

CEP

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE ETHICAL

TAKING MY
PLACE IN
A COMPLEX
WORLD

```
selection == "MIRROR_X";  
mirror_mod.use_x = True  
mirror_mod.use_y = False  
mirror_mod.use_z = False  
operation = "MIRROR_Y";  
mirror_mod.use_x = False  
mirror_mod.use_y = True  
mirror_mod.use_z = False  
operation = "MIRROR_Z";  
mirror_mod.use_x = False  
mirror_mod.use_y = False  
mirror_mod.use_z = True  
  
@selection at the end - add  
obj.select= 1  
bpy.ops.object.select_all(action='SELECT')  
bpy.context.scene.objects.active =  
obj  
obj.select= 0  
bpy.context.selected_objects =  
obj  
bpy.data.objects[one.name].select  
obj.select= 1  
print("please select exactly  
one object")  
  
--- OPERATOR CLASSES ---  
  
class MirrorOperator(bpy.types.Operator):  
    """Mirror the selected object to the selected  
    mirror object"""  
    bl_idname = "object_mirror_mirror_x"  
    bl_label = "Mirror X"  
    mirror_x = bpy.props.StringProperty(name="Mirror X")  
  
    @classmethod  
    def poll(cls, context):  
        obj = context.active_object  
        return obj is not None
```

STUDENT HANDBOOK

WRITTEN BY JOSH APIEZONEK
REVISED BY TESSA REPP



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KEY TO ICONS

⇒ LIFE

A real-life style scenario showing where this impacts life.

Ⓢ YOU

A more personal, individualistic question.

🗨️ DISCUSS

For class or small group conversation.

📖 READ

Usually a Bible passage or other reading for analysis.

🔄 REFLECT

A quote or concept for reflective consideration.

👁️ VISUALISE

Opportunity for visual representation of a concept (either produced or completed by students).

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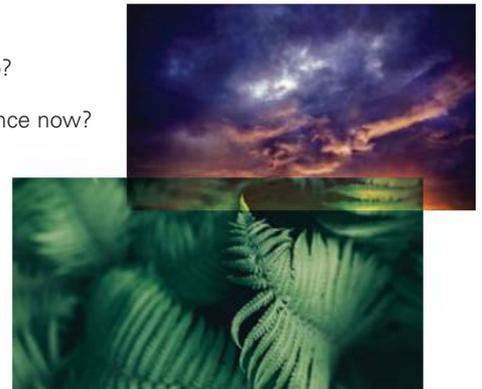
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LESSON 1

INTRODUCING ETHICS

SO ... WHAT IS ETHICS?

How do we work this out? Let's start where we often start when we don't know something—ask Siri or Google it.

⇒ LIFE

You're in a clothes store and you notice a girl look around to check no-one's watching. She grabs a T-shirt off the rack and hides it under her jacket. How do you respond?

Cross the option you think you probably would take.

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

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

ETHICS explores the 'best way' for life when deciding what makes actions, speech, thoughts and proposals right or wrong.

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 have done, you've been 'doing' ethics. Ethics is everywhere. Everybody makes decisions involving right and wrong all the time and life constantly produces ethical situations for us to face.

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?
- When is it right to sleep with someone?
- How should I spend my money?
- Should I sign that petition?
- Should I get revenge?

Ethical issues speak to us deeply. 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. All these emotions point to our standards, and our interest in right and wrong. Our emotions also suggest that we think others should act according to a standard that we think is right.

But, how often do you actually reflect on *how* you choose your ethics?



ETHICS IN THE REAL WORLD

2 Author Andrew Cameron claims a lot of people don't do much thinking about ethics until they are faced with a decision. This can put a lot of pressure on each decision. He says, 'their mistake has been to pack *all* of their thinking about ethics into these moments of decision. They're not only thinking through the decisions themselves—they're straining to do a lot of catch-up thinking about *how ethics works*'.

DISCUSS

What do you think the author is saying?

YOU

How true is this of you? Mark yourself on the scale below.

 I <u>often</u> <u>reflect</u> on my ethics.	 I <u>never</u> <u>reflect</u> on my ethics.
---	---

If, as argued by Andrew Cameron, we're better off if we don't have to work out our views of what is best at the moment we have to decide, then we do ourselves a big favour if we take time when we have the headspace. That's what this course hopes to provide—unpressured time to reflect.

REFLECT

What kinds of ethical issues could these pictures imply?



CASE STUDY ETHICS BEFORE THE BELL

4 For the following account, underline or highlight each moment where an ethical decision is made. Tally them up.

Isla's alarm went off at 6:20 am. She was exhausted as she'd unintentionally been looking at Instagram and Facebook until 1 am. She rolled over and didn't wake up again until 7 am. She had planned to finish her homework before she went to school, but there was no chance now. No time for breakfast either since she had stayed in the shower for 15 minutes analysing the comment her friend had left on her Facebook page. After a frantic rush during which she yelled at her brother and kissed her mother goodbye, she got halfway down the driveway before running back to grab her phone from her bed. She muttered an apology to her Dad who had been impatiently waiting in the car to drop her at the bus stop.

On the bus she gave up her seat for an adult which meant she lost another chance to finish her homework. She checked her phone instead and signed some petition her friend had forwarded her without really reading it. It seemed to be something about the environment. After quickly eating a muesli bar she threw the wrapper towards the bin. It missed but she didn't have time to go back and pick it up.

When she arrived at school, she saw a group of Year 8 boys teasing a younger kid. She hated seeing that and told the bullies to leave him alone. She formulated a white lie to tell her teacher about why she didn't do her homework. Then the bell went.

LIFE

What emotions can be associated with ethics?

SUBJECTIVISM AND OBJECTIVISM

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

There are two major views of ethics that fundamentally shape the way we engage with the views, feelings, standards, morals and behaviours of others.

To understand them let's consider some scenarios.

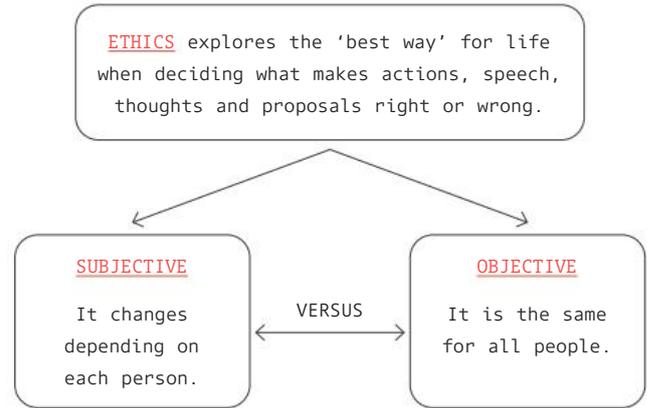
When you are asked a question about how a book or a piece of music made you feel, you are being asked a **subjective** question. It is asking how you, the subject, felt about the object, the book or piece of music. Alternatively, you may be asked in science about how many protons the oxygen atom has (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. 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.

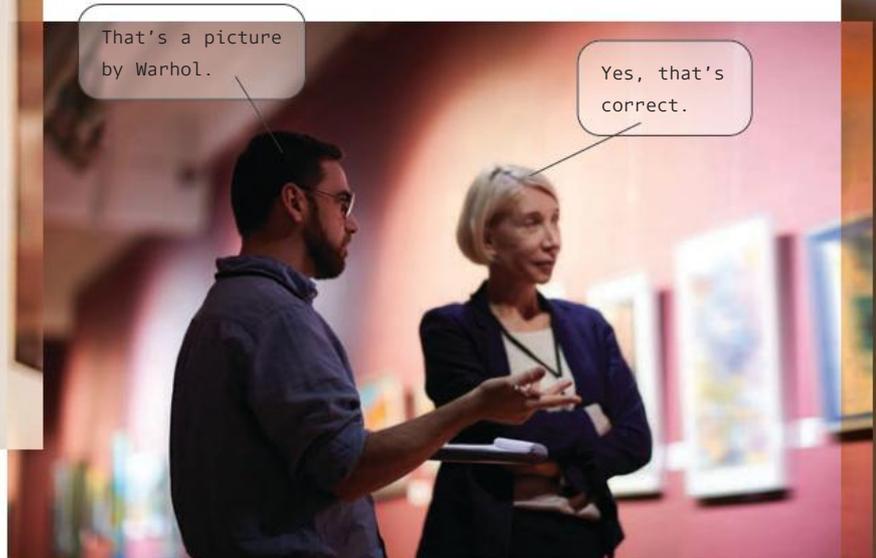
👁 VISUALISE



⇒ 5 LIFE

Mark each statement either S for subjective or O for objective:

- ___ 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 should tell you what's right and wrong for you.
- ___ Plastic is causing the death of sea creatures.
- ___ You should always be loyal to your friends.
- ___ Facebook is better than Instagram.
- ___ Sexual morality changes according to each person.
- ___ Every human has the right to life, liberty and security of person regardless of race, colour, sex, religion or political opinion.
- ___ World poverty should be eliminated.



