

The good, the bad,

& the ethical

Taking my place
in a complex world

Digital Student workbook | Written by Josh Apieczonek

CEP
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
PUBLICATIONS



Published 2007 by CEP.
Reprinted 2011, 2014, 2016.

Digital Student workbook version 2017

ISBN 978-1-921137-97-6
eISBN 978-1-925725-08-7

Copyright © Christian Education Publications 2007

This resource is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part of this book may be reproduced by any process without permission of the publisher.

Christian Education Publications
PO Box A287, Sydney South NSW 1235 Australia
Email: sales@cepstore.com.au
Web: cepstore.com.au

Written by: Josh Apieczonek
Managing editor: Simon Smart
Editorial: Rhonda Watson, Sue Aiken
Internal design: Online Advertising Pty Ltd
Cover design: Andrew Hope

Contents

Part 1: Ethical systems

Introducing ethics	4
Chapter 1: Individualism	7
Chapter 2: Rules vs results	10
Chapter 3: Values	13

Part 2: A brief introduction to biblical ethics

Chapter 4: Foundations	16
Chapter 5: The Fall: what went wrong?	18
Chapter 6: Redemption	20
Chapter 7: The Mutual Love Ethic	23

Part 3: Ethics in the real world

Chapter 8: War	26
Chapter 9: Environmental ethics	29
Chapter 10: Marriage and sex	32
Chapter 11: Human rights	35
Chapter 12: Compassion	39
Chapter 13: Altruism	43
Chapter 14: Sanctity of life	45
Chapter 15: What do you think? Personal reflections	49

Key to icons



Action



Question



Discussion

The good,
the bad,

& the ethical



Taking my place
in a complex world

Written by Josh Apieczonek

Introducing ethics



You're shopping in a clothes store and you notice a girl look around to check that nobody is watching her. She grabs a T-shirt off the rack and puts it under her jacket. How do you respond?



Circle the course of action you would most like to take in this situation.

✓ Tick the option you think you probably would take.

Underline the option you think is the right one to take.

- a) You ignore it and keep shopping.
- b) You'd like to do something about it but you're too chicken, so you mumble something about globalisation and stealing from corporations being OK.
- c) You confront her and tell her to put it back, or you'll tell someone in the shop.
- d) You tell the shop assistant about her.
- e) You convince the girl to put it back, take her out to lunch and have a long conversation that changes her life.
- f) You yell out 'Police!' and enjoy watching her freak out.

Ethics

If you've ever wondered whether a decision was right or wrong, if you've argued about what was important or trivial, if you've debated about what someone should or shouldn't have done, you've been 'doing' ethics. Ethics is the study of right and wrong. It involves thinking about, and living out, right and wrong in our world.

Ethics is everywhere. Everybody makes decisions involving right and wrong all the time and life constantly produces ethical situations for us to face.

Ethics isn't a subject like nuclear physics, where you come to it with very little in the way of knowledge. We have much of our lives to draw on when it comes to ethics. We're not complete novices; we do have some experience in this area.



What kinds of ethical issues could the following pictures imply?



Our emotions show that we are very concerned about right and wrong. If we feel we have been wronged we get angry. When we see injustice our blood boils. Our compassion or sadness can reveal a concern about a

situation that we think is wrong. We may find ourselves strongly voicing our feelings that something should or shouldn't happen. All these point to our standards, and our interest in right and wrong.



Think about a time when you felt anger or guilt or sadness, or were offended by someone or something. Discuss what the situation was and why you felt the way you did.

Ethics in the real world

Ethics involves asking questions like:

- ☀ What is the right thing to do here?
- ☀ Is there only one choice that is right?
- ☀ Why is this decision right?
- ☀ Where do right and wrong come from?
- ☀ Should our country go to war or not?
- ☀ Who should I sleep with?
- ☀ How should I spend my money?

The study of ethics may sound a bit theoretical but it's also very practical. Each one of us makes ethical decisions every day.

We can define ethics as:

'A system of moral principles by which human actions, speech, thought and proposals may be judged good or bad, right or wrong.'

'The unexamined life is not worth living.' Plato

'Even a dead dog can go with the flow ...'

'The pig in the mud is enjoying life more than the tortured intellectual.'

Ethics before lunch



For the following account, circle or underline each moment when an ethical decision is being made.

Sarah's alarm began beeping at 6.20 am. She knew if she got up now she could be ready in time for her dad to drive her to the bus. She hit snooze and rolled over. It wasn't until 7 am that she finally dragged herself into the shower where she stood thinking for 20 minutes while the warmth of the water washed over her. After a frantic rush during which she yelled at her brother, and kissed her mother goodbye, she got halfway down the driveway to the waiting car, before running back into the house to snatch her MP3 player off her desk. She didn't want to miss the tunes she had downloaded last night from a borrowed CD.

On the bus she stood to let an adult have her seat and this meant she couldn't finish her homework as she'd intended. On arrival at school, Sarah tossed her muesli bar wrapper to the ground before abusing Angela for refusing to be part of the Make Poverty History campaign at the school.

At break, she helped Claudia, a blind student, to find her way to the library. On her way out to meet her friends, Sarah intervened in a situation where a group of year 8 boys were picking on a younger boy.

Subjectivism and Objectivism

Ethical issues are everywhere, but where do we get the concept of right and wrong? That question will form an important part of our study.

When you are asked a question about how a book or a piece of music made you feel, you are being asked a *subjective* question. It is asking how you, the *subject*, felt about the object, the book or piece of music. Alternatively, you may be asked in science about how many protons the oxygen atom has (apparently it's eight). This question is asked about the object (not you the subject) and so is an *objective* question.

'Do you like to eat mangoes?' is a subjective question, and depends on you for an answer. 'Is the mango a fruit?' is an objective question and doesn't depend on you. It is a fruit, regardless of your feelings for or against it.

A very common idea people have about morality in our society is that it is not like science, which deals in facts, but more a matter of values, which deals in the realm of personal opinion.¹ So, for these people, ethics is about whatever you think or feel. It is *subjective*. It changes according to each person. It is personal. You can't force your ideas onto someone else. It is relative to you. This view is called subjectivism because it is a **subjective** view of ethics.

Others think ethics is not dependent on what you think or feel, but rather it is outside, or external to, you. It is *objective*. It stays the same for all people across all cultures. It is universal and absolute. This view is called objectivism because it is an **objective** view of ethics.²



5 Identify each statement below as either **S** for subjective or **O** for objective:

S or O

	Murder is always wrong.
	Beetroot tastes terrible.
	There are eight protons in the Oxygen atom.
	Disagreements about right and wrong show there are no answers that are right for everyone.
	All humans owe future generations a clean, healthy environment.
	Nobody can tell you what's right and wrong for you.
	You should always be loyal to your friends.
	Every human has the right to life, liberty and security of person regardless of race, colour, sex, religion or political opinion.
	One Direction is the greatest band of all time.
	Sexual morality changes according to each person.



6 Can you think of examples from your experience to support each of these positions? Write them in the space below.

Subjectivism

Objectivism

Sometimes ethics gets complicated, for instance when we make objective statements about the subjectivism of ethics! We are going to spend the next three chapters looking at **different ways of making ethical decisions**. This will be a very brief and simplified version of different ethical theories. Ethics can get very complicated. We'll try to keep it as simple as possible.



7 How do you decide what is right and wrong? What helps you to make those decisions when they come up?

Plato

BIG GUN BOX Humans have studied ethics for thousands of years. Plato, who lived around 300–400 BC in Athens, is the first ethical philosopher we have records of. His writings record many dialogues and arguments between his teacher Socrates and the Sophists. The Sophists thought that there was a radical difference between the world of facts and the world of values. They thought that good and bad could not be proven by logic but was rather a matter of rhetoric, of persuading people to agree.

Plato's teacher **Socrates** argued in contrast that there are right and wrong views about right and wrong (if that makes sense) and that we can use our powers of reasoning to discover what these are. He admitted it did take a certain degree of expertise to get the answers right and so philosophy plays an important role in gathering this expertise.

Individualism



Lucy thinks that any decisions she makes in life should be all about her having fun. Can you think of any limits to such an approach? If her own pleasure was the basis of every decision she made, how could she go wrong?



Construct a list of the areas of our lives where as individuals we get to choose what we want. Contrast it with those things in which we do not have a choice.

I'll decide

The key question of ethics is **'How do we figure out what is right and wrong?'** Every ethical theory attempts to give an answer to this question. We will explore some of these in the chapters that follow. The first group of ethical theories we will look at focuses on the individual.



One way of deciding what's right and wrong holds that morality is better left up to each individual to decide. 'Nobody has the right to tell someone else what's good or bad for them!' it says. It points to the many disagreements and debates that people have about right and wrong, and says, 'See! Of course we don't agree. It's up to each individual to decide for themselves what's right and wrong'. The technical name for this view is **egoism** (sometimes referred to as voluntarism). Western societies place enormous value on the individual and so this method is popular in our culture. This individualism flows on into the field of ethics and how we decide what is right and wrong. **Individualism** says the good of the *individual* takes priority over the *group* in any decision-making.

Choice

Limited or no choice

So how do I figure out what's right and wrong? Our society's individualism gives a strong and decisive answer: 'I decide'. But what things influence my choice?



'Pleasure is the beginning and the goal of a happy life.'

Epicurus

Pleasure

Something else that is valued highly in Western society is pleasure or happiness. Applying this to ethics is simple. How do I decide what's right and wrong? I choose it by whatever brings me pleasure and avoids pain.

Pleasure = good
Pain = bad

This view is an ethical theory known as **hedonism**—the best life is the most pleasurable one. It's appealing because it's simple and promises pleasure.

'Pleasure = good, pain = bad' sounds simple but sometimes the very pursuit of pleasure can also produce pain.



How is this true of the activities below if they are done without any limits?

Minor/short-term pain

Drinking e.g. hangovers

Eating

Sex

Drugs

Major/long-term pain

Drinking e.g. alcoholism

Eating

Sex

Drugs



'The heart wants what the heart wants.'

Woody Allen

Feelings

Another way to think about ethics is to let your feelings decide what is right and wrong. This is a view called **romanticism** (sometimes referred to as emotivism). This has nothing to do with roses on Valentine's Day. It comes from the philosophical movement in history that emphasised the emotions, feelings and experience. Its answer to the question, 'How do I decide what's right and wrong?' is: you choose based on what *feels* right. It's not so much a matter of cold logic and analysis; it's more about your inner desires, your passions, your dreams. These are what you think about when making decisions in life. It comes from a view of human nature that says humans are essentially good, and looks to draw on this *natural* state. It asks us to be creative and imaginative in setting a vision for how our world and our experience can be, and to work towards this.



What are the main problems with making ethical choices based on pleasure?

Just thinking about pleasure isn't sufficient to determine what's good. It's not just *any* pleasure in *whatever way we want* that we should choose. What if something brings me pleasure and another person pain? If, for example, I like to risk some of the family food budget every night on poker at the casino and my wife doesn't share my enthusiasm for this practice, and my kids are going hungry, is it right to keep doing it?

