PROVIDE US WITH THE BASIS FOR A CHRISTIAN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF HOW WE CAN MOVE FROM IS STATEMENTS TO OUGHT STATEMENTS IN ETHICS

GOD'S MORAL STATEMENT

John 3:16

New King James Version

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

THE TOOLS GOD HAS GIVEN US IS THE BIBLE: THE BASIC INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE LEAVING EARTH

2 Timothy 3:16-17

New King James Version

¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

ETHICAL DILEMA NUMBER 1: TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT

DISCUSSION: GENESIS 3

EVERYDAY WE WAKE UP WITH THE SAME ETHICAL DELIMA DO I FOLLOW GOD'S TEACHING OR DO I FOLLOW MAN; TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT

DAY 2: COCE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

EXODUS CH 20: THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

MANY CHRISTIANS HAVE READ THE OLD TESTAMENT AND WONDERED HOW SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND THE DETAILED LAWS THAT GOD GAVE TO THE PEOPLE OF ISREAL UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF MOSES. THIS REQUIRES AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY OF REDEMPTION

1 Peter 2:9

New King James Version

⁹But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

THE MOSAIC COVENANT, WHICH BEGAN AT EXODUS 20, WAS TERMINATED WHEN CHRIST DIED. CHRISTIANS ARE NO LONGER DIRECTLY SUBJECT TO THE LAWS OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT BUT NOW LIVE INSTEAD UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW COVENANT. HOWEVER, THE OLD TESTAMENT IS STILL A VALUABLE SOURCE OF ETHICAL WISDOM, AND ETHICAL TEACHING IN LIGHT OF THE CHANGES BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE NEW COVENANT

Matthew 5:17-19

New King James Version

Christ Fulfills the Law

¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away,

one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Romans 7:12

New King James Version

¹² Therefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

WHY CHRISTIAN ETHICS

ROMANS 7:7-25/ROMANS 3:23

1. BECAUSE WE ARE AMBASSDORS OF JESUS CHRIST; WHOSE TEACHINGS ARE CENTERED ON BOTH THEOLOGY, ETHICS, AND MORALS.
2. BECAUSE ALL PEOPLE MAKE MORAL AND ETHICAL DECISIONS EVERY DAY
3. BECAUSE ETHICS PROVIDE THE STANDARD BY WHICH BELIEVERS CAN MEASURE THEIR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
4. BECAUSE IT TEACHES US HOW TO LIVE A LIFE THAT IS PLEASING TO GOD. HOW TO KNOW GOD'S WILL
5. BECAUSE IT HELP'S GUIDE US INTO UNDERSTANDING THROUGH SCRIPTURE WHAT BEHAVIOR IS ACCEPTABLE AND WHAT IS NOT

GUIDELINES

1. MOTIVES MUST BE PURE. (COL 3:17)
2. OUR ACTIONS MUST NOT BE SELFISH (1PETER 3:8/1 CORIN 10:24)
3. ACTIONS MUST BE DONE IN FAITH (HEB 11:6)
4. WE ARE TO SEEK RIGHTEOUSNESS (MATT 6:33)
5. WE MUST BE COURAGEOUS (JOSHUA 1:7)

MORAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES WE FACE TODAY

RACIAL INJUSTICE; PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION; EQUAL RIGHTS FOR MEN AND WOMEN; BIOMEDICAL ISSUES SUCH AS ORGAN TRANSPLANT, CLONING, ABORTION; CHRISTIAN INTERPETATION OF SCRIPTURE; HOMOSEXUALITY; LGBTQ LIFESTYLES; CAPTIAL PUNISHMENT; IMMIGRATION; CAPITALISM

ETHICAL DELIMA: TO KILL OR NOT TO KILL

COCE: FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS DAY 3

Proverbs 3:5-6

New King James Version

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.