⇒ 6 LIFE

Highlight the subjective comments in the following. Underline the objective comments.

OLIVER

That Biology lesson was the worst!

NOAH

Your teacher is Mr Donaldson isn't it?

We were classifying animals and plants. Honestly, it was SO boring!

You still have time to switch classes, it's only week two!

You have a better teacher, Noah, and besides, the classroom faces the cricket oval.

We are going to spend the next three lessons 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, but it is really important for life.

7 STICKY DEBATE

Are there views of right and wrong that should apply to everyone? Why or why not? Give an example.

Questions I have

THE QUICK VERSION

8 YOU

Ethics is everywhere. We can't escape making decisions about what is right and what is wrong. In the next three lessons we're going to be looking at different ways of making ethical decisions, but for now, how do you decide what is right and wrong?

What helps you to make those decisions when they come up?

This week, try and notice what kinds of ethical decisions you are faced with. We'll share some examples at the start of next lesson.

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW / Go to pages 35-36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson's section.



LESSON 2

INDIVIDUALISM

FUN IS #1

DISCUSS

Isaac thinks that any decisions he makes in life should be all about him having fun. What limits are there to such an approach? If his own pleasure was the basis of every decision he made, how might he go wrong?

LIFE

If you were friends with Isaac, describe to the person near you a scenario where his focus on fun might negatively impact you?

YOU

Whose happiness matters most, Isaac's or yours?

We said straight up that ethics can be messy. For the next few weeks we'll think about 'systems' or theories people use to help decide what is the best way (good or bad, right or wrong).

This week's ethical theories can be grouped together into one that focuses on the **individual**.

REFLECT

List some areas of life where you get to choose what you want. Contrast this with areas where you do not have a choice.

CHOICE

Limited or NO CHOICE



For the areas where you *do* have choice, the question is: How do you figure out what is best, what is right and wrong?

I'LL DECIDE!

One way of deciding what's right and wrong says that morality is better left up to each individual to decide. 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 and what's good for you is the most important factor'. Western societies place enormous value on the individual and so this thinking is popular in our culture.

We could summarise this as ...

Right and wrong should be left to each individual to decide.

AND

The good of the individual takes priority over the group in any decision-making.

= **INDIVIDUALISM**

So ... individualism gives a strong and decisive answer to the key question of ethics: 'I decide'.

Fine. But what things influence my choice of what's right and wrong? Let's look at three big influences: my desire for pleasure, my feelings and my sense of logic.

PLEASURE

⇒ 3 LIFE

YOLO came and went as an expression. What does it stand for and what point is it making?

This idea is not new: about 300 BC a philosopher named Epicurus wrote: 'Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life'.

⊙ YOU

How similar does this sound to your approach? What about Isaac from the start of the lesson? What would he think of Epicurus?

Pleasure or happiness is valued highly in Western society. 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.



When deciding what's best, a hedonist would ask:

What makes me happiest? =

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

⇒ 4 LIFE

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

MINOR/SHORT-TERM PAIN

Drinking =
hangover

Eating =

Sex =

Drugs =

MAJOR/LONG-TERM PAIN

Drinking =
alcoholism

Eating =

Sex =

Drugs =

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

⇒ LIFE

Everyone deciding what's right and wrong based on what makes them happiest (individualism and hedonism) doesn't just impact other people, it impacts our world. Issues related to the environment such as pollution and climate change are constantly in the news and are a source of anxiety for a great number of people. (This issue will be picked up in 'Lesson 9—War'.)

Do you think an ethic of individualism and hedonism has contributed to environmental destruction? If so, how?



☰ CASE STUDY COSTLY BARGAINS

⇒ LIFE

Let's put hedonism to another test. Role-play what can happen when 'What makes me happy?' is the guiding ethic for decision-making in the following scenarios.

- A. Mia loves shopping but doesn't have a lot of cash. She read that her favourite clothing label is not paying a living wage for its labourers overseas and they have been caught using child labour. But the clothes are so cheap, and she feels great when she wears them, so she keeps buying them.
- B. Jake loves the excitement of poker at the city casino. He gets a huge thrill out of it, so he feels it's OK to spend most of his pay cheque gambling. The pity is that he's not that great at poker and loses regularly. Jake's wife and kids, moreover, definitely don't share his enthusiasm for poker. They would rather have food on the table and money for the school excursion.

Can we say Mia's choice of clothing is wrong? Or is that merely our opinion? What about Jake's love of poker?

Do you agree that there are limits, guidelines and specific pleasures that we need to choose?

The need to introduce guidelines or principles to make hedonism work in our relationships and our society suggests we need something more to tell us what's good and bad than the simple fact that something produces pleasurable sensations.

FEELINGS

Another way to think about ethics is to let your feelings decide what is right and wrong. This is a view called **romanticism**. This has nothing to do with roses on Valentine's Day. It comes from the philosophical movement in history that emphasised one's emotions, feelings and experiences.

Author CL Stevenson argued in the 1940s that our ethical judgements are *only* based on our feelings. **Good and bad are only a feeling** (rather than something we think about).

What do I feel is right?

=

Knowing what is best or right is about your inner desires, your passions, your dreams. These are what you think about when making decisions in life. Romanticism comes from a view of human nature that says humans are essentially good so therefore we can know what is right in our hearts.

But can we trust our hearts to guide us?

☰ CASE STUDY 'THE HEART WANTS WHAT THE HEART WANTS'¹

Ⓣ Ⓢ YOU

Can you think of situations when you have made decisions of right or wrong based on your feelings? Identify one time when a feelings-based decision led to a good outcome for someone and another where it ended up negatively impacting someone.

Your reflections may show that feelings are not always the most useful guide in making ethical decisions.

An example from a popular TV show from the 90s, *Desperate Housewives* (ask your teacher or parents to confess if they watched it), serves to illustrate this issue. Key characters Karl and Susan used to be married, but their relationship ended when Karl left Susan for his (young and attractive) 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!

🗨️ DISCUSS

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

Hmmm ... We might not identify with Karl, but we have acknowledged that there can be situations where making decisions based on our feelings is negative for someone else.

So, what other ideas are out there?

1. Emily Dickinson > Woody Allen > Selena Gomez.



LOGIC

Some of us may be offended by suggestions that we are ruled by our feelings. We might not identify with the idea of just pursuing pleasure (hedonism) or going with what our heart or gut instinct says is right (romanticism). We might prefer to think of ourselves as clear, purely rational thinkers capable of decisions untainted by emotion.

Well, individualism can manifest in a third way.

What if we could tell our emotions to be quiet and just use our intellect? Is this the way to know what is best, what is good or bad, right or wrong?

We could decide our ethical dilemmas with:

What does my own logic say? =

A logical approach to ethical issues has appeal but weaknesses also. Reflect on this quote from ethicist Tim Dean: ‘When we see someone do something immoral, we first experience a sense of outrage, and only *after that* does reason kick in to explain why we think it’s wrong. The reasons we give are often made up after the fact to justify our sense of outrage.’

Consider also these (paraphrased) words of Thomas Cranmer from the 1500s: ‘What the heart loves, the will chooses, and the mind justifies’.

REFLECT

What are these authors suggesting about our attempts to make ethical decisions based on pure logic?

DISCUSS

Luke sees a fundraiser for an international charity and contemplates whether the right thing to do is donate to it. He doesn’t really feel like parting with his money since giving it away decreases the amount of cash he has to spend on himself (like going to a movie). But he weighs that against the suffering of children overseas. Surely missing a movie in order to feed someone is a good, logical choice.

Do you think anything other than pure reason influenced Luke’s change of mind? If so, what?

A challenge for trying to make ethical decisions based on our pure logic is that we have trouble separating ourselves from our desires, especially regarding emotionally charged issues. Let’s be clear: it’s *good* that we have an emotional response if we see terrible things being done, but this does make it hard to be purely logical.

VISUALISE

Right and wrong should be left to each individual to decide.

AND

The good of the individual takes priority over the group in any decision-making.

What makes me happiest?	What do I feel is right?	What does my own logic say?
=	=	=

What do these have in common?
It’s all about you!
You decide and you are the priority.

=

THE QUICK VERSION

Our question is: ‘How do I figure out the best way, what is right and wrong?’ The answers we’ve looked at so far have been:

— I get to choose (individualism), according to what brings me pleasure (hedonism), or my feelings (romanticism), or my personal logic (rationalism).

But ... what about you and you and you and you?

The world is made up of over 7.5 billion individuals, 7.5 billion other ‘yous’. Think what might happen if all 7.5 billion individuals decided to base their ethics on whatever they thought was best.

The problem is, each of these approaches—pleasure, feelings and logic—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.

Next lesson we’ll consider whether rules would help us in the quest to determine what is right and wrong and thus live the best way.

 **SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW** / Go to pages 35–36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson’s section.