Most people agree that there are limits, guidelines and specific pleasures that we need to choose. This means we need something more to tell us what's good and bad than the simple fact that something produces pleasurable sensations.

Environmental ethics

Issues related to the environment are very much on the agenda these days. It is not only greenies or even politicians who realise that some serious work needs to be done to reduce the negative impact of humanity on the planet.

Global warming—perhaps the most serious environmental crisis we have faced—is but one of the ways humans have impacted and damaged the world. (This issue will be picked up in Chapter 9.)



In what way do you think an ethic of individualism and hedonism has contributed to this environmental destruction?



Can you think of situations when you have made decisions based on your feelings?

This method has problems though, as feelings may not always be the most useful guide in making ethical decisions. An example from a popular TV show, *Desperate Housewives*, serves to illustrate this issue. Karl and Susan used to be married, but their relationship ended when Karl left Susan for his (younger and prettier) secretary.

Susan: ... I need an apology, Karl.
(Karl looks up, making eye contact.)

Karl: For what?

Susan: An apology. For the way you ended our marriage. You never took any responsibility for your behaviour.

Karl: I don't know what to say, Susan. The heart wants what it wants.

Susan: What's that mean?

Karl: I fell in love.

Susan: While you were married to someone else!

Karl: The heart wants what it wants.

Susan: Yeah, well my heart wants to hurt you, but I can control myself!

7? *What problems are there in Karl's view on making decisions? Are his logic and reasoning flawed or sound?*



Epicurus (341–271 BC)
Epicurus thought hedonism was the way to go when it came to deciding on the ethical life. He developed a philosophy that rejected the existence of a soul and of gods, and taught that the point of all actions was to maximise pleasure. It wasn't all 'beer and skittles' for Epicurus. Partly, the focus on pleasure would involve overcoming the fear of gods and death, as well as placing limits on your desires. Still, pleasure and pain were his means of measuring what was good and bad.

BIG GUN BOX

Summary

Our question is: 'How do I figure out what's right and wrong?' The answers we've looked at so far have been: I choose (individualism/egoism), according to what brings pleasure (hedonism) or my feelings (emotivism/romanticism).



What were the strengths of each of these approaches?

'When we start from no fixed reference point, just how do we decide what is right and wrong?'

Ray Cassin²

What weaknesses do they contain?

The problem is, each of these answers is helpful to a point but we really need something more to make sense of the world and to provide us with a good way of doing ethics. The next section looks at attempts to provide these more comprehensive viewpoints.

Rules vs results



Can you think of any ethical issues that are true for every culture in every place and at all times in history? For instance, is it always bad to harm baby seals, or is it always right to be kind to children?

Ethics is a really practical subject, so maybe the answer to our key question, ‘**How do we figure out what’s right and wrong?**’ lies in looking at each action we perform and deciding accordingly. The big question is ‘what principles do we have for deciding whether an action is right or wrong?’

Desperate measures

Imagine a situation in which your country’s security forces have uncovered a planned terrorist plot and have arrested one of the perpetrators. All that you know is that a large number of people are in danger, and time is running out to prevent the attack. Details of the time and nature of the attack are probably known by the arrested suspect. How should the authorities proceed?

The heads of the police operation are faced with a difficult decision. Should they use torture to extract information from the man? Should they threaten his family with death in order to find out what they need to know? Are they restricted to using conventional questioning techniques?

This admittedly extreme example poses one ethical dilemma that offers no easy answer, but reveals something about how we might go about making decisions related to right and wrong.

‘Always recognise that human individuals are ends, and do not use them as a means to your end.’

Immanuel Kant (German Philosopher 1724–1804)



Do the ends justify the means?

The dilemma about the terrorist above represents a choice between two approaches to ethics. They are both about determining what *actions* a person should or should not follow.

A *rule*-oriented approach believes that right is right, regardless of the results. In order to know whether an act is good or bad, we only have to see if it is in accord with a valid moral rule. For instance, it is wrong to kill, or steal, or torture, regardless of the circumstances. The technical word for this approach when doing ethics is **deontology**.

The other way is a *result*-oriented approach, which believes that the results tell you whether the act was good or bad. An act is good, if and only if, the consequences are good. So, for instance, if to kill someone you would reduce the chances of that person doing harm, it might be OK. Bombing a country that is becoming a threat to peace could also be justified, despite the high number of civilian and innocent casualties. This is called **consequentialism**.

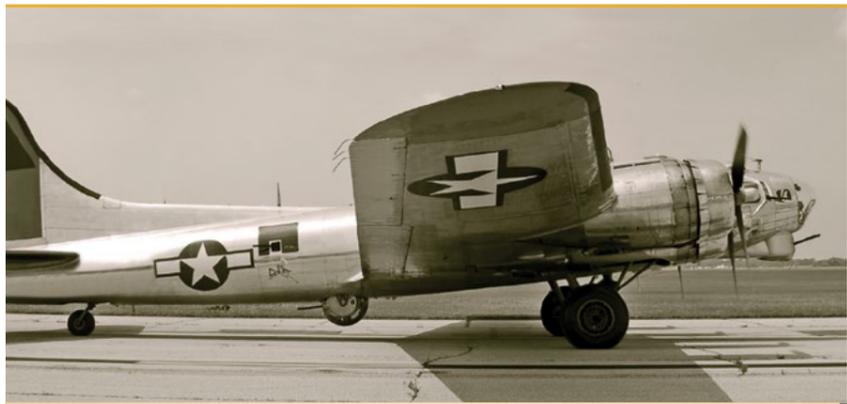
Definitions

Deontology: an act is good or bad in and of itself, regardless of the consequences.

Consequentialism: an act is good if, and only if, the consequences are good.



- ▶▶ Can you think of any situations where you think lying would be OK?
- ▶▶ Can you imagine where there might be a legitimate place for stealing?
- ▶▶ What do you think are moral laws that you cannot break, no matter what?
- ▶▶ Is it OK to alternate between the two approaches depending on the situation?



Ends justifying the means ... a necessary evil? Atomic consequentialism

On August 6, 1945 the US air force B-29 bomber, the Enola Gay, took off from an air base on the island of Tinian in the West Pacific, headed for the Japanese city of Hiroshima. On board was 'Little Boy', a bomb containing 60 kg of uranium. At 8.15 am the bomb was dropped over the target. It exploded about 600 metres above the city and instantly killed around 70,000 people. The death toll from this attack is estimated to be over 100,000—many died from radiation poisoning. This action on behalf of the US Government was repeated three days later, when the city of Nagasaki felt the fury of the nuclear bomb code-named 'Fat Man'. Again the death toll was horrific—reaching around

80,000 people. As in the case of Hiroshima, almost all those killed were civilians. The decision to use nuclear weapons to bomb Japan is a striking example of consequentialist thinking. The bombs were used to demonstrate the futility of dragging the war on, and to save the lives of Allied soldiers, as well as avoiding more Japanese deaths. (These issues will be picked up again in Chapter 8.)



Was the consequentialist approach right, or did the cost of the action outweigh the benefits?



Assess each statement below and determine which ethic each one is using. Use 'C' for Consequentialism, 'D' for Deontology.

	I don't go above the speed limit because I'll lose my licence.
	It is never OK to lie.
	Sexual morality is all about doing whatever makes you happy.
	Paedophilia is wrong because it wrecks kids' lives.
	You shouldn't speed because it's illegal.
	Torture is acceptable, if the information you're getting can prevent terrorism and other crimes.
	I'm a vegetarian because I think killing things and eating them is wrong.
	Drugs are bad because they wreck your life.
	Downloading illegal music from the web is wrong because it deprives musicians of their income.
	Euthanasia is appropriate when a person is suffering in hospital without chance of recovery and costing lots of money to be kept alive.
	I'd like to steal some expensive clothes but I'd probably get caught and put in jail.



Which of the two approaches outlined above most closely represents the way you make decisions about right and wrong?



What would a consequentialist and a deontologist say about the following actions:

- ▶ picking up the ball in a game of soccer
- ▶ stealing a chocolate from a large store
- ▶ downloading music from a friend's CD
- ▶ taking a 40-minute shower
- ▶ using a fake ID to enter a club underage
- ▶ developing a policy of censorship of pornography on TV
- ▶ wearing your school uniform correctly.

Complications in the rules

Monica has fled her nation in Africa and is now in a refugee camp awaiting a country to take her in. Food is scarce and her daughter is wasting away from malnutrition. Monica has believed from a young age that stealing is wrong, and yet she finds herself tempted to steal bread from a village outside the camp to feed her daughter.

According to a strict, rules-based ethic she would be doing the wrong thing to steal in that situation. (This issue will be picked up again in Chapter 12.)



What do you think?

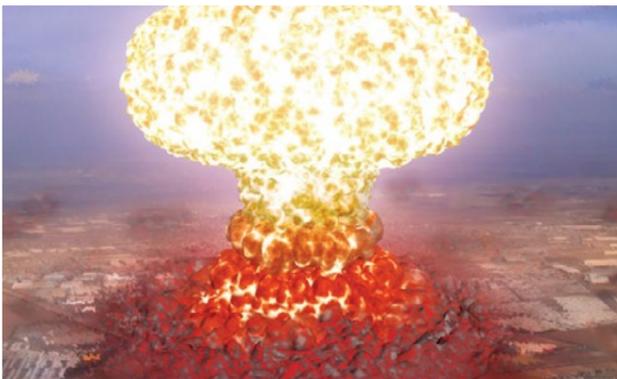
BIG GUN BOX

John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) was a British philosopher and an important voice for utilitarianism, which is closely related to consequentialism. He famously wrote that ‘actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure.’ (*Utilitarianism*, 1863)

This provides a useful summary of a method of doing ethics centred on the results of a given action.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), a German philosopher, argued against consequentialism as being too subjective. Morality, he believed, stemmed from absolutes and obligations to a universal moral law dictated by reason.

He said, ‘Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law’. (*Metaphysics of Morals*)



Singer logic

Australian philosopher Peter Singer is controversial and extreme in his articulation of a consequentialist vision for life. His directness becomes helpful in understanding the implications of this mode of thinking.

Meaning in life comes from what Singer refers to as ‘a preferred state of being’. It is all about maximising happiness, which sounds fine but carries some alarming implications. Moving far from the notion of the sacredness of human life, Singer believes if a baby is disabled it makes perfect sense to replace it with one who is not, thus increasing the chances of overall happiness. He writes, ‘when the death of the disabled infant will lead to the birth of another infant with better prospects of a happy life, the total amount of happiness will be greater if the disabled infant is killed’.

Much of this stems from Singer’s understanding of personhood coming from *consciousness*, rather than a human nature or membership of the human species. To him it makes perfect sense to make judgements of the worthiness of human life according to his results-oriented framework.



Where can you identify consequentialist thinking in the theory of Peter Singer?
What is your response to such an approach?

Summary

It’s hard to use just one of these approaches when making ethical decisions. They each have questions that need answering ...

