
Subject: Christian Ethics: Introduction

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The Study of Christian Ethics

Introduction to Christian Ethics

Definition:

It is the study of the principles & practise of right and wrong in light of the scriptures.

- Christianity into conduct

- doctrine into deeds

The Greek word meaning ethics is "ethos".

Ethics is 3/4 of life because conduct is 3/4 of life. Every decision a person makes is on some moral or ethical standard. Our morals & ethics are based on everything we have seen been taught or read.

John 14/6 the christian has a standard or norm to base his life on. 1 Tim.3/16. Since conduct is 3/4 of life we should know what to base our life on.

Presuppositions:

a) christian ethics are grounded in its Jewish heritage. The OT is fulfilled in the new.

Matt. 5/17-18,39 The basis of Jesus teaching is the OT

b) We need to distinguish between christian ethics and other ethical standards

christian ethics are based on the bible.

All other ethics we call philosophical ethics

christian ethics deals with the same questions but has different answers

c) Christian ethics believes that Christ is the source of all truth and light as it is revealed in his word.

Differences between Christian & Philosophical Ethics

a) They are incomplete and inadequate as they have no answers

b) We criticize them because they make absolute the finite. They make mans reason the absolute and final source of revelation.

c) They say reason alone is a sufficient guide for all moral conduct. Socrates said if you want to do right you will. 1 Cor.1 mans reason is fallen and can't reason properly.

d)They cannot agree on what is the highest good. Seminaries and teachers are changing their views constantly.

The Relationship between Religion and Conduct

- The OT Canaanites practised human sacrifice
- Some eastern Indian religions have temple prostitutes.
- The liberal churches would say no drinking or gambling etc is the height of legalism

In the bible conduct is the essence of religion. Christian ethics is not based on rules only principles. It just gives basic principles based on the word so we can make a decision. The difference between rules and principles is love. Rom.13/8-10. Christian ethics are based not only on principles but a living person. Jesus is our standard.

Principles of conduct

- a) Holiness Eph. 1/3-4
 - b) Righteousness Titus2/11-12, Rom. 6/12-13,
 - c) Just and Merciful. Micah 6/8, Luke 6/31, Matt 5/7
 - d)Love John 13/34-35
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