STREETVJ / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

LESSON 3

RULES VS RESULTS



GOOD FOR ME = GOOD

Last lesson we considered the common idea that ‘Everyone should be left alone to decide right and wrong for themselves’ (based on pleasure, feelings or their logic). But we finished with the question: “What about all the other ‘yous’?” If we left each individual to decide what is right or wrong, it could compromise the good of others and create a chaotic society. Even if we like the sound of individualism, none of us truly want a world where everyone is completely free to choose what they think is right or wrong. This is why every society has laws that declare certain things to be wrong.

⇒ YOU

You might not like every law (or school rule for that matter) but think about some laws or rules you are thankful for.

Life involves a lot of decisions. Maybe the answer to our key question, **‘How do we figure out what’s the best way, what’s right and wrong?’** lies in looking at each action we perform and deciding accordingly. Which approach works best? Today we consider two ways to evaluate whether a decision is right or wrong.

≡ CASE STUDY UNLOCKING THE APPLE

Attorney General William Barr said during a press conference on Monday that Apple had not helped the FBI crack into password-protected iPhones used by Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani, who is suspected of killing three people last month in a shooting at a Navy base in Pensacola, Florida.

The comments highlight law enforcement’s frustration with encryption technologies that protect data so that neither Apple nor law enforcement can easily read it.

“We have asked Apple for their help in unlocking the shooter’s iPhones. So far Apple has not given us any substantive assistance,” Barr said, next to a poster with a picture of the iPhones. “This situation perfectly illustrates why it is critical that investigators be able to get access to digital evidence once they have obtained a court order based on probable cause.”

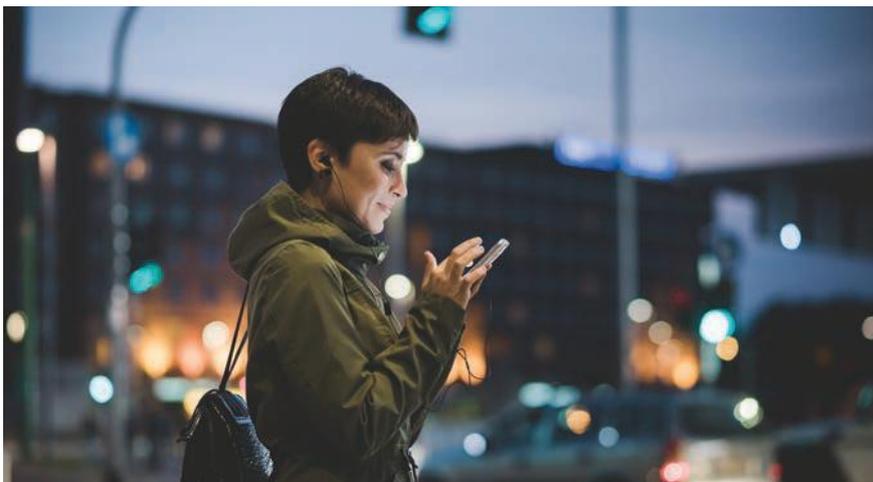
“We call on Apple and other technology companies to help us find a solution so that we can better protect the lives of Americans and prevent future attacks,” Barr said.

Leswing, K 2020, ‘Attorney General William Barr says Apple is not helping unlock iPhones used by alleged Pensacola shooter’, *CNBC*, January 13 2020, viewed November 16 2021, <<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/01/13/barr-says-apple-not-providing-substantive-assistance-on-locked-iphone.html>>.

🗨️ 1 DISCUSS

Of what were the FBI accusing Apple? What do you think should have been done? Discuss your position in small groups and then share.

10



TWO SIDES TO THE STORY ...

ⓐ 2 YOU

Imagine you are a friend of one of the shooting victims. Which course of action would you think is best? Why?

What if you were the head of Apple with a reputation for respecting people’s privacy. What would you do? Why?

RULES VS RESULTS

Who is right? The dilemma about unlocking the suspect’s iPhone represents a choice between two approaches to ethics. Like all ethics they are both about determining what actions are best for a person to follow.

DEONTOLOGY	<p>A rule-oriented approach is known as DEONTOLOGY. It states 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.</p> <p>For instance, it is wrong to kill or steal or torture regardless of the circumstances.</p> <p>In short:</p>	CONSEQUENTIALISM	<p>A result-oriented approach is known as CONSEQUENTIALISM. It believes that the results themselves, that is, the consequences, tell you whether an act was good or bad.</p> <p>An act is good, if, and only if, the consequences are good.</p> <p>So, for instance, if by killing someone you prevent that person doing harm, it might be OK.</p> <p>In short:</p>
------------	---	------------------	--

ⓐ YOU

Mark which approach you took regarding Apple’s situation. Would you be prepared to make your approach universal, or do you think it should be determined case-by-case?

🗨️ 3 DISCUSS

A common saying is ‘the end justifies the means’. What do you think is meant by this? Would a deontologist or a consequentialist agree?

COMPLICATIONS IN THE RULES

☰ CASE STUDY DRIVEN TO DESPERATION

4 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 ‘Lesson 12—Compassion’.)



AMORS PHOTOS / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

ⓐ YOU

What do you think you would do in her situation? Justify your response.



FOR HER / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

CASE STUDY COVID CONSEQUENCES

⑤ 2020 gave the world lots of food for thought regarding the place of rules verses outcomes. When COVID ravaged the world, different approaches were taken by different governments and the public varied greatly in their views of what was the right approach and what wasn't. Consider the following scenario.

During its 'second wave', Victoria closed its borders to prevent any more people with COVID entering the state. They held to this deontological (rule-based) ethic strictly as the numbers in Victoria were rising fast.

One consequence of this deontological ethic was that people from South Australia were denied access to Melbourne hospitals for specialist medical care. Doctors suggested that this may have contributed to the death of four babies in Adelaide who were unable to access more sophisticated treatment in Melbourne.

Use the following table to consider pros and cons of each ethical approach to this situation.

Approach	Weaknesses/problems	Strengths/positives
DEONTOLOGY (Rules)		
CONSEQUENTIALISM (Results)		

⑥ YOU

What would you have done if you'd received the request for these medical transfers? Identify if it is consequentialism or deontology. Why that approach?

It's complicated, isn't it? Real-life scenarios help us see that looking at rules vs results can give some guidance but doesn't provide enough to deal with life's complexities. Philosophers throughout history have been grappling with this issue.





LESSONS FROM HISTORY

JOHN STUART MILL / 1806–1873

A British philosopher of the consequentialist school who 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’. (Mill, J 1863, *Utilitarianism*, London) This hedonistic thinking is a method of doing ethics centred on the results of a given action.

6 VISUALISE

Represent John Stuart Mill’s thinking in a diagram or image.

IMMANUEL KANT / 1724–1804

A German philosopher of the deontologist school who argued against consequentialism as being too subjective. (Remember ‘subjective’? It’s when something is opinion-based or true for some but not others.) He believed we didn’t need religion to tell us what is wrong or right because it was embedded into the universe and we could work it out with pure intellect. Once we worked these rules out, they applied to everyone! For example, if a supposedly good person steals then they are saying stealing is good and everyone should be allowed to steal whenever they want.

In his words ... ‘Act only according to that maxim (rule) whereby you can at the same time will (insist) that it should become a universal law’. (Kant, I 1797, *Metaphysics of Morals*, Königsberg)

7 DISCUSS

What impact would Kant’s thinking have on society?



THE QUICK VERSION

8 REFLECT

It’s hard to use just one of these approaches when making ethical decisions. They each have questions that need answering. In small groups have a go at answering the following questions.

If we decide what is right and wrong using *rules (deontology)* ...

Who makes the rules?

What are the rules based on?

Why is something ever wrong?

What if someone disagrees with a rule?

If we decide what is right and wrong based on *results (consequentialism)* ...

Who decides whether the results are good or bad?

Can you really ever know the full consequences of an act? Why or why not?

What do you do if the consequences are good for some but hurt one or lots of people? For example, is it okay to kill one to save many?

These are hard questions and suggest that perhaps more is needed to navigate the ethical issues of life in the best way.

 **SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW** / Go to pages 35–36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson’s section.



VALUES AND VIRTUES



EULOGY

🕒 1 YOU

Imagine that you were to die in 60 years' time. Write a couple of lines describing what you would like said at your funeral? Focus on *how* you would like to be remembered as a person (that is, your character), rather than what you might have accomplished or achieved.

DEAR FRIENDS, We are gathered here today to remember the life of ...

WHAT'S THE MOTIVATION?

🕒 2 Three students know about Ryan's drug problem. They all approach the principal Ms Jones to talk about Ryan.

ANNABELLE dislikes Ryan for cheating on her friend and tells Ms Jones about Ryan's habits to get him in trouble.

GRACE catches the train with Ryan and is concerned about him and his problems and knows he needs the help that Ms Jones might be able to arrange.

DIMITRI (Ryan's loyal but not very bright mate) is getting advice from Ms Jones about his own drug issues and accidentally reveals Ryan's predicament.