Rules: Who makes the rules? Where do they come from? Why is something ever necessarily wrong?

Results: Who decides whether the results are good or bad? How do we know what the consequences will be? Can you really ever know the full consequences of an act? These can be very difficult to measure.

Values

What's the motivation?

Three students know about Ryan's drug problem. They all approach Mr Jones, a well-liked and respected teacher, to talk about Ryan.

- ▶ Anne dislikes Ryan for cheating on her friend and tells Mr Jones about Ryan's habits to get him in trouble.
- ▶ Lisa catches the train with Ryan and is concerned about him and his problems and knows he needs the help that Mr Jones might be able to arrange.
- ▶ Dimitri (Ryan's loyal but thick mate) is getting advice from Mr Jones about his own drug issues and accidentally reveals Ryan's predicament.



The students' actions are roughly the same, but what motivates them?

Anne:

Lisa:

Dimitri:



Which do you think is the case—do our actions form our character or do our actions spring from our character? Explain your answer by drawing a diagram in the space below.

'At crucial moments of choice, most of the business of choosing is already over.'

Iris Murdoch¹



Imagine a situation where a student is being teased at school about their shockingly bad haircut. When observing this:

- ▶ What would a courageous person do?
- ▶ What would a compassionate person do?
- ▶ What about a cruel person?
- ▶ What would a weak or cowardly person do?

Educating values

The following list of values comes from the Australian Federal Government's 'Nine values for Australian Schooling' document.² You might have seen it displayed in your school somewhere.



Read the list and compare it to the qualities your school seeks to develop in its students. (You might find some help from your school website for this exercise.)

Rank these from 1 to 9, in order of what you consider to be the most important to the least important. Circle the ones you would like to display more often. Can you think of any examples recently at school when you have seen any of these values displayed?

<input type="checkbox"/> Care and compassion: care for self and others.	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity: act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds.
<input type="checkbox"/> Doing your best: seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence.	<input type="checkbox"/> Respect: treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view.
<input type="checkbox"/> Fair go: pursue and protect the common good, where all people are treated fairly for a just society.	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility: be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment.
<input type="checkbox"/> Freedom: enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship, free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others.	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding, tolerance and inclusion: be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others.
<input type="checkbox"/> Honesty and trustworthiness: be honest, sincere and seek the truth.	

Values

The scenario above shows that ethics is not simply a matter of deciding whether an action is right or wrong. The **motivation** behind the action needs to be taken into account. Our motives are related to what we value. A method of doing ethics that studies our 'inner attitudes' is called *values*. This concentrates less on our actions and more on what character traits we value. According to this ethical theory the big question of ethics is not 'What should I do?' but 'What kind of person should I be?'

People who favour 'values' think our character gives rise to our actions. They think talking about rules and results is less useful because we tend to act in line with our character, not according to ethical theories.

Summary and critique

Virtues (and values) are clearly important for living a life with integrity. *Why* we do things can matter as much as *what* we do. Our character impacts our actions.

However, virtues need to be tempered by each other—or considered from the perspective of other virtues. For example, if someone is always brutally honest, they may needlessly offend, insult or hurt people. You cannot major in just one virtue, or it becomes a weakness.

Also, virtues can be of limited use when it comes to making hard decisions. A teacher can't choose in advance to do the compassionate thing. That would be giving an answer before the question had been asked. We might ask of any given situation, 'Which virtue does this require?' A situation may be best served with an attitude of justice, not compassion.

Virtues do not take away the need for clear thinking and analysis. They are very helpful but we have to decide what is the *right* thing to do. Virtues (and values) need to be understood in the wider moral order and not cut off and forced to stand alone.

We need an ethic that can utilise both our character and our actions and help us to understand the wider order of the world we live in.



BIG GUN BOX

Aristotle (384–322 BC)

Aristotle was a Greek philosopher who studied under Plato and became the teacher of Alexander the Great. He is famous for his writings on a number of subjects including ethics.

The key part of his teaching on moral virtue was his concept of the mean between two extremes. This meant that moral virtue was to be found somewhere between extremes of, for example, courage and fear—where too much courage would lead to rash behaviour, and too little courage, to cowardly behaviour. Somewhere in between two character traits would be the right path.⁴ Aristotle's theory of ethics focused on humans living in community and included such virtues as modesty, courage, patience and truthfulness.⁵

Foundations

Jesus and relationships



Read the following Bible passages.

Mark 7:20–23—‘what comes out of the heart’

Luke 19:1–10—Zacchaeus the tax collector

- ▶ What do Jesus’ actions and words reveal about his approach to ethics?



Ethics as response

The ethical theory that has had the most impact on Western society is the Judeo-Christian ethic. However, it is as misunderstood as it is influential. Many people think Christianity has a pretty simple ethical framework: God said it, just do it! This is known as **Divine Command Theory**. But Christian ethics isn’t simply about commands. It’s not about doing good so that you can go to heaven or avoid divine punishment. It’s not about making people feel guilty so they do the right thing. It’s not about meeting a standard that God sets.

What you might find surprising is that Christian ethics is all about relationships and *responding*. Jesus’ ethic, his actions and words, are based on the importance of relationships for people with each other and with God. Christian ethics is less about what God expects of us and more about how we respond to what God has done for us in Jesus.

The next four chapters will give a broad outline of a basis for Christian ethics. We will explore and explain why Christians make the choices they do when it comes to making ethical decisions. These chapters will provide those who follow Jesus with a framework for making ethical choices.

Why is Christian ethics about relationships? It is because of what the Bible says about the meaning and purpose of life.

A plan and a purpose



Each of these objects has a clear purpose. Identify the purpose and write it in the space below the image.



Genesis I

The Bible opens with the claim that the world was created by God, that it is good, structured and made with a purpose in mind. God the Creator is the designer, the manufacturer, the parent, who makes things with a specific purpose stitched into them, like a pattern in a jumper.

The following verses reveal the purpose of humanity. In Genesis chapter 1, God set out his plan for humans to have dominion over the earth and to be his representatives in creation:

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground'.

Meaning and significance of 'image of God'

One of the most important claims of the Bible is that people are made in God's image. It is a critical concept for understanding our place in the world, the value of human life and our special connection to the God who created us. Genesis chapter 1 tells us that God's creative work was *all good*, but that *people* were the pinnacle of the creation. Therefore humans enjoy a special status and responsibility in the world.

When humans are said to have 'dominion' over the earth, the meaning here is one of protecting the relationships they are responsible for, to maintain the order God has given to creation, to serve others and to seek their good.¹ According to the creation accounts, it is *relationships* that are the main purpose of life. You don't have to be a Christian to have worked this one out. There are plenty of people who agree that without relationships, the rest of life becomes pretty meaningless.



How might a belief that humans are created in the image of God affect the way we treat each other?



In the space below, list the many different types of relationships that you experience, ranging from the person who sells you a drink at the local store (or your bus driver for example) to your parents. The list should range from the least important to the most important.

- _____ ■
- _____ ■
- _____ ■
- _____ ■
- _____ ■



If you were to lose your relationships with the top five most important people on your list, life would look very different. Describe what that life would be like.

BIG GUN BOX

Aquinas/Natural Law

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) was a Catholic priest, theologian and philosopher. He was a strong supporter of the idea of Natural Law. Natural Law suggests there is a law set by God in nature which fits all places and all times.

According to this theory people have a special purpose that is hardwired into their very being. It involves humans participating in this eternal law, and according to Aquinas, using reason, humans could approach a full understanding of this 'law'.

Relationships

The notion of God having made the world for relationships is intimately related to ethics. Simply put, 'good' is whatever helps relationships, 'bad' is whatever hinders relationships. Because this order is 'stitched into' the world, ethics is not so much about **deciding** what's right and wrong, but rather about **recognising** it.

Beginner's guide to relationships

This is where commands come in. Commands are not random instructions designed to test our obedience; they are compass directions, road signs to help us live wisely in regard to our relationships. The Ten Commandments, for example, are a bit like God's beginner's guide to relationships.

Summary

The Christian understanding of life is that there is an objective moral order in creation given by God and communicated to us through his word. This order and its purpose is for producing loving relationships between God and people, people and people, and people and the environment.

This is the starting point of Christian ethics. It underlies all else, and while we need more than this to make good choices of right and wrong, we need to hold on to this picture of reality if we are going to stay on track.

The Fall: what went wrong?

‘The whole range of human miseries, from restlessness and estrangement through shame and guilt to the agonies of daytime television—all of them tell us that things in human life are not as they ought to be.’ Cornelius Plantinga Jr¹

In Part I, we talked about objective and subjective approaches to ethics. The Christian view of creation definitely falls into the objective category with its claim of a moral order stitched into creation that’s geared towards loving relationships. Despite this claim, it doesn’t take great insight to see that the world is a messed-up place, with disagreements about right and wrong everywhere. Why is our world so broken and why do people disagree so much about ethics?

The Fall

The Bible’s account of where things went badly off track is a familiar story, but it is widely misunderstood.



Read Genesis 3:1–13.

The issue at stake here is about much more than shoplifting fruit. It is an argument about who has the right to decide what is good and evil. Adam and Eve thought they could decide, but their action represents a refusal to trust God and his goodness to them, and an attempt to usurp a position that was rightfully his alone.

In kicking against the established order of creation, the man and woman, who represent all of humanity, introduced disorder into the creation, which disrupted the harmony of the original design. They failed to recognise order and purpose, and tried to create it for themselves.

At least two things happened here: humanity’s relationship with God went badly off course, as did its ability to see the world clearly and live in it wisely (even though we often think we are doing the right thing).

The results

The Genesis account maps a sorry tale, as the story is infused with fear, shame, guilt and judgement.



How does the reaction of the man and the woman to God’s confrontation remind you of how people react today when caught doing the wrong thing?

How would you describe the relationship with God that occurs as a result?

‘They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator ...’

Romans 1:25

The Bible says humans were made for worshipping God, and if they replace God they end up serving something else. But nothing else was ever supposed to be an object of worship or to have control over our lives.

Many (but not all) of the things in the list below, in their appropriate place and time, can be good. When they become the lord, or the overruling force of our lives, do they become a problem?

A list could include things like:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| ▶▶ Work | ▶▶ Travel |
| ▶▶ Sport | ▶▶ Music |
| ▶▶ Family | ▶▶ Material goods |
| ▶▶ Food | ▶▶ _____ |
| ▶▶ Gambling | ▶▶ _____ |
| ▶▶ Cars | ▶▶ _____ |
| ▶▶ A boy/girlfriend | ▶▶ _____ |
| ▶▶ The environment | ▶▶ _____ |
| ▶▶ Money | ▶▶ _____ |
| ▶▶ Fitness | ▶▶ _____ |



Add to the list above any further points you can think of.



What problems can you envisage in making any of these things (from the list) an object of worship or undivided loyalty and devotion?

The heart of the problem

All of this is to say that we are out of sync with the way we were created. The creation itself is now fractured and imperfect. Like being in a game of footy where no-one listens to the ref and everyone makes up their own rules, life has become confusing, disordered and dysfunctional.