Matthew 6:33

New King James Version

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS TEACHES US TO CONSIDER FOUR DIMENSIONS OF ANY ACTION, AND NINE POSSIBLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

CHRISTIAN ETHICS IS NOT CONCERNED ONLY WITH OUR RIGHT AND WRONG ACTIONS. WE ARE COMPLEX PEOPLE AND LIFE ITSELF IS COMPLEX. THEREFORE, IN STUDYING CHRISTIAN ETHICS, GOD NOT WANTS US TO CONSIDER NOT ONLY

1. THE ACTION ITSELF BUT ALSO
2. A PERSON'S ATTITUDE ABOUT THE ACTION
3. THE PERSON MOTIVES FOR DOING THE ACTION
4. THE RESULTS OF THE ACTION

IN SEEKING TO KNOW GOD'S WILL SOMETIMES WE MUST MAKE A DECISION INSTANTLY, WITH NO TIME TO PONDER THE SITUATION (JOSEPH GEN 39:12). BUT AT OTHER TIMES, WE ARE ABLE TO PONDER A DECISION. WHEN WE HAVE MORE TIME TO PONDER A SITUATION, WE CAN CONSIDER AS MANY AS NINE POSSIBLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. THE BIBLE
2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION
3. KNOWLEDGE OF OURSELVES
4. ADVICE FROM OTHERS
5. CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES
6. OUR CONSCIENCES
7. OUR HEARTS
8. OUR HUMAN SPIRIT
9. GUIDANCE FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT
10. PRAYER; WE NEED WISDOM FROM GOD IN ORDER TO EVALUATE THESE FACTORS RIGHTLY IN MAKING A DECISION

WE SHOULD NEVER THINK THAT GOD WANTS US TO CHOOSE A LESSER SIN. THAT IS NOT TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE. LOOK AT THE LIFE OF JESUS (HEB 4:15) WHEN WE STRUGGLE REMEMBER (1 CORIN 10:13)

WILLFUL SIN BRINGS CONSEQUENCES TO OUR DAILY LIVES. THE NEW TESTAMENT MENTIONS SEVERAL HARMFUL

CONSEQUENCES THAT COME FROM WILLFUL SIN IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN. THESE CONSEQUENCES INCLUDE A DISRUPTION OF OUR DAILY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD (EPH 4:30/1 JOHN 3:21). THE AWARENESS OF GOD'S FATHERLY DISPLEASURE AND THE POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE OF HIS FATHERLY DISCIPLINE (1 CORIN 11:30/HEB 12:5-11/EPH 4:30/REV 3:19). AND A LOSS OF FRUITFULNESS IN OUR CHRISTIAN LIVES (JOHN 15:4-5)

EVEN AFTER ALL THIS WE STILL COME UP SHORT. BUT THERE IS HOPE

1 John 1:9

New King James Version

⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

New King James Version

⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

ETHICAL DELIMA: CHEATING

COCE: FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS DAY 4

CHRISTIAN ETHICS TEACHES US HOW TO LIVE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

THE GOAL OF ETHICS IS TO LEAD US TO A LIFE THAT GLORIFIES GOD (1 CORIN 10:31/COL 3:17)

SUCH A LIFE WILL HAVE

1. A CHARACTER THAT GLORIFIES GOD (PHIL 2:1-5)
2. RESULTS THAT GLORIFY GOD. A LIFE THAT BEARS FRUIT FOR GOD'S KINGDOM (JOHN 15:8/16; COL 1:10/GAL 5:22-23)
3. BEHAVIOR THAT GLORIFIES GOD. A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD, LIVED IN A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD (GAL 2:20)

HOW IS IT MANIFESTED: THROUGH A LIFE OF HUMILITY;
FAITH; CHARITY; COURAGE; SELF-
GOVERNMENT; VIRTUE; INDUSTRY; WISDOM

Matthew 5:16

New King James Version

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

CREDITS: WAYNE GRUDEM (PHD, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE)
CHRISTIAN ETHICS