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

ANNABELLE

GRACE

DIMITRI

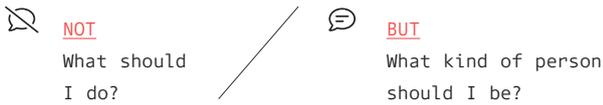


VALUES

The previous scenario 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 not necessarily random, they are related to what we value.

According to the 'values' ethical theory the big question of ethics is:



3 VISUALISE

Which do you think is the case—do our actions *form* our character or do our actions *spring from* our character? Draw (or write) the way you think it works.

CONSIDER



IRIS MURDOCH

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

4 To consider what Iris Murdoch is getting at here, discuss the following scenario. (Perhaps something similar has happened to you.)

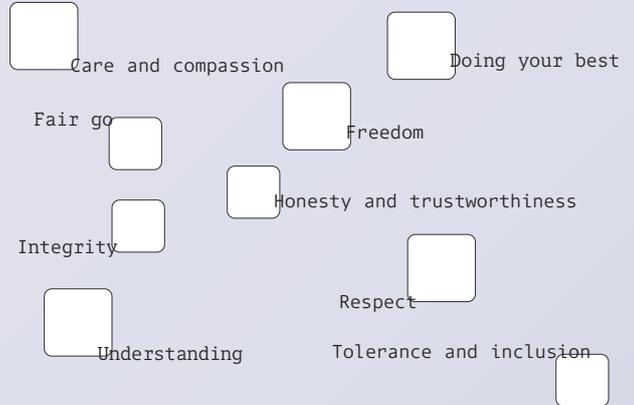
A student is being teased at school about their shockingly bad haircut. When observing this:

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

Life can bring ethical dilemmas at any instant. We don't always have time to stop and analyse our ethical position before we act. Arguably, we don't act based on a set of rules we've learnt. Rather, our pre-formed character will determine our response.

EDUCATING VALUES

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



YOU

Rank these from 1 to 9 in order of what you consider to be the most important to the least important. Highlight the ones you would like to demonstrate more often.

DISCUSS

Compare your rankings of values to those around you. Are they the same? If not, how can you determine whose value ranking is best?

LIFE

What were some recent examples at school where you have seen any of these values displayed?

YOU

What value(s) (if any) would you add?



SAYS WHO?

Are there any values that are objective and absolute, that is, everyone 'should' have them? Why?

What is the basis for the Australian government's list of values? For example, why should we respect others? Who is to say that is a good thing? Why does the government get to tell me what I should value? Why can't I decide for myself?

Are there any values that are objective and absolute, that is, everyone 'should' have them? Or is it based on majority opinion?

With a partner each try to defend opposite views on one of the following statements: 'If a majority of people decided we don't need to respect others, we no longer have to show respect.' OR 'Every opinion or action should be tolerated.'

There is no doubt it can be helpful to speak of 'values' inasmuch as they encourage us to be respectful, tolerant, and to have compassion, etc. However, taken in isolation, focusing on 'values' may also be a weakness because of the implication that these traits are only important if we value them. This makes them open to change (and only important if a majority of people *continue* to value them).

CASE STUDY OUTSIDE YOUR WORLD

6 On the whole, people in our society think respect and compassion are good values but what would the world look like if society decided respect and compassion were no longer important? We don't have to guess; we can look to history or even other societies today. Today Germany is a democratic country much like Australia where people of different classes and religions are respected and tolerated. These values were not always part of German culture. Under the leadership of Adolf Hitler people of certain beliefs were not valued. Strength and loyalty to the Nazi party were prioritised over the values of inclusion or tolerance. Much of the world was opposed to these the ethics of the Nazi party and united to overthrow their government.

YOU

Do you think it was right of the world to impose their values on Germany? What if Germany was expelling Jews from Germany but not killing them, would that be OK? Why are our values better than theirs?

DISCUSS

Are values a subjective or objective approach to ethics?

MOTIVATION

8 Corrie Ten Boom (author of *The Hiding Place*) was a Christian who hid Jewish people in her home in the Netherlands in the 1940s to protect them from the Nazis. Although Christians highly value honesty, Corrie helped hide her Jewish neighbours, which was a crime at the time.

Do you think she acted rightly or hypocritically by deceiving the German authorities? What do you think God thought of her actions?

Recall the definition of **consequentialist**-based ethics. Did the end justify the breaking of her values in this situation?

What does this example show us about the limitations of both rules and values in facing life's ethical dilemmas?

VIRTUE ETHICS

An older and stronger approach to thinking about character is called **virtue ethics**. Imagine the person who knows the right thing to say or do in every situation and the way to say it. The friend who knows how to be honest without being blunt, the teacher who gives feedback on your terrible exam result in a really constructive and kind way, the parent who is able to comfort you with wisdom when they see you're upset after a fight with a friend. And they do this without being self-righteous or patronising. We call this kind of behaviour virtuous. The virtuous person is that person who seems to have goodness built into them and it flows out in their behaviour and interactions with others.

REFLECT

Consider how Jesus' words below convey this idea of virtue.



MATTHEW 12:34b

For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.



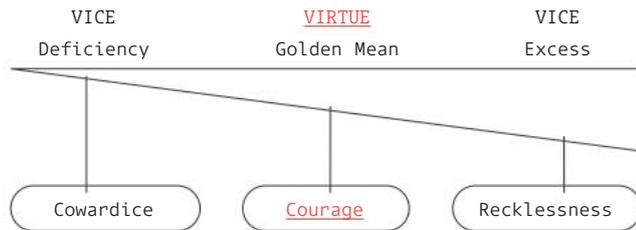
LESSONS FROM HISTORY

ARISTOTLE / 384–322 BC

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. He taught that your character is shaped by doing something over and over again. So, for example, if someone continually gives their time and money for others, we call them generous, which is a virtue. Virtues are less relative than values and have stood the ‘test of time’. Virtues are settled patterns of admirable actions and feelings that have become so ingrained in a person that they form part of their character.

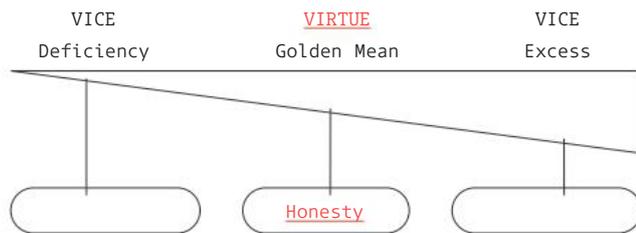
A key part of Aristotle’s teaching on moral virtue was his concept of the mean between two extremes. So, when thinking about courage, too much leads to rash behaviour and too little leads to cowardly behaviour. Somewhere in between would be the right path.

For example, according to Aristotle, the two extremes of courage might be shown like this:



VISUALISE

Try the same for the Virtue 'honesty'.



YOU

Where in your life is a virtue that you value (honesty, for example) deficient? Why do you think that is?

THE QUICK VERSION

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 and it would be brilliant to be a virtuous person who has a permanent instinct for what is the best way to act.

However, according to Aristotle, 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. A situation may be best served with an attitude of compassion mixed with honesty (finding a nice way to communicate truth).

Virtues and values are a helpful guide but we often also need clear thinking and analysis to enable us to decide what is the right thing to do. Virtues need to be understood in the wider moral order and not cut off and forced to stand alone.

We need an ethic that considers both our character and our actions to help us navigate life the best way.

WHERE ARE YOU AT?

What approach to ethics that we’ve looked at so far in this course has been most appealing to you?

How would you summarise your own approach at this point?

Maybe one thing that has stuck with you is the popular suggestion that everyone should be left to make decisions for themselves without anyone else telling them what is right or wrong. Or maybe that idea seems, in reality, totally crazy. Flick back through your handbook if you need to.

We’re going to start exploring what Christianity has to offer to our thinking ...

 **SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW** / Go to pages 35–36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson's section.

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LESSON 5

CREATED: HOW GOD MADE IT

YOURS OR MINE?

DISCUSS

Flick back to your reflection at the end of last lesson. Share what you wrote with the person next to you. Whose approach to ethics do you think is best? Why?

THE BIG PICTURE

We've seen that ethics is not just about deciding if you should sign a petition or copy and paste something for an assignment. Life is a non-stop series of thoughts, decisions and actions that reflect and shape who we are and the direction our life takes. Picking between right and wrong is just part of navigating the best way to live. But what is the best way? Chasing pleasure? Sticking to your principles? Devoting yourself to protecting the environment? Discovering your destiny and pursuing it? Fighting hard to be number one? Sacrificing your happiness to serve others? All of us want to live the best life, but what is that?

SAD BUT TRUE

Below are scenarios from the real world. They might be hidden from many of us, but they are not fiction.

A **TODDLER** isn't fed because parents have spent all their money on drugs.

At the age of 12 a **GIRL** is told she is going to be married to a friend of the family that year.

The leader of a country lives in absolute luxury thanks to bribes and excessive taxes while **CITIZENS** live in houses made of cardboard and rubbish.