Broken, disconnected, darkened in the way we think and process information, and in the way we operate morally, we don't know what the right thing to do is, and even if we do, we don't want to do it. It's not that we get it completely wrong all the time, but there is no area of life into which this problem doesn't intrude.

Of this situation, the Apostle Paul writes in the book of Romans:

'For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.' Romans 1:21

A barrier now exists between humans and God, and between humans and other humans. Our real problem is a relational (and motivational) problem. We have tried to take God's place. We don't *want* God to tell us what is right and wrong, but want to make that decision for ourselves.

Tainted choices

'What the heart wants, the will chooses and the mind justifies.' Dr Ashley Null²



Do you agree with this statement? Why/why not?



In what way have you experienced even good things in life as tainted and imperfect?



Can you think of a time when you knew the right thing to do but didn't do it? Were there any negative consequences of your actions?

If the Bible's account of the state of humanity is accurate, then it is not hard to see why ethics and morality is such a difficult area. It also tells us how difficult it is to lead a moral life, and why every one of us is in need of redemption.



BIG GUN BOX

Augustine of Hippo (354–430 AD)

A North African bishop and theologian, Augustine was one of the highly influential church fathers. His teaching on original sin was that humans have been corrupted after Adam and Eve's fall, and now exist in a state where no part of a person's being is untainted. We are born into a state of sin, and need God's grace and redemption to be rescued from it.

Redemption

‘The human condition is for I think all of us, tragic as well as blissful. It is a struggle as well as sometimes an armchair ride.’ Hugh Mackay¹

We all know that there are some problems in life that are so complicated and hurtful that only a miracle could solve them.



What aspects of life do you think are so messed up that only God could fix them? Consider global, local and personal issues.

Global	Local	Personal

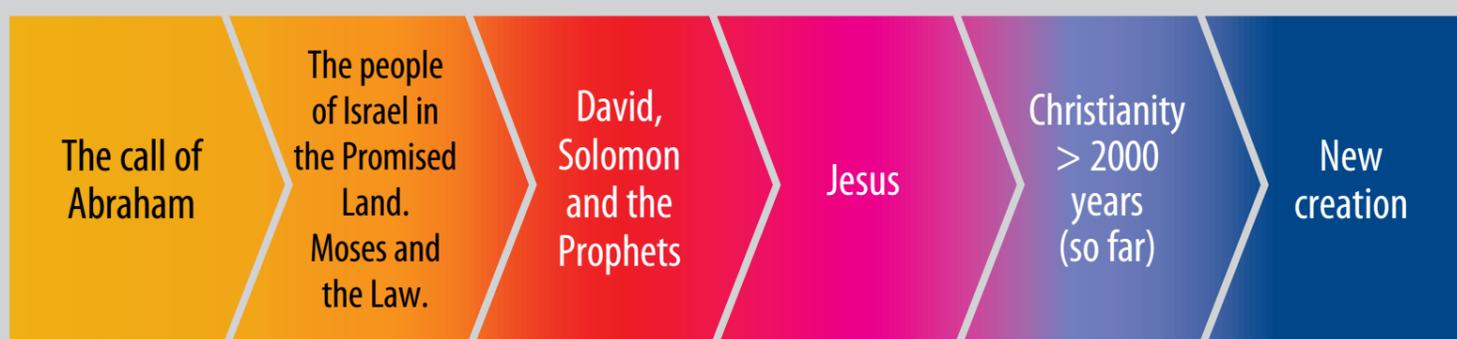


The rescue plan

The story of the Bible tells us about God’s rescue plan and his promise to restore what was lost in the Fall. Beginning with the call of Abraham in Genesis chapter 12, God set about re-establishing his

rule and his order. If the Bible gives an accurate picture of reality, it has profound implications for how we should think about ethics.

The biblical story of redemption



Many ethical theories are based on the belief that humans can sort out the mess of our world, but over and over again the biblical story shows people mucking up their relationship with each other and with God. Human experience since appears to confirm this sorry tale. What becomes clear is that we are unable to live as God would want, and if a solution is to be found, only God can provide it.

The highlight of God’s rescuing action is found in the coming of Jesus. It is in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection that we see God’s rescue plan for creation swinging into full gear.

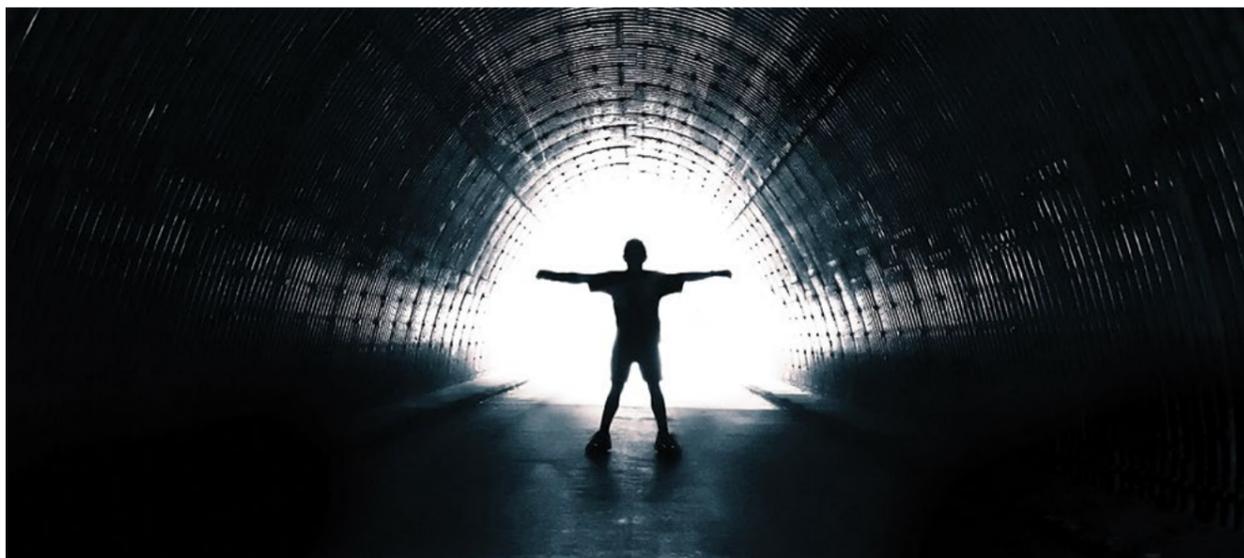
Living in light of the rescue



Read Luke 7:36–50 (Jesus anointed by a sinful woman) which explains Jesus’ attitude to broken relationship with God and other people.

What qualities do each of these people show?

The Pharisee	The woman	Jesus



The Bible’s approach to ethics can’t be separated from its view of our relationship with God and other people. God acted to restore our relationship with him by sending Jesus. We can either be like the woman, who was aware of her broken life and knew her relationship with God needed healing, or we can be like Simon, who denied needing any help.

1 Peter 3:18 says, ‘For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God’. Jesus’ death shows that the forgiveness he offers is costly to God. Because God is just and our world has a moral order (though broken), evil actions have consequences. Either the victim absorbs the pain of wrongdoing or the person responsible faces a penalty, or both. On the cross, Jesus did both of these things on behalf of humanity: satisfying justice and providing the offer of forgiveness.

All ethical situations require repentance (admitting wrong and turning around) and forgiveness.



Consider the relationships below. What needs to be done to bring restoration and healing and bring about a healthy relationship?

- ▶ Jill lets it be known that she doesn’t like her friend Jess’s boyfriend.
- ▶ Mr Johnson mistakenly punishes Billy for a disruption in class.
- ▶ Clint wants to know God, but is aware of all of the stuff-ups in his life.
- ▶ Samantha lied to her parents about where she was on Saturday night.
- ▶ Ben is a government official who is found to have been siphoning money from the public funds for himself.
- ▶ Stuart has admitted to his wife that he has been unfaithful to her.
- ▶ Aboriginal families have been broken up when children were taken from them.
- ▶ Refugees from Sudan receive racist mail and comments on the street of their new community.

The Mutual Love Ethic



1 Tick the statements that best capture the way you usually make decisions about right and wrong.

- I think about how my choices will look to other people.
- I consider whether or not I will get caught.
- I base my choices on what I think God would want me to do.
- When deciding on a course of action I think about the pleasure it will bring to me.
- My biggest concern is caring for others.
- The outcome and consequences for others and myself is my strongest motivation for action.
- I just go with my gut feeling when presented with a particular choice.
- I try to do things that will win the approval of my parents.
- I try to do things that will win the approval of my peers.
- I choose things that will give me the most fun.

Some ethical dilemmas



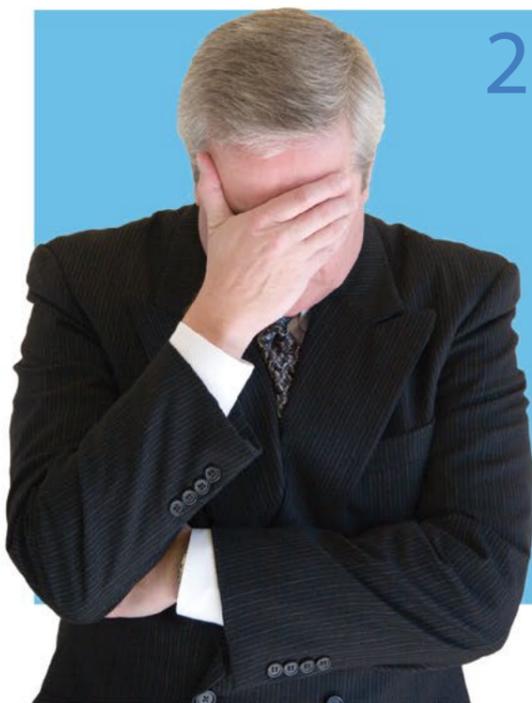
2 Consider the following five scenarios. Choose which action you think is right and explain why.



1

Rosy is in a small business partnership with her cousin Dean. Rosy knows that Dean's family is struggling to meet their mortgage repayments and make ends meet. Dean has been putting pressure on Rosy to be a bit 'creative' with their tax returns in order to have more cash each month. Rosy is very uncomfortable about this.

What should she do?



2

The prime minister is aware that a neighbouring country is killing large sections of its population. The other countries in the region want to ignore the problem. To intervene would likely lead to war and the cost of young lives, billions of dollars and political popularity.

What decision should he make?



3

Claire is the CEO of a large company. She has just come across new technology that would greatly increase profits, but would lead to cutting hundreds of jobs in one of the company's factories which operates in a very poor part of the city.

How should she proceed?

Kerry suspects her brother Brett might be violent towards his girlfriend Natasha. She loves Brett and doesn't want to see him get into trouble, but fears that his bad temper is the cause of Natasha's frequent bruises.

What is the right way for Kerry to act?