A **STUDENT** is beaten up after school by older kids.

A mother's **CHILDREN** are taken from her because her religious beliefs are illegal in her nation.

Dozens of **PEOPLE** on a busy street notice a dead homeless person on the sidewalk and walk past.



 2 DISCUSS

What is your gut reaction to situations like these?

If right and wrong are subjective (personal opinion) then does it make sense for someone to tell the ‘perpetrators’ in these scenarios that they are doing something wrong? If people are left to decide their own purpose (for example, happiness) or values (for example, strength) or rules (for example, be true to what you believe) then these actions can all be justified.

 3 DISCUSS

It may feel awful to you, but try and explain how the perpetrators above could justify their actions based on their personal ethics/morals?

 4 YOU

Did you feel yourself wanting to say, ‘That’s wrong!’ Why? Should your standard of wrong apply to other people? Why/why not?

 DISCUSS

Should the sufferers in the scenarios be treated better than that? If so, why? What makes people worthy of love, protection, dignity and respect? Are people worthy? Says who?

HARSH TRUTH?



RICHARD DAWKINS
famous scientist
(and atheist)

If it is solely an evolutionary convenience, there is really no such thing as good or evil.

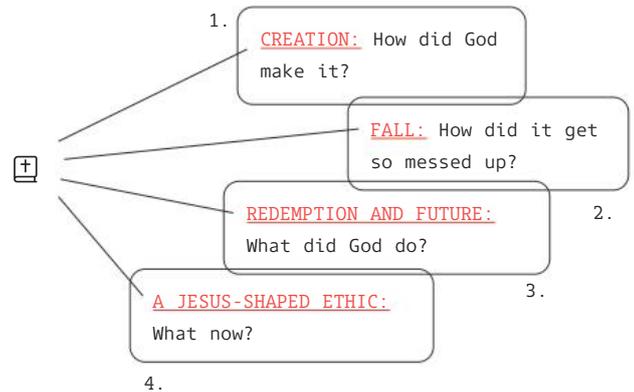
 5 REFLECT

Richard Dawkins is brutally honest in his reflections on ethics in a world with no purpose, made from an unexplainable explosion where we are simply the freakish outcome of a heap of genetic mutations. Do his words sit comfortably with you? Think of the scenarios mentioned: can we say these things are actually wrong, or is everyone entitled to their opinion?



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY?

For the following four lessons we are going to see what the Bible contributes to our understanding of ‘the best way’ to live. It’s absolutely impossible to explore all that the Bible teaches about ethics in just four lessons but we will try to boil it down by considering the following four questions:



 6 YOU

Before we get into it, jot down how you think Christians work out ‘the best way’ when it comes to moral issues?

JUST DO IT?

Many people think Christianity has a pretty simple ethical framework: God said it, just do it! This is known as *Divine Command Theory*, and lots of non-Christian philosophers like to suggest this is what Christians believe. Maybe it is similar to what you wrote at the start?

But Christian ethics is not simply about commands. Which means:

- It’s not about making people feel guilty so they do the right thing.
- It’s not about meeting a standard that God sets.

Jesus famously said, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners’. In other words, he did not come to save those who thought they could live up to a certain set of rules.

Our big question for today is:

HOW DID GOD MAKE IT?

A PLAN AND A PURPOSE

Each of these objects is designed with a clear purpose. Identify the purpose and write it in the space below the images.



If something is designed with a purpose, there is a best way to use it ... Hold that thought.

VISUALISE

An alien visits and asks you the purpose of earth and earthlings? How do you respond (after freaking out that you are talking to an alien ... who happens to speak English)?

The inventor of the lightbulb and first motion camera, Thomas Edison, famously said, 'I find out what the world needs. Then I go ahead and try to invent it.' In other words, his inventions weren't happy accidents, rather the result of a specific purpose and design. The Bible says the world is kind of like that, with God as the inventor of the universe who has a specific design and purpose for his invention.

READ / GENESIS 1

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

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". Genesis 1:27-28

What do you think is meant by the phrase 'made in the image of God'? Is that how you think of yourself?

According to the Bible's description of creation, 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. For example, loneliness is considered a big contributor to depression, so much so that in 2018 the UK government appointed a Minister for Loneliness.

SIDENOTE ————— When humans are said to rule over the earth and subdue it in Genesis 1, it doesn't mean to mistreat the world as the most advanced species. The meaning here is one of protecting the relationships we are responsible for, to maintain the order God has given to creation, to serve others and to seek their good and the good care of his world.

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 purpose is 'stitched into' the world by its inventor (creator), ethics is not so much about deciding what's right and wrong, but rather about *recognising* it.

How do you feel when you read that the Bible says God cares about relationships—about how you treat other people (and him)—and that this is stitched into the world? Does it make people more valuable or less? Why?

THE IMAGE OF GOD

①③ YOU

Draw a quick sketch of yourself (stick figures are fine) and describe what you think is special about you or that make you, you.

MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE

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.

WHY CARE?

A question that came up for us repeatedly in the first four lessons was ‘Why should we care about other people?’ It’s hard to give a strong answer if we are just randomly evolved creatures that happen to dominate other species of animals. God’s answer is that you (along with the 7.5 billion or so other people of the world) are infinitely precious to him. Everyone has value because God values them. Everyone is made in the image of God.



①④ DISCUSS

How might we treat one another differently if we all believed that humans are created in the image of God (precious, made for a special relationship with him)? Look back to the ‘Sad but true’ scenarios near the start of this lesson and describe why they are wrong if God designed the world.

①⑤ REFLECT

Highlight which of the below options best matches your gut instinct:

Humans are simply evolved animals with no intrinsic (built-in) worth or purpose.

God has created everyone precious ‘in his image’ for relationships with him and other people.

A Christian from the 4th century, Saint Augustine, said, ‘Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it’. Do you think this matches the Bible’s teaching as explored in this chapter? Why/why not?

🧠 THE QUICK VERSION

HOW DID GOD MAKE IT?

- God designed the world with BUILT-IN RIGHT AND WRONG, GOOD AND BAD. We call this an objective moral order.
- So ... God says NO TO SUBJECTIVE INDIVIDUALISM— we cannot make up right and wrong for ourselves.
- God created people ‘in his image’—EQUALLY PRECIOUS— we cannot prioritise ourselves above others.
- A key part of God’s purpose is flourishing relationships with him, each other and right enjoyment of his creation. Good = things that match this purpose.

✍️ **SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW** / Go to pages 35–36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson's section.

LESSON 6

THE FALL: HOW DID IT GET SO MESSED UP?

Ⓣ 1 YOU

Why do you think our world is so broken and why do people disagree so much about ethics? Note down any thoughts.

It's a pretty challenging question. Maybe you drew a blank.

Part of the Bible's explanation of why our ethics are so messed up is that we are unable and/or unwilling to do what is right.

Ⓣ 2 YOU

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?

HOW DID IT GET SO MESSED UP? THE FALL

Last week we looked at Genesis 1—people were living happily with God and one another. The following chapters give an account of where and why things went badly off track. It's a familiar story, but it is widely misunderstood.

📖 READ / GENESIS 3:1–13

It might seem that the issue here is that Adam and Eve stole some fruit they weren't allowed to eat ... like sneaking chocolate from your mother's secret stash and lying about it. If so, God seems to overreact like a tired and grumpy parent kicking them out of the garden into hardship and death. But, the issue at stake here is about much more than shoplifting fruit.

In Genesis 2:16–17 God says to the man and woman: 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die'. This is no ordinary tree. Eating from this 'tree of the knowledge of good and evil' reveals a battle about who has the right to **decide** what is good and what is evil. Instead of recognising that God had given order and purpose, Adam and Eve tried to create it for themselves.

Ⓣ 3 YOU

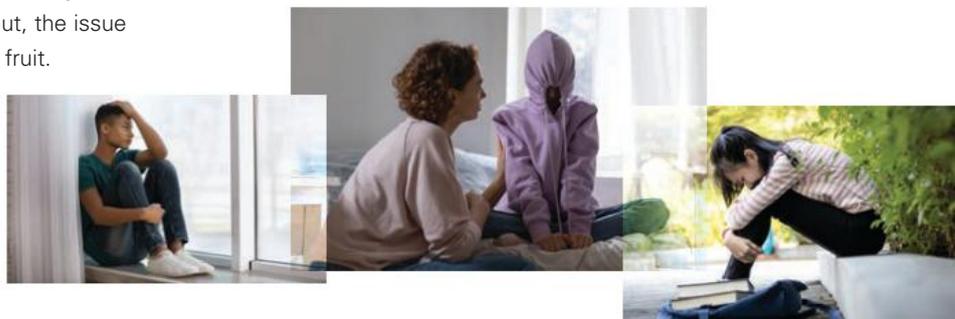
In what ways do you identify with Adam and Eve's desire? How do you want to create the rules?

Arguably not much has changed. We might say they began the subjective approach to ethics ... they'd make up the best way to live based on their own opinion, not God's revealed good.