4



5

Mike is a soldier in Afghanistan. He has been ordered into a village known to be harbouring leading terrorists, with the instructions to kill everyone there. The village has been the source of much carnage, but destroying it will involve killing civilians, which he thinks is completely wrong. He is a reliable soldier but doesn't agree with the war he is fighting. He is under orders to obey his commanding officer.

What should he do?

Framing a Christian ethic

In Part 1, we looked at various theories of doing ethics. You could choose to use one or more of these in sorting out ethical problems you encounter. In Part 2, we have been exploring how we might understand a Christian attitude to ethics based on the Bible.

Purpose

The creation accounts found in Genesis provide a vital foundation for ethical decisions as they lay out a picture of the way things are and ought to be. God is in charge of everything, we are his special creation representing him on earth, the world is fallen and in need of redemption. The New Testament tells us that God has provided a means of rescuing this broken world, and that rescue finds its high point in the person of Jesus—his life, death and resurrection.

The best ethics emerge not from a system or a theory, but through a response to the sacrificial love God shows to heal our relationship with him.

Further, there is both an individual and a community aspect to ethical choices, which means nothing can be considered in isolation from how it might impact relationship with God and other people.

The Mutual Love Ethic

Christian ethicist Michael Hill puts forward a theory of ethics that he calls 'a Mutual Love Ethic' (MLE).



MLE =
An action or trait of character is right if, and only if, it promotes (creates or maintains) mutual love relationships between:

- a) God and humans, and
- b) humans and humans.¹

We will adopt his framework for considering ethical problems and decisions in Part 3. It is not the only way of doing Christian ethics, but we believe it is a useful and valid one for us to use.

When Jesus was asked to sum up the most important of all the commandments he said:

‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength ... Love your neighbour as yourself.’

Mark 12:30–31

Biblical ethics should flow from mutual love between humans. This selfless, giving love is modelled on the generous love that God has for all people.

War

Was it right to go to war in Iraq in 2003? Did the Allies make the correct decision when dropping atomic bombs on Japan in World War II? Was NATO justified in bombing Yugoslavia in 1999? Each of these questions relate to the ethics of war.

1 *Make a list of possible causes of war.*



Just War Theory

The ethical issue of when a country might decide to go to war is one of the most difficult and important, the consequences of decisions in this area being so large.

It is difficult to reconcile Jesus' instruction to his followers to 'love your enemies', and 'turn the other cheek', with going to war to kill and destroy. Some Christians have therefore taken a pacifist stance, renouncing all actions of war as counter to the words of Jesus.

Others have followed the teachings of two Christian theologians and philosophers: Augustine (354–430 AD) and Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274 AD) in developing what is known as the 'Just War Theory'. The church has adopted this theory generally, in rejecting the extremes of pacifism and militarism. It has also been the basis of many secular judgements on the rights and wrongs of waging war. There are seven elements to this theory, outlining how going to war could be justified.



Pacifism vs militarism

Pacifism is the moral principle that the use of force, either in attack or self-defence, to settle disputes or gain advantage is wrong. Belief in non-violent action as superior is a hallmark of pacifist belief.

Militarism is often considered the opposite of peaceful or pacifist movements. It places a high value on the place of the military in society as a means of maintaining security and ensuring the interests of the nation.

The continuum below represents the contrast between pacifism and militarism.



2 *Place a mark on the line to indicate your position on this issue. Discuss why you adopt the stance you hold.*

Just War Theory

1. Legitimate authority

Only the recognised authority of a country may make the decision to declare war. Today we would regard a collective group such as the United Nations (UN) as having authority rather than just individual nations.

2. Just cause

War may be waged in self-defence or to deal with a grave public evil, such as massive violation of human rights of whole populations.

3. Right intention

This relates to the motive for action—it must involve striving for justice and peace and not stem from hatred and malice.

4. Probability of success

Force must not be used when chances of success are very poor—success must be probable.

5. Last resort

Force may only be used when all other avenues have been exhausted. A wide range of peaceful options is usually available, including diplomatic and economic sanctions, which must be used prior to any military action.

6. Proportionality

The use of force must be in proportion to the goal sought for peaceful outcomes and the threat posed. It would not be appropriate, for example, to carpet bomb a country for breaking a trade agreement.

There must be great care taken to avoid and minimise harm to civilians.

7. The means must be absolutely necessary to achieve the end.

We must ask whether the whole exercise would be worthwhile given the suffering and loss it is likely to create.

The first five of these points relate to reasons for going to war; the last two to the way in which a war may be fought.



Of the seven points above, list what you consider to be the three most important.

Innocents and waging war

A. In the middle and later phases of the bombing of Germany in World War II, hundreds of thousands of civilians—men, women and children—were killed when their cities and towns were turned into firestorms. Cities such as Dresden, Düsseldorf and Hamburg were virtually destroyed.



How might such an action be justified/criticised under Just War Theory?

B. In July 2006, Israel launched a series of bombing raids on southern Lebanon in response to the action of the paramilitary group Hezbollah, who had attacked Israel, killing three soldiers and capturing two. What followed was a 34-day conflict where Israel conducted massive air strikes and artillery fire on strategic targets in Lebanon, while Hezbollah continued to fire rockets into northern Israel.



The conflict killed around 1000 people—most of whom were Lebanese. Some of the Israeli bombing hit apartment blocks, killing dozens of civilians.



What aspects of 'Just War' would be relevant in weighing up whether the Israeli action was justified?

Rwanda—an opportunity missed (MLE)

In 1994 a plane crash killing the president of the central African country of Rwanda and the president of Burundi sparked mass violence in Rwanda. The majority Hutus attacked Tutsis and their Hutu sympathisers, with whom they were engaged in civil war. The Tutsis made up only about 15% of the population but were economically and politically powerful. Over a period of only a few months, between 800,000 and 1 million people were slaughtered, most of them with machetes.

While the killing was reported on news media across the world, the UN refused to intervene. The international community stood by while hundreds of thousands of men, women and children were murdered. Bill Clinton, the then president of the USA, described the failure to stop the tragedy in Rwanda as 'one of the greatest regrets of my presidency'.¹

6  *Using Just War Theory, explain whether or not intervention in the Rwandan conflict could have been warranted.*

7  *What are the potential costs of involvement in such conflicts?*

Mutual Love Ethic

At this point we want to consider what the Mutual Love Ethic (MLE) has to say about the issue of war. In the left-hand column, list the way MLE could speak *against* the use of war and violence. In the right-hand column, list how it could *support* the use of force.

MLE and non-violence

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

MLE and support for war

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

8  *Make a list below of questions a consequentialist would ask before making a decision about going to war.*

Consequentialist

9  *How might the consequentialist decision regarding war differ from that of the Mutual Love Ethic? Describe any possible differences.*



Environmental ethics



- * Since 1850, people have converted 2.2 billion acres of natural lands to human use. This compares with Earth's total of 16 billion acres that have some kind of vegetation and current world crop land of 3.6 billion acres. Tropical deforestation removes about 25 million acres of primary forest each year.
- * More than three species of plants and animals are extinguished daily.
- * Some 70,000 chemicals such as pesticides, herbicides and fungicides have been created by humans, many of which cannot be absorbed back into the environment. ¹

'I looked at the earth, and it was formless and empty; and at the heavens, and their light was gone ... I looked, and the fruitful land was a desert.'

Jeremiah 4:23–26

1 On the line below, plot where you sit in terms of your attitude to the environment.



2 Make a list of what you consider to be the top five environmental issues for your generation.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

3 Do you consider care of the environment to be related to ethics? Why/why not?

An unavoidable problem

Issues surrounding environmental ethics are considered by many to be some of the most important that we face today. Forty years ago, there was little mention of environmental concerns in the media, or in everyday conversation. Today the environment is very much on the agenda for debate and discussion. Anyone from CEOs of large companies to small children can be found doing their bit to preserve the planet.

Leaving our mark

Experts argue about the extent to which humans have impacted the earth, but there is no doubting the damage done, and the need to do something about it.

4 What attitude should we adopt regarding our planet? (Tick the box you most relate to.)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> It is a resource to use to our advantage and not stress too much about. | <input type="checkbox"/> We might as well give up because it's all too hard. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> We are required to offer reverence to Mother Nature as something sacred and spiritual. | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental catastrophe is inevitable. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humans can and should rescue the planet from disaster. | <input type="checkbox"/> We should view our planet with optimism and hope, enjoying creation and using it responsibly. |

5 What other possibilities are there?

Christianity and the environment

It has to be acknowledged that many Christians have been as guilty as anyone else when it comes to not taking care of the planet. Yet there are good reasons for Christians to be actively involved in conservation.



Creation (Love)

God made the world and declared it to be good. In Genesis chapter 1 we learn that God made humans as his special creation. They were to rule over it, and take care of it. This is God's creation and he cares deeply for it. Caring for the world that God has made makes sense for people who want to please him.

The Fall (Disobedience)

Humanity rebelled against God and people began to use creation for whatever they felt like without thought for others or the natural world. People's rule over creation has frequently been characterised by selfishness, cruelty, greed and exploitation.

Those who seek to obey God can find good ways of being stewards of the earth, rather than exploiters.

Redemption (Justice)

The problem of the environment has arisen from human hearts. Jesus' death and resurrection brings forgiveness for our messed-up hearts and relationships, and points to the way forward for our world. Love for others means understanding the way our actions impact others. It is frequently the poor who suffer first when the environment is damaged.²

The Goal (Hope)

From an environmental perspective our world looks like a complete mess. The scale of the problem is overwhelming, and we can be tempted to think that we can do nothing to make any real difference. We don't need to fear, however, as God promises to one day renew the creation. This should offer us real hope and urge us on to be a part of that redeeming action of God in our world.

The Bible and creation

Christians deliberately talk about 'creation' rather than 'nature', or 'environment', and this is to remind them that God is the reason for everything. It is his creation and he is the Creator. Creation is not to be exploited or worshipped, or ultimately rescued by us.³ It is instead something of unimaginable wonder that we are to care for and engage with. It is entirely fitting that Christians take the management of creation seriously, aiming to play a small part in redeeming this broken world. To do so is to engage in relationship with God and fellow humanity.

Engage

6  **Make a list of actions you can take to care for creation.**

In your own home

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

In your local community

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



7 

Consider your own family and lifestyle. Give your household a rating out of 10 for each of the following items in terms of environmental impact, where 10 is positive and 1, a negative effect.

- Use of petrol (think of the number and size of cars, and whether you use public transport).
- Electricity consumption (think of heating, air conditioners, lighting, washing machines, dryers, etc).
- Water usage.
- Plastics and other non-biodegradable products.
- Chemicals and pesticides.
- Garbage (do you have a compost facility?).
- The number of consumer goods in your home.
- How much stuff you throw out at council pick-up time.

8 

How do you feel about the assessment of your home?



9 

Consider someone who essentially favours a hedonistic approach to ethical issues (see Chapter 1). Describe in the space below, the shape of their life in terms of their impact on the environment. Consider their attitude to recycling, and use of energy, water and fuel. Think about how they might make decisions regarding consumer goods, waste disposal, their local environment and attitude to global ecological issues. (Draw symbols if you prefer.)

Mutual Love Ethic What do you think the Mutual Love Ethic (MLE) has to say about our interrelationship with:

God and creation?

Other people and creation?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Marriage and sex

‘Love at first sight is easy to understand; it’s when two people have been looking at each other for a lifetime that it becomes a miracle.’

Amy Bloom¹



What do you think constitutes a ‘good’ marriage? Make a list of characteristics in the space below.



Why do you think so many people still get married when statistics for failed marriages are so high?



‘I think some people are more committed to the idea of a wedding than the idea of marriage.’

Relationship counsellor Eric Hudson²

Society and marriage



Emily Maguire, a writer for the *Sydney Morning Herald* has suggested we change our expectations of marriage from a lifelong commitment to a five-year commitment with an opt-out clause.

Here are the normal words of a marriage service:

I, NAME, in the presence of God,
take you, NAME, to be my wife;
to have and to hold from this day forward,
for better for worse, for richer for poorer,
in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish,
as long as we both shall live.

This is my solemn vow and promise.³

Emily Maguire’s five-year marriage.

(Write an alternative vow in the space below.)

Marriage and the Bible

Marriage is part of God's good created order. We were created to marry and form families.

Genesis 2:24–25 says, 'That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame'.

Marriage is, according to Christian teaching, the voluntary sexual and public social union of one man and one woman from different families. Intrinsic to this union is God's calling to lifelong exclusive sexual faithfulness.

If you really want to understand marriage, you need to consider the notion that it is an institution given by God, not a project fashioned by culture. It is part of the way the world works.

Sex and marriage

Contrary to the perception of popular culture, the Bible is not negative about sex—quite the opposite. Sex is a key part of the brilliance of God's original design. Right from the beginning, and the story of Adam and Eve, sex and marriage are part of the same dynamic that seeks to promote mutual love between two people, security, loyalty and a safe place for nurturing families. Sexual love is presented as both an actual and symbolic act of giving yourself to the other person.

It is because sexual union carries both physical and spiritual connotations that it is not to be treated lightly or used outside the framework of God's purposes—that is, within the context of marriage. This is what the Bible points to as the ideal place of sexual expression, and that is the standard by which the morality of all sexual acts are to be evaluated.⁴ This helps us to understand why the Bible regards sex between unmarried people as adultery and homosexual acts as wrong.



What is your reaction to the Bible's understanding of marriage?

Successful marriage

A recent study by a research centre in the US provided a list of nine items associated with a successful marriage. Topping the telephone survey of 2020 people was faithfulness, with 93% of respondents rating it very important; second was a happy sexual relationship, rated very important by 70% of respondents, followed by household chores on 62%.⁵



What do you imagine would have ranked in positions 4, 5 and 6?

4.

5.

6.

'One-third of marriages in 2000/02 could be expected to end in divorce, compared with 28 per cent in 1985/87.'⁶

Marriage impact

When marriage goes wrong the repercussions are enormous. Our society discourages people from entering into marriage lightly, and there are good reasons for this. Journalist Barbara Drury, writing about divorce, says: 'Divorce is one area of life where "good enough" is about as good as it gets.' While some ways are better than others in handling the mess, she writes: 'There is no such thing as a good divorce; the pain of separation, its impact on children and on finances make sure of that'.⁷

Social commentator Hugh Mackay suggests that entering or leaving any relationship impacts the wellbeing of another person, or just as likely, a number of others, and this has a clear moral dimension to it. This is most true of the marriage relationship.

Mackay says, 'The moral sense means nothing if it doesn't imply a willingness to take other people's needs into consideration and, sometimes, to rate them more highly than our own. Any worthwhile relationship demands that kind of sacrifice'.⁸



Do you agree with Hugh Mackay? What are the implications of what he says for marriage?

Human rights

‘The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government.’

Thomas Jefferson



The things we hold dear

The extract below is one of the most famous summaries of individual human rights.

‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.’

American Declaration of Independence



1 List and briefly describe situations in the 21st century that involve a violation of the right to ‘Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness’.

Who decides the rights that are important?

The year is 2030. You are part of a group sent to Mars to begin a new human community there. Part of your job is to establish a list of human rights for the new society that will form on Mars.



2 In groups, discuss and find agreement on the rights you will seek to preserve. List them below.

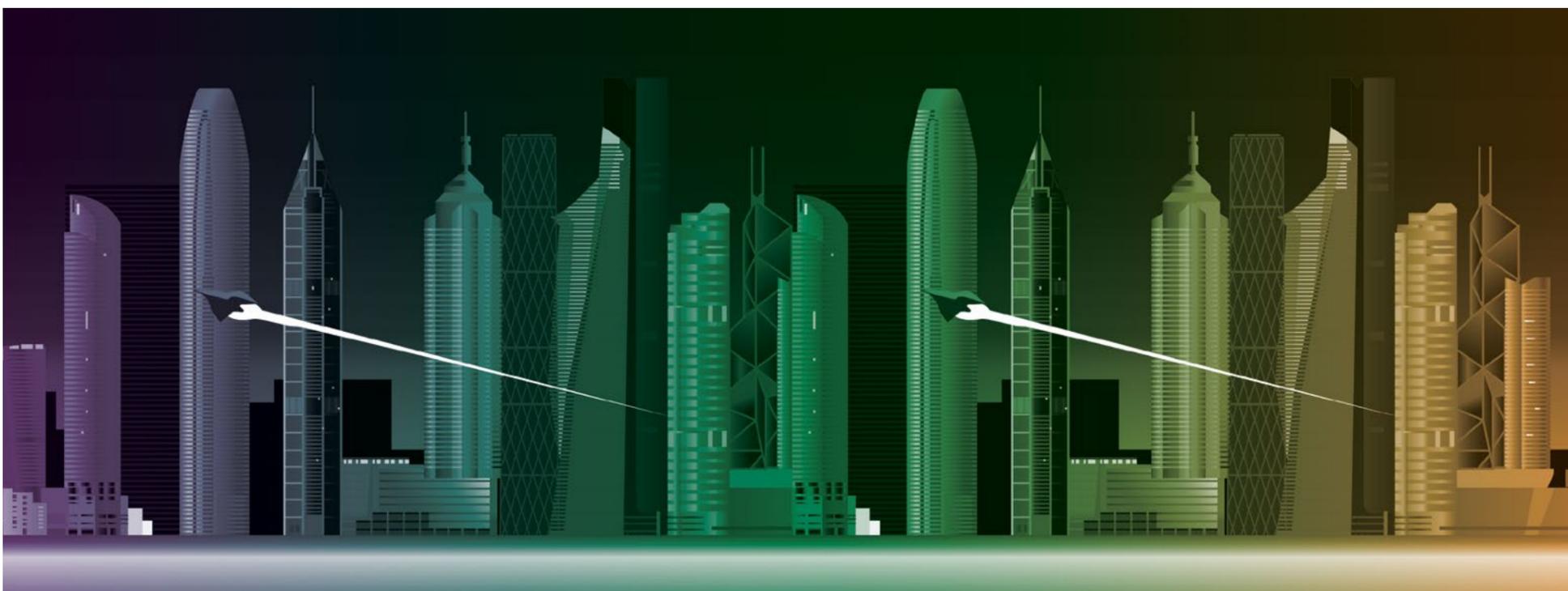
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



- ▶ Do all people have an intrinsic value? Why?/why not?
- ▶ Do you believe in human rights? If so, why?
- ▶ Give examples of the way the idea of freedom can conflict with the principle of equality.



A Christian understanding of human rights



The movement for human rights finds strong support from the Bible and its sense of the value of each person, concern for the outcast, the poor and those on the margins of society. Again it can be helpful to frame the issue within the broad biblical framework.

CREATION

Humans were created for a special purpose, to be God's image-bearers in this world (Genesis 1:26). This gives an inherent dignity to humans regardless of gender, race, religion or age.

THE FALL

Rebellion against God creates the broken situation we now have where, in some countries, people have their rights severely abused under oppressive regimes. Those of us with freedom tend to use it not for the good of others but to entertain ourselves or fight for our own selfish choices.

REDEMPTION

Jesus put aside his own rights for the good of others, according to 1 Peter 2:24—he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree so that we might die to sins (selfishness) and live for righteousness (other-person-centredness). Those who follow Jesus ought to be especially concerned with the interests and rights of other people.

THE GOAL

The Bible speaks of a day in the future when justice will be done and those who have violated others' rights will be punished. Forgiveness will be granted to those who have asked for it. It is logical for Jesus' followers to engage in seeking justice and freedom from oppression for those who fall under the wheel of evil institutions or individuals.

Rights vs responsibilities

Rights that are not also enmeshed with responsibilities, or connected to communities, can easily turn into just another way to be selfish. According to a Christian view of life, the dignity of being made in God's image gives us 'rights' but they are not held in isolation from our society. We are created for loving relationships with each other and with God, and so our rights could more helpfully be described as responsibilities to each other.

In the West we enjoy enormous freedom in the way we conduct our lives. There are also limits imposed on us so as to allow the community to operate in a healthy manner, and to protect people from misuse of freedom. Consider the list below and how each point acts as a limit to rights and freedoms.



4 What can you add to this list?

- ▶▶ Speed limits
- ▶▶ Laws about wearing seatbelts
- ▶▶ Censorship
- ▶▶ Age restrictions for drinking
- ▶▶ Workplace safety laws
- ▶▶
- ▶▶
- ▶▶
- ▶▶



5 When can a focus on rights (without responsibilities) become a negative force in our society?

A modern problem—human rights in an age of terror

In the wake of September 11, the Bali and London bombings, and the real danger of further carnage, governments have taken extreme measures to defend their nations and make them safer. Imposing greater restrictions on their populations has been just one aspect of this broad struggle.

Cruel and degrading treatment of detainees has been justified on the grounds of the need to protect the society as a whole. Methods such as sleep deprivation, isolation, psychological trauma and detention for long periods of time without legal representation or trial are just some of the areas in question. Some claim Western governments have resorted to torture to extract information they are seeking.



6 How far do you think we should bend our usual laws and practices in order to resist the threat of terrorism?



7 Is torture ever OK? Explain your answer.

A study conducted in 2009 by the Pew Research Centre in the United States found that just under half of the public believed that the torture of 'suspected terrorists in order to gain important information' could 'never' or 'rarely' be justified.¹



8 How are these methods of extracting information related to a utilitarian approach to ethics? (See Chapter 2.)



Compassion

‘People living in poverty have the least access to the power needed to shape policies that may eradicate poverty and frequently are denied effective remedies for violations of their human rights.’

Irene Khan, former Secretary General, Amnesty International¹

Some ancient instruction

In a discussion about how people can be made right with God, Jesus affirmed the Old Testament teaching of loving God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, and loving your neighbour as yourself—the Mutual Love Ethic! Then, in answer to the question, ‘Who is my neighbour?’, he told the following story:

- ³⁰ ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.
- ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.
- ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.
- ³³ But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.
- ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.
- ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. “Look after him”, he said,

“and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have”.