Adam and Eve represent all of humanity, and by kicking against the established order of creation, they introduced disorder into the creation, permanently disrupting the harmony of the original design. At least two things happened here:

- ⓐ. Humanity's relationship with God went badly off course. We find ourselves unwilling to do what is best in God's eyes.
- ⓑ. Humanity's ability to see the world clearly and live in it wisely was blurred. We are often unable to know what is best in the first place (even when we're trying).

These events are known as 'The Fall' and we live in a fallen world.



EFFECT #1 FALLEN RELATIONSHIPS

📖 4 READ / GENESIS 3:7–13

If God’s design for humanity was flourishing relationships with him and other people, then the Genesis account maps a sorry tale. The story is infused with fear, shame, guilt and judgement. Look again at the words of Genesis 3:7–13.

How do Adam and Eve relate to each other after becoming the ‘determiners of right and wrong’?

How does their reaction 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 of Adam and Eve’s choice?

The final effect was that life in God’s created environment became tough. From the garden that was a safe place that provided all humanity’s needs to a world where it was hard to grow enough food and work was painful. Through the Fall, three sets of relationships were damaged—with God, with other people and with our environment.

👤 5 YOU

Not even the nicest person can avoid sin and the impact it has on relationships. Think of a time when one of your relationships was messed up by the reality that we tend to put ourselves first (it might be as simple as a time when you tackled your brother to the ground knowing it would hurt him).

⇒ 6 LIFE

Brainstorm any bigger examples of how things might go wrong in the world when people put themselves above others rather than treating others as being equal in the image of God?

EFFECT #2 THE FRACTURED HEART

🔄 7 REFLECT



CAT IN THE HAT
from *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr Seuss¹

Be who you are and say what you feel.

What are strengths and weaknesses of this motto?



PAUL
from
Romans 1:21

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.

How do the apostle Paul’s words hint at what problems might arise if we followed the Cat in the Hat’s motto? Write or draw your answer.

‘Follow your heart’ sounds like a nice idea unless our hearts are not always so nice. We saw this back in ‘Lesson 1—Introducing ethics’.

Last lesson, we heard that God made us to be ‘in his image’—precious to him, like his children, reflecting his character—but a quick look at the world shows an awful lot (including us) is out of sync with the way it was created. The idea of the Fall means everything 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. Even when we know what the right thing to do is, we often 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.

1. Dr Seuss, 1957, *The Cat in the Hat*, Houghton Mifflin Random House, New York.

CHOOSING THE GOOD

The Bible says humans are made for worshipping God and if they replace God they end up serving something else. But nothing else was ever meant to be worshipped by us or have control over our lives.

8 Many of the things in the list below (but not all) can be good. If they become the overruling force in our lives, though, or an object of our utmost loyalty and devotion, how can you see them becoming a problem?

Work **NEGLECT RELATIONSHIPS AND YOUR OWN HEALTH**

Sport _____

Travel _____

Gambling _____

Relationships _____

Money _____

The environment _____

Material goods _____

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO / 354–430 AD

A North African bishop and theologian, Augustine was a highly influential early church father. A recurrent theme in his writings is that of 'ordered loves', where he says something will always be our first love; if not God, then something else. He also wrote on original sin saying 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.

9 What do you think of Augustine's claim? Are we really that bad?

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

Many (not all) questions of what is the best way (right, good) can be clarified by asking, 'Does this treat other people as created equally precious to God?' If the answer is 'No' then it doesn't fit with God's design.

⇒ 10 LIFE

List some examples of actions that can be deemed wrong based on asking this question? Think of the alternative that does fit with God's design.

Copying a friend's assignment which gets them accused of plagiarism.

WRONG

Putting the effort in to do your own work.

RIGHT



Ⓢ 11 YOU

Have an honest moment with yourself and highlight any of these thoughts if they lurk inside your head (add any other related thoughts):

- When it comes to the crunch, I’m probably going to make decisions based on what is best for me not others.
- I may have only existed for 15, 16, 17 years or so, but I reckon I know what’s best for me more than my parents (or even God if there is one).
- I still think ‘follow your heart’ is good advice for deciding right and wrong.
- If God exists, following him will limit my happiness.
- I have hurt others by being selfish.
- Others have hurt me by being selfish.
- Sometimes I can see what is right but don’t do it.
- Sometimes I have no idea what the right thing to do is.
- Life would be chaos if everyone in this world decided to be God for themselves and did whatever they thought was right.
- I don’t want ethics to impact my freedom to do what I feel like.

Our real problem is relational and motivational. 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 define, let alone live, the best way and why every one of us is in need of redemption.

REDEMPTION = being rescued from the punishment for sin and brought back to God.

Ⓢ 12 YOU

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

FINAL THOUGHTS

THERE IS HOPE

This might feel like a pretty despairing lesson. It would be depressing to think that maybe this is the best there is. Sadly, that’s the stance of many notable atheists. Richard Dawkins in particular is famous for declaring that ‘there is at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference.’ ‘We are survival machines—robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes.’

13 What is your gut reaction to Dawkins’ view?

Many of us have an instinct that there has to be something more. God says that instinct is right. Life has fallen from how God designed it to be, but that’s not the end of the story. Next lesson we see that God entered this messy world and did something about it.



🧠 THE QUICK VERSION

— In exploring Christian ethics last week we asked [HOW DID GOD MAKE IT?](#) Today’s question was [HOW DID IT GET SO MESSED UP?](#) We have seen:

- ¶ Humanity chose to reject God’s good rule (= sIn), putting ‘I’ at the centre of their lives and deciding right and wrong for themselves.
- ¶ Our relationships with God, other people and his world are damaged.
- ¶ We are unwilling and/or unable to live God’s way.

[SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW](#) / Go to pages 35–36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson’s section.

LESSON 7

REDEMPTION: HOW DOES JESUS MAKE A DIFFERENCE NOW?

WE CAN DO IT ... OR CAN WE?

Some human achievements are pretty mind-blowing. For example, if you type 'Humans' into a search engine it comes back with 4,710,000,000 results in 0.73 seconds. Somehow that information 'flies through the air' and onto your computer quicker than you can blink. We can build 'molecular machines' a thousand times smaller than a human hair, vaccines that one by one are removing deadly viruses from the planet, and we can sit 11 kilometres in the sky watching YouTube at the speed of sound.

With all that humanity has achieved, it's understandable that many ethical theories are based on the belief that humans can sort out the relational mess of our world. But over and over again the biblical story, countless examples from history and our current world shows people mucking up their relationships with each other, with God, and generally finding it hard to work out what is best. This, as we saw last week, is the outworkings of the Fall.

⇒ 1 LIFE

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

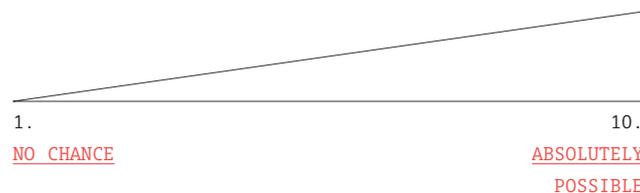
Human beings have not perfected treating one another as equally precious. We have national and international laws that say that all people should be treated with dignity, but this has never come close to being universally achieved. And we mustn't kid ourselves to think we are the exception and have achieved perfect love and respect for others.

↻ REFLECT

Think of the past week. Take a moment to consider when you were 'less than perfect' in your thoughts, actions or what you failed to do. It's not hard to see that we can never overcome the effects of the Fall. While we have moments of goodness, we are certainly faulty versions of what God intended us to be.

⊕ 2 YOU

What do you think? What are the odds of people being able to create 'heaven on earth' (or at least close to this)?



The biblical claim is that life works best if we live God's way: trusting God as Creator and King and valuing everyone as precious 'in the image of God'. However, we can't even consistently love the people closest to us let alone the rest of humanity. It becomes clear that if there is a solution it can only be provided by God himself.

REDEMPTION— THE RESCUE PLAN

Ever watched Season 1 of a show and been desperately waiting for the story to be resolved in the final episode only to find out they leave it hanging, unsolved or incomplete? So frustrating! You're left hoping they make a Season 2. Well, last lesson was like the end of Season 1 and it was a pretty depressing ending.

Is that it? Should we just accept that life sux a fair bit of the time or is there hope?

WHAT DID GOD DO?

Last lesson we introduced the term **redemption**. Fill in the missing words below for the definition (check the side note in 'Lesson 6—The Fall: How did it get so messed up?' if you need).

REDEMPTION = being _____ from the punishment for ____ and _____ back to ____.

The Bible is a story of redemption. Its many diverse books mesh together to tell one story: that of God's rescue plan to reverse the curse of sin and bring people back into a right relationship with Him.

After the depressing end of 'Season 1' with the Fall, 'Season 2' is the story of redemption, beginning with the call of Abraham in Genesis Chapter 12. God sets about restoring relationships by re-establishing his perfect rule and design, first through Israel, then through Jesus to the rest of the world and into eternity.