³⁶ ‘Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?’

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, ‘The one who had mercy on him’. Jesus told him, ‘Go and do likewise’. Luke 10:30–37



What is the main point of this story?



In groups, discuss and retell the parable in a modern context.



There are some ethical theories that claim we have an obligation not to harm others, but no moral compulsion to offer assistance to those less well-off than ourselves. There is much in the story of the Good Samaritan to illustrate what Jesus expects of his followers. Mercy, compassion and care for people who are suffering are strong themes in the New Testament. People who want to follow Jesus should reflect the mercy he has shown them, by treating other people in the same way.

Australia’s foundations are strongly influenced by Judeo-Christian ethics, and while not all people are actively Christian or perhaps religious at all, there exists a widely held belief that it is a good thing to reach out to people in trouble. (The Australian Government’s ‘Values’ education document, discussed in Chapter 3, puts ‘care and compassion’ at the top of the list.)



Should we care about people less fortunate than us? Why/why not?

‘In Australia we do not lack the ability to solve poverty; we lack the will. And the richer we become as a society the more unwilling we are to sympathise with those at the bottom of the heap.’

Clive Hamilton and Richard Denniss, *Affluenza*⁵



‘Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.’
Article 14, United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Refugees

A difficult ethical issue related to human rights and compassion is the question of the treatment of refugees. Refugees fall into a different category to other forms of migration. A refugee is ‘anyone who has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion’.⁶ In the world today there are many such people.

Australia, like the US, operated a highly controversial ‘Pacific Solution’ policy of intercepting people before they reached the mainland from 2001–2007. Those who were intercepted included genuine refugees who were seeking asylum from persecution and violation of human rights.

The ‘Pacific Solution’ drew criticism for the conditions in which asylum seekers were being kept, the lack of legal help for applicants and the length of time it was taking to process applications. Some people were held in detention for up to five years on the tiny island of Nauru, while waiting to hear whether or not they would be accepted into Australia.

Increasingly, Western governments see the need and the right to protect their borders from unwanted people, such as terrorists infiltrating their countries. The question of what to do with refugees becomes a complex issue related to the obligation to assist those in need, weighed against protection and control of immigration.



In the space below, list reasons for and against accepting refugees into our country.

REASONS FOR

REASONS AGAINST

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

True or false



Circle the letters T or F to indicate whether you think the following statements are true or false.



- T / F** It is not an offence to enter Australia and seek asylum, even if this is done without permission.
- T / F** The average percentage of the unauthorised asylum seekers found to have genuine claims for refugee status is 90%.
- T / F** The average number of new permanent immigrants accepted into Australia each year is over 1.2 million.
- T / F** In 2004, the Human Rights Commission reported that Australia had not breached its obligations under international human rights conventions through its policy of mandatory detention of children seeking asylum.
- T / F** The longest period anyone has been in detention awaiting asylum status has been six months.

Answers: 1. True 2. True 3. False: it is around 122,600 4. False 5. False: the longest-serving detainee was detained for over seven years.



Mutual Love Ethic



Explain what you think the Mutual Love Ethic (MLE) could contribute to the question of caring for the world's most defenceless.

Altruism

Al - tru - ism

- ▶ The principle or practice of unselfish concern for or devotion to the welfare of others.
- ▶ 'Behaviour carried out to benefit another at some sacrifice to oneself, without, or not primarily because of, the expectation of reward from external sources.' Morton Hunt¹



How far would you risk your own safety to rescue a stranger?



Story 1. Brendan Keiler

On a cold June Monday morning in Melbourne, father of three Brendan Keiler, out on a morning jog, ran headlong into a dispute between bikie gang member Christopher Hudson and Kara Douglas. Hudson was attacking Douglas when Keiler, along with backpacker Paul De Ward, rushed to her aid.

Hudson drew a pistol from his coat and shot Keiler, De Ward and Douglas. Keiler died at the scene. De Ward and Douglas survived their injuries.

At Keiler's funeral, his friend Gerard Dalbosco, delivering a eulogy, said, 'Brendan had many great qualities, and central to them was a moral compass that gave him a strong sense of what was right and what was wrong'.

Keiler's wife remarked that, 'To him, to have ignored the injustice would have been to be a party to it'.

Officiating priest, Father Hosking said, 'Brendan didn't want to die, but he died standing up for what he thought was right. Love and sacrifice make the world a better place. Brendan died making the world a better place. He leaves a wonderful legacy in the way he lived about how we should live, how we should love, how we should sacrifice'².



Did Brendan Keiler do the right thing in going to the aid of the woman being attacked? Why?

Do you agree that Keiler died making the world a better place?

What would a strictly consequentialist stance have to say about this story?

Story 2. LaShanda Calloway

Five days after the Melbourne shootings, a 27-year-old woman, LaShanda Calloway, was stabbed during a fight in a corner shop, in Wichita, Kansas. Five people stepped over her as she lay dying on the floor. One stopped long enough to take a photo, but not long enough to help. Someone quickly rang the police, but it was too late. Calloway died in hospital.

'The fact people were more interested in taking a picture with a cell phone and shopping for snacks rather than helping this innocent young woman, is, frankly, revolting', a Wichita policeman, Gordon Bassham, said. 'The lack of concern for humanity over this young woman's life is deeply troubling.'

Police said they'd consider laying charges against the neglectful shoppers, but laws are unclear about bystanders' duty of care.³



Do you find this story troubling? In what way does it reflect ethical bankruptcy and the importance of thinking about ethics?

Story 3. Delmae Barton

Suffering a suspected stroke, respected Aboriginal opera singer Delmae Barton was left unable to move and in a pool of her own vomit for several hours at a busy bus interchange near Brisbane's Griffith University. Hundreds of passengers chose to ignore the 62-year-old until finally two Japanese students raised the alarm and sought help.

Premier Peter Beattie appealed to the community to examine their behaviour in such instances. 'If there is someone lying on the side of the road, do the good Samaritan thing', Mr Beattie said. 'Australians are noted for their giving of a fair go, their commitment and their compassion. We should never lose it.'⁴



How do you explain the lack of concern for Barton? Do you agree that Australians are known for compassion?

Sanctity of life

In the field of medical ethics, there are some key questions regarding the nature of human life and when it begins, which will largely determine your view on some controversial issues. Two of those ethical issues considered briefly here are **abortion**, and **cloning for embryonic stem cell research**.

Both topics revolve around such issues as:

- ▶▶ When does life begin?
- ▶▶ What does it mean to be a person?
- ▶▶ Does a foetus have rights?



In the space below list some of the arguments supporting a woman's right to choose abortion, and those opposing the practice.

ARGUMENTS FOR

ARGUMENTS AGAINST

Abortion

Abortion is an extremely controversial ethical topic that evokes highly charged emotional reactions on both sides of the debate.

Supporters of the rights of a woman to choose to abort a foetus argue that the fertilised egg is an extension of the woman's body. She has every right to make decisions about her body, they argue, and thus can rightly choose to go on with the pregnancy or not.

Opponents of abortion say the foetus is a unique and separate life existing within the mother, with a right to life. It is wrong, they say, to take that life.

Definitions

PRE-EMBRYO / conception to 14 days

EMBRYO / 14 days to 8 weeks

FOETUS / 8 weeks onwards

A range of complexities

About 80,000 abortions are performed each year in Australia—one for every four live births. Less than 2% of these abortions are for foetal abnormality, the others being for social or economic reasons.¹



Below is a list of possible reasons why someone might opt for an abortion. Rank them according to what you think are the most reasonable (number 1) to the least reasonable (number 8) motivations for such a decision.

- Diane's doctor has found her to have a condition where to continue with the pregnancy would put her life at serious risk.
- Charlotte has discovered she is pregnant and is disappointed because she wants to look thin and fit for her trip to Greece in three months' time.
- Jane is 19 and feels she is too young to have a child. She doesn't want to give up her partying lifestyle at such an early age.
- Carol was the victim of a violent sexual assault and has discovered she is pregnant as a result.
- Indra is from a culture where boys are valued more highly than girls. At an ultrasound she has discovered that her baby is a girl, and she and her husband want to abort.
- Karl and Tammy married young and their relationship is on rocky ground. Tammy discovers she is pregnant and now feels she is far from ready to have a family with Karl.
- Kate is just getting going in her career, and making inroads with a large law firm when she discovers she is pregnant. She is not in a steady relationship, and is pregnant after a casual weekend fling. She can't imagine abandoning her career to have the baby.
- Rocco and Sonja have been told that the baby she is carrying will have serious structural birth defects.

To be a person



3 Construct a definition of what it means to be a person. You could consider such things as the ability to use reason, to feel emotions, to make free choices, or engage in relationships. Discuss what impact such a definition could have on an attitude to abortion.

When the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was drawn up, it stated the principle reason for prohibiting the death sentence for pregnant women was 'to save the life of the unborn child'. The ICCPR recognises in Article 6(5) that the pregnant woman does indeed carry within her womb another human being who is entitled, by virtue of the child's immaturity, to special protection from the death sentence.²

The Christian take on abortion

An ethic based on the Christian understanding of reality opposes abortion as a legitimate course of action. It does so, all the while acknowledging the extremely complex and painful circumstances that frequently accompany such a decision. While not denying the obvious burden placed on females who carry and usually care for the child, the biblical position comes down to the nature and purpose of the growing embryo or foetus. Christian understanding takes the debate beyond the realm of individual choice and into the large, orienting and foundational messages of who God is, and who we are as humans, and what he created us for—relationships with him and each other.

Such a perspective regards the entity within the womb from the point of conception as an emerging person, made in the image of God.

This is enough to give this one-of-a-kind human intrinsic value. God's purpose is for that person to be in mutual love relationships with him and other people.³

Rather than emphasising the 'rights' of either the parents or the child, biblical teaching suggests a focus on the responsibilities of the parents and the personhood of the foetus. Abortion denies the foetus this personhood. A strong sense of the need to protect the life of the innocent child within the womb is the basis for opposing abortion. The rights of the mother (or the father for that matter) should not be taken in isolation from those of the developing human or the complex matrix of relationships involved in the new life. In this sense, abortion impinges on the personhood of the parents as well as the aborted foetus.



4 In the space below, create a diagram to represent the mutual love relationships of father, mother, God, and other members of the community that a fertilised ovum is a part of.

‘It is proper to ask what sort of society we become when human life is regarded as disposable.’⁷

Stem cell research

Cloning for embryonic stem cell research

Much controversy surrounds a form of embryonic stem cell research called ‘therapeutic cloning’. It is legal in Britain. Some parts of Europe such as Germany have banned it, but in December 2006 the Australian Federal Government lifted its ban on the practice.

Until recently, embryonic ‘stem cells’ have been farmed from discarded embryos created in IVF clinics (also a controversial practice). Therapeutic cloning offers a different method for the production of embryonic stem cells. An embryo is created from an unfertilised egg by removing the nucleus of that egg and replacing it with the nucleus from another adult cell. The embryo is grown for a few days, and then destroyed either in the course of further research into clones or into embryonic stem cells, or simply because the law requires that it not be allowed to develop beyond a few days.