③ Consider a summary of how this redemption plays out by filling these gaps using the upside-down words underneath. The first one is done for you.

Creation =

perfect relationships

The Fall =

Abraham =

Israel =

Jesus =

Christianity =

New creation =

—redemption begins
—redeemed to live under God's good rule
—redemption goes worldwide
—broken relationships
—restored to perfect relationships
—died and rose to restore relationships

THE GREAT SWAP

The focus of God's plan of redemption is Jesus. He begins the restoration of all the relationships broken at the Fall. But he does much more than that. He allows us back into the perfect creation—what the Bible calls the new creation. And, strangely, he achieves it by his death.

God put the sins of us onto Jesus, his own Son whom he sent into the world, so that we would not die, but live with God. The Fall is reversed. Our relationship with God can be restored. Our relationship with other people can be restored. And our relationship with the creation itself can be restored. Things are still messy but not hopeless.

LIVING IN THE LIGHT OF THE RESCUE

📖 ④ READ / LUKE 7:36–50

Compare the responses of Simon the Pharisee and the woman to Jesus.

THE PHARISEE

THE WOMAN

The Bible's approach to ethics can't be separated from its view of our relationship with God and other people. We can either be like the woman, who knew her relationship with God needed healing, or we can be like Simon, who denied needing any help.

Reflect on verse 47. 'But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.' What do you think Jesus meant by this?



RESPONSE—TOWARDS RESTORATION

FORGIVENESS

⇒ 5 LIFE

Consider the relationships below. What needs to be done to bring healing and restore a healthy relationship? What would prevent healing?

- Mr Johnson mistakenly punishes Gus for disrupting his class.
- Gabby posts a photo on Instagram that she knows will embarrass her friend, Lucy.
- Lachlan wants to know God but is aware of all of the stuff-ups in his life.
- Evie lied to her parents about where she was on Saturday night.
- Gerry was forcibly taken from her Aboriginal parents as a child.
- Declan has admitted to his wife that he has been unfaithful to her.
- Boris says he is a Christian, but his friends know he regularly lies to them.

Where wrong has been done, both repentance (admitting wrong and turning from that wrong) and forgiveness are essential.

Ⓧ 6 YOU

Consider an occasion in your life where you needed to be forgiven? What would have happened if that forgiveness didn't occur?

How about an occasion where you needed to forgive someone? What would have happened if you hadn't offered that forgiveness?

What happens if someone apologises but doesn't actually repent (That is, stop the behaviour)?

COSTLY LOVE

Our own experience of messed-up relationships will no doubt show that even when forgiveness is offered and received, wrong actions still have consequences. Forgiveness doesn't delete all these consequences. Either the victim absorbs the pain of the wrongdoing or the person responsible faces justice (a fair punishment) ... or both.

REPENTANCE OR REJECTION

📖 7 READ

In Luke's biography of Jesus we read the story of what may have been the first person to understand God's offer of redemption and respond rightly.

✚
LUKE
from
Luke
23:38-43

³⁸ There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. ³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: 'Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' ⁴⁰ But the other criminal rebuked him. 'Don't you fear God', he said, 'since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong'. ⁴² Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom'. ⁴³ Jesus answered him, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise'.

How does the first criminal treat Jesus?

What does the second criminal realise about himself (v 41a)?

What does this criminal declare about Jesus in verse 41b?

How does the criminal respond to Jesus in verse 42?

How does Jesus respond to the criminal's request (v 43)?

🗨️ 8 DISCUSS

'We can't fix what we don't know is broken.' How does this apply to our relationship with God?



RESURRECTION—NEW LIFE

The second criminal next to Jesus understood something that transforms life here and now: his death was not the end. Instead, it was the beginning of a new life where everything is once again just the way God designed it. Jesus didn't stay dead, his resurrection that first Easter Sunday is the life-transforming event for the billions of Christians who trust that through him, God's demand for justice for sin is satisfied and forgiveness is offered. By coming back to life Jesus opened up the way to a perfect future where there is no brokenness and we all relate perfectly to God, other people and properly enjoy God's restored world.

IN GOD'S PLANS, GOOD HAS A FUTURE; EVIL DOES NOT.

YOU

How does it make you feel to know you are offered forgiveness for everything you've ever done?

If it's true, how might that change how you live now?



PETER

from

1 Peter 3:18

For (Jesus) Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

LIFE

Think of one example of how relationships might change in a world free of sin.

Do you think it's possible to taste this new life now? What would be necessary?

Next lesson we'll consider how all this works together to create a 'Jesus-shaped' approach to ethics (and therefore to all of life).



THE QUICK VERSION

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- **CREATION: HOW DID GOD MAKE IT?** God designed us for flourishing relationships with himself, each other and creation.
- **FALL: HOW DID IT GET SO MESSED UP?** These relationships are damaged because we ignore God's good design.
- **REDEMPTION AND FUTURE: WHAT DID GOD DO?** Jesus (God's son) died & rose to life to offer forgiveness and eternal life.



SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW / Go to pages 35–36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson's section.



LESSON 8

A JESUS-SHAPED ETHIC



CHRIS PALEY
from
Beyond Bad

Morals are for suckers. Morals hold you back. They stop you doing what you want to and make you do things that aren't in your interests.

Paley C, 2021, *Beyond Bad: How Obsolete Morals are Holding us Back*, Coronet, London.

1 REFLECT

Write one argument agreeing with Chris Paley's view and one argument against.

FOR

AGAINST

When we reduce ethics to a set of rules, and God to the boss who sets the rules, we might empathise with Chris Paley's sense that morals prevent us living the best life. But what if, as we've seen over the past few lessons, God loves people to the point of dying for them so they can be restored to a right relationship with him? God's idea of the best life isn't following a list of rules. It's something else entirely.

WHAT NOW?—A JESUS-SHAPED ETHIC

The heart of the Bible's story of redemption is Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Let's consider each of these and their impact on living life the best way.

1. JESUS' LIFE

2 YOU

Think of someone you would like to get to know. What would you like to find out about them if you were friends?

In John 14:9, Jesus makes an incredible declaration that if people have seen him, they have seen the Father (God). Early in the course we considered ethics based on values but wondered about how to decide what values were important. Here, Jesus is claiming to perfectly represent God's values. Christians therefore, examine Jesus when they want to see what God is like.

3 YOU

Think of someone you admire. What is it that you admire about them and does that admiration have any impact on your behaviour or thinking? How do you respond to that admiration? Often we tend to imitate those we admire. Share answers.

 4 DISCUSS

Apprenticeships involve both working with an experienced person to learn a job and studying the theory of that job at TAFE, or similar. How might living as a Christian be a bit like being an apprentice?

Ethics is not *just* about knowing what decision to make at key moments; it is knowing how to live the best way all the time. Of course, none of us can do this perfectly, but we have the ultimate guide in the _____ and _____ of Jesus. Just as an apprentice looks to his trainer to know how to be a good electrician, plumber, builder, so too do Christians look to Jesus to know how to live the best way as a human.

 REFLECT

Consider one of Jesus' most famous teachings—"You have heard that it said, "Love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven ..."" Matthew 5:43-45 (NIV). This is a tough teaching, and it matters whether Jesus simply taught it or if he also lived it.

 LUKE
from
Luke 23:33-34

³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, they [the Roman soldiers] crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing'.

 Does it matter to you whether Jesus 'walked the walk' and not just 'talked the talk'? What does this say about his integrity?

RULES OR RELATIONSHIPS?

An expert in the Old Testament law once confronted Jesus and asked for him to name the single greatest commandment. Jesus' answer is wonderfully straightforward and wonderfully vague: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind". This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself". All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.' (Matthew 22:37-40 NIV)