Some scientists believe these practices may eventually alleviate the impact or even produce a cure for such things as spinal damage and degenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s disease and Alzheimer’s disease. At this stage however it is so early that no long-term benefit is guaranteed.

The controversy centres on the ethical issue of when a life begins, the nature of being human and whether there is a right to life at conception.



Those in favour of the practice see no issue with it, considering the potential benefits. Bob Turner, who is the father of a man made quadriplegic in an accident, strongly adheres to the ‘benefit outweighs the cost’ argument. On a television discussion panel he made his thoughts clear:

‘My point of view on the ethics is that it’s unethical not to continue [the research]. One man’s ethics is another man’s poison.’

Former Victorian ALP member for Pascoe Vale, Christine Campbell, is opposed to the practice. ‘Individually and collectively we need to ensure that human life at every stage is protected, nurtured, loved and defended, and that no human life is knowingly desecrated or sacrificed’, she writes. ‘Human cloning and destructive embryonic stem cell research are wrong because both deny, indeed deliberately extinguish, human life ... What is technically or scientifically possible in stem cell research should also conform to an ethic that respects life.’⁸



- » Where in the above issue are you able to identify consequentialist thinking and action?
- » What understanding of the world would lead one person to be in favour of the process and another opposed to it?

Mutual Love Ethic

Which aspect of the Mutual Love Ethic diagram (page 23) do you think most applies to the issue of abortion, and cloning for stem cell research. Explain your answer in the space below.



» Abortion

» Cloning for stem cell research

Acknowledgement of works

Introduction

- 1 Gordon Graham, *Eight Theories of Ethics* (Routledge: London & New York, 2004), p 1.
- 2 *ibid.*, pp 3–14.

Chapter 1

- 1 Script from <http://desperatehousewives.ahaava.com/0103.htm>
- 2 Ray Cassin, 'Right and wrong,' *The Age*, April 10, 2004.

Chapter 3

- 1 Iris Murdoch, quoted in Dennis P. Hollinger, *Choosing the Good – Christian Ethics in a Complex World*, (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2002), p 46.
- 2 <http://www.valuededucation.edu.au/values/default.asp?id=14515>
- 3 Andrew Cameron, 'Anglican schooling in a pluralistic society', The Inaugural Isaac Armitage Lecture, 11/11/05, Shore School, p 6.
- 4 The internet encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/a/aristotl.htm> (accessed 22/6/07)
- 5 Michael Hill, *The How and Why of Love—An Introduction to Evangelical Ethics*, (Matthias Media, 2002), p 37.

Chapter 4

- 1 Michael Hill, *The How and Why of Love—An Introduction to Evangelical Ethics*, (Matthias Media, 2002), p 66. Hill is drawing on the work of Bill Dumbrell here.

Chapter 5

- 1 Cornelius Plantinga Jr, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be—A Breviary of Sin*, (Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids Michigan, 1995), p 2.
- 2 'Dr Ashley Null on Thomas Cranmer', Anglican Church League website, <http://acl.asn.au/resources/dr-ashley-null-on-thomas-cranmer/>, viewed 28/1/2011.

Chapter 6

- 1 'Hugh Mackay, on right and wrong', *Compass* website, 10/10/2004, <http://www.abc.net.au/compass/s1217354.htm>

Chapter 7

- 1 Michael Hill, *The How and Why of Love—An Introduction to Evangelical Ethics*, (Matthias Media, 2002), p 131.
- 2 This diagram has been used with permission of Chris White, *Biblical Ethics*, Kambala Religious Education Document, 2007.
- 3 *ibid.*, p28.

Chapter 8

- 1 Bill Clinton, *My Life*, (Random House, London, 2004), p 593.

Chapter 9

- 1 Calvin B. DeWitt, 'Eco-Myths,' *Christianity Today Magazine*, June 1, 2001, <http://www.ctlibrary.com/7727> viewed 13/9/07.
- 2 Some of this discussion comes from the introduction to A Rocha, Christian nature conservation organisation <http://en.arocha.org/about/index8.html>
- 3 Robert Forsyth, 'Clearing the air—Christians on climate change' Address to New College, University of NSW, Formal Dinner, April 23, 2007.

Chapter 10

- 1 Amy Bloom <http://www.quotedb.com/quotes/2378>
- 2 Anne Fawcett, 'For whom the bells toll', *Sydney Morning Herald* 14/03/2007 Section Radar p 4.
- 3 *Common Prayer: Resources for Gospel-shaped Gatherings* (APA, 2012) p 119.
- 4 Michael Hill, *The How and Why of Love*, (Matthias Media, Sydney, 2002), p 153.
- 5 'Married women losing war against chores', *The Australian*, August 13, 2007.
- 6 *SMH* August 7/07 (AAP)
- 7 Barbara Drury, 'Make a Clean Break,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30/8/2006
- 8 Hugh Mackay, 'When leaving can be loving', *The Sun Herald* (8/7/07) news section, p 51.
- 9 Ann Landers says 'Truth is Stranger' (Prentice Hall Trade, 1982).

Chapter 11

- 1 <http://www.people-press.org/2009/04/23/public-remains-divided-over-use-of-torture/> (viewed April, 2014)

Chapter 12

- 1 'Amnesty reaffirms human rights commitments', Sydney Peace Foundation, 21/8/2007, <http://sydneypeacefoundation.wordpress.com/2007/08/>
- 2 Tim Norton, 'Australia the generous nation?', Oxfam Australia website, 29/7/2010, <http://www.oxfam.org.au/blogs/2010/07/australia-the-generous-nation/>
- 3 Helen Szoke, 'Why aid should keep growing' August 6, 2013, Oxfam Australia <https://www.oxfam.org.au/media/2013/08/why-aid-should-keep-growing/>
- 4 Tim Costello, Speech to National Press Club, 'We are winning the war on world poverty but our government can do more', *The Age*, 2/8/2007, News section, p 15.

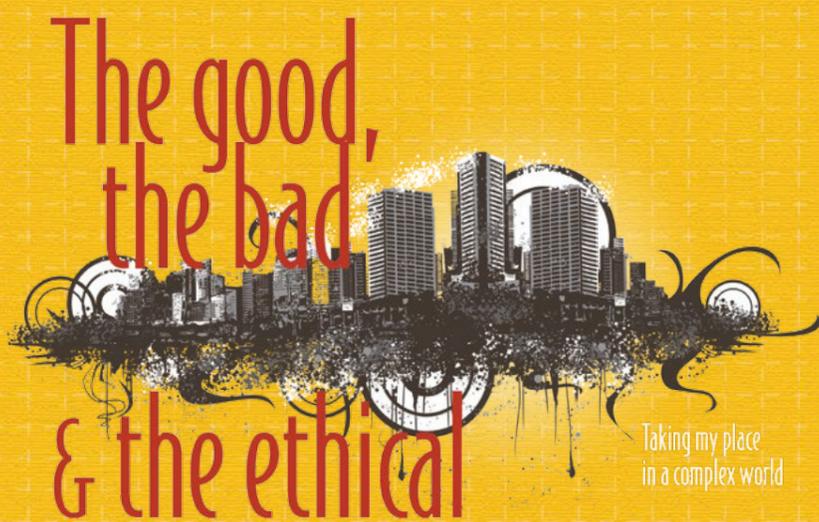
- 5 'Average Australian household worth \$728,000', Australian Bureau of Statistics, August 21, 2013 <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mediareleasesbytitle/E40C458995B5A2B4CA25738D00155600?OpenDocument>
- 6 'Living on a dollar a day', World Vision Report, 2/1/2010, <http://www.worldvisionreport.org/Stories/Week-of-January-2-2010/Living-on-a-Dollar-a-Day>
- 7 Ruth Alexander, 2013 'Does a child die of hunger every 10 seconds?', June 18, viewed April 30, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22935692>
- 8 '2013 World hunger and poverty facts and statistics', World Hunger Education Service, viewed April 14, 2014, <http://www.worldhunger.org/articles/Learn/world%20hunger%20facts%202002.htm>

Chapter 13

- 1 (Morton Hunt), quoted in David P Gushee, *Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust—Genocide and Moral Obligation*, 2nd Edition (Paragon House, 2003), p 115.
- 2 Based on, Greg Baum, 'Celebrating a life and remembering the differences a man made to many', *The Age*, 23/6/07.
- 3 Based on, Chris Rau, 'Altruism: A test of your spirit', *Sydney Morning Herald*, August 25, 2007.
- 4 Based on AAP and Dylan Welch, 'Opera Singer "left for dead" wins apology', *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 7, 2006.
- 5 Written by author based on news reports.
- 6 Written by author based on news reports.

Chapter 14

- 1 'Abortion statistics', NSW Right to Life, http://www.nswrtl.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=58&Itemid=119, viewed 28/1/2011.
- 2 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- 3 Michael Hill, *The How and Why of Love—An Introduction to Evangelical Ethics*, (Matthias Media, 2002), p 215.
- 4 Peter Vardy and Paul Grosch, *The Puzzle of Ethics*, (Fount, 1999), p 152.
- 5 *ibid.*, p 153.
- 6 Letter to the editor by Mark Rabich, *The Age*, July 2007.
- 7 David J Atkinson and David F Field (Eds) *New Dictionary of Ethics and Pastoral Theology* (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove Illinois, USA, 1995), p 133.
- 8 Christine Campbell, 'Biotech leaders can still honour ethics', *The Age*, 3/4/07, Business section, p 12.



The Good, the Bad and the Ethical offers a practical approach to the question of ethics while applying a biblical framework to real-life situations.

A sound platform for making ethical choices is crucial for students as they negotiate their way through contemporary life. The Student handbook takes seriously the complexities of the modern world, the questions students have, and different ethical theories on offer. Students are challenged to consider the Bible's 'big story' as the most comprehensive and life-affirming basis for making sound ethical choices. This extremely practical resource will assist students to reflect meaningfully on their world, and ultimately, the type of person they hope to become.

The Student handbook contains:

- short-answer questions
- stimulus for discussion
- scenarios
- case studies
- Bible links
- newspaper articles
- illustrations and diagrams
- group activities.

Structure

Part 1: Ethical systems

- Introducing ethics
Chapter 1 Individualism
Chapter 2 Rules vs results
Chapter 3 Values

Part 2: A brief introduction to biblical ethics

- Chapter 4 Foundations
Chapter 5 The Fall: what went wrong?
Chapter 6 Redemption
Chapter 7 The Mutual Love Ethic

Part 3: Ethics in the real world

- Chapter 8 War
Chapter 9 Environmental ethics
Chapter 10 Marriage and sex
Chapter 11 Human rights
Chapter 12 Compassion
Chapter 13 Altruism
Chapter 14 Sanctity of life
Chapter 15 What do you think? Personal reflection



cepstore.com.au

ISBN 978-1-921137-97-6



9 781921 137976 >