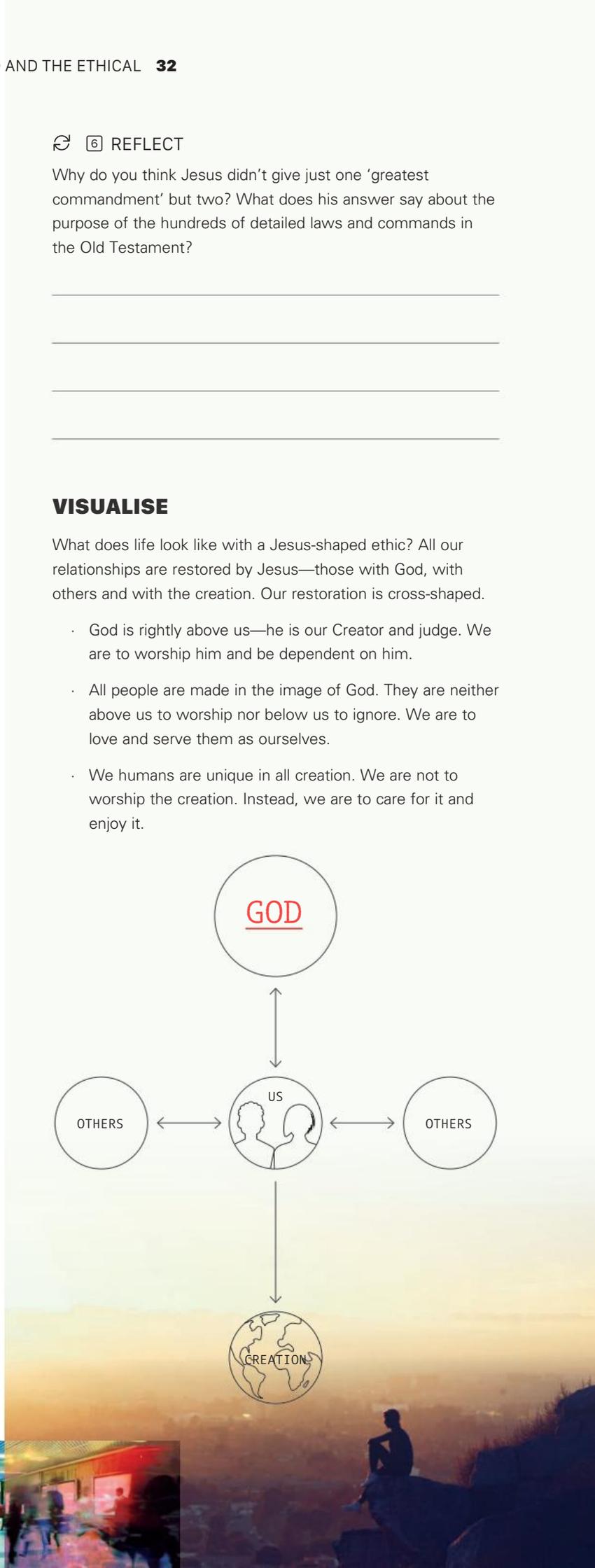
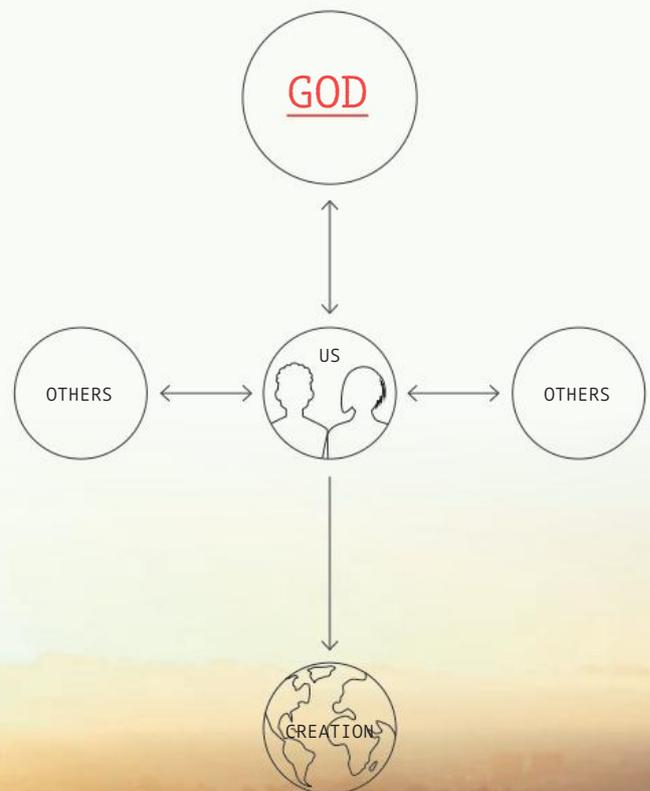
 6 REFLECT

Why do you think Jesus didn't give just one 'greatest commandment' but two? What does his answer say about the purpose of the hundreds of detailed laws and commands in the Old Testament?

VISUALISE

What does life look like with a Jesus-shaped ethic? All our relationships are restored by Jesus—those with God, with others and with the creation. Our restoration is cross-shaped.

- God is rightly above us—he is our Creator and judge. We are to worship him and be dependent on him.
- All people are made in the image of God. They are neither above us to worship nor below us to ignore. We are to love and serve them as ourselves.
- We humans are unique in all creation. We are not to worship the creation. Instead, we are to care for it and enjoy it.



2. JESUS' DEATH

Last lesson we saw that Jesus' death was how God made a way for sinful people to be forgiven without compromising his justice. As both God and the perfect human, Jesus was able to absorb the punishment deserved by people so that they could be forgiven and restored to a right relationship with God. Therefore, it's only natural that a key part of a Jesus-shaped ethic will be forgiveness and justice.

FORGIVENESS

Ⓢ 7 YOU

Why do you think examples of forgiveness appeal to people?

⇒ 8 LIFE

Brothers Joel (18) and Tim (16) have always been close but recently they've had a series of massive fights. Both feel like they never want to speak to the other again. If Joel and Tim refuse to forgive one another, describe the impact on them and others in their family. Then describe the alternative, where forgiveness shapes their actions.

UNFORGIVENESS	FORGIVENESS

Ⓢ 9 YOU

Although revenge makes for good Hollywood entertainment, when it comes to our own lives, mercy (not getting what we deserve) and forgiveness is what we desire. How much do you agree?

1. ABSOLUTELY 5. DISAGREE COMPLETELY

In God's big purpose for humanity, flourishing relationships are central. Since we all instinctively put ourselves first, forgiveness is a powerful and distinctive characteristic of a Jesus-shaped ethic.

JUSTICE

Ⓢ 10 YOU

Think of an occasion where you feel you were treated unfairly. Was it made right? If not, how do you feel about that injustice?

⇒ LIFE

With the people near you share an example of a bigger injustice you see in the world—now or in history.

We can judge by the number of petitions that people share on social media that there is a sense of a lot of injustice in the world and a great desire to address that injustice. People have diverse views of what is right or wrong, but many people want something done about whatever they perceive to be wrong or unfair. The fact that a lot of injustice is never made right on earth—people getting away with crime due to lack of evidence; governments letting themselves off the hook after acting corruptly; the media ignoring great suffering in a particular nation so there is no international help—only makes us long for justice all the more. Jesus' death affirms our longing for justice. Last lesson we saw that by dying on the cross Jesus took the punishment for the injustices of this world (including those done by us) and made a way for all wrongs to be brought to an end. Knowing this, Christians are compelled to aspire to justice where possible here on earth, in particular speaking for the voiceless and vulnerable.

Ⓢ 11 YOU

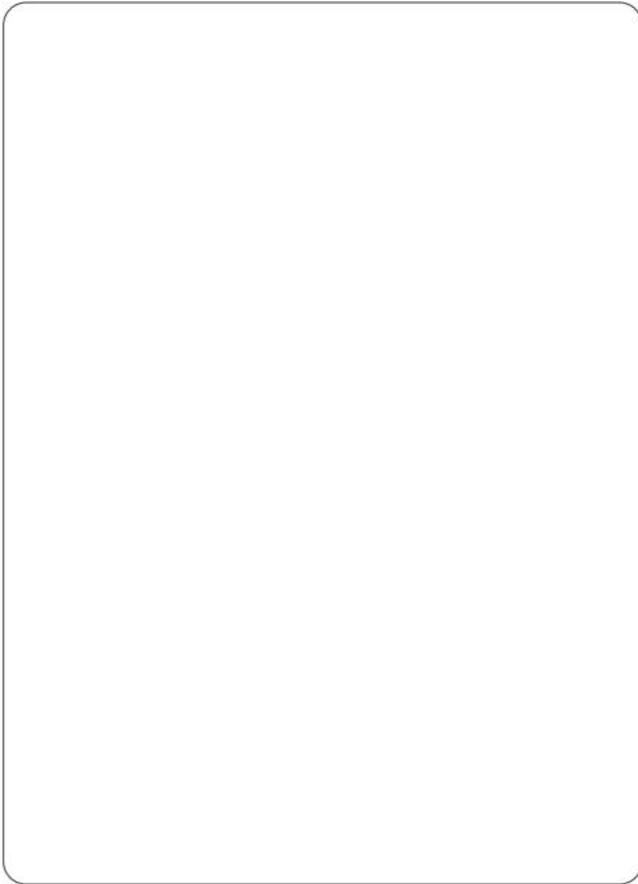
Consider the example of injustice you came up with: what do you think should be done? How successful do you think human efforts could be?

Forgiveness and justice are deep desires within us. We are moved when we see examples of forgiveness and we hate it when injustice triumphs. The Christian believes these longings come from God. But when we cry out for justice, we must remember that we are all deserving of God's judgement. When we cry out for God's justice, we must also cry out for God's forgiveness.

3. JESUS' RESURRECTION

① ② YOU

Draw someone dreaming of their destiny.



① ③ REFLECT

If you felt destined to be a professional musician how would that impact your daily decisions? If you feel your purpose is to be a doctor volunteering in poverty-stricken countries how will that impact you now?



If you know you have a purpose or destiny then it shapes your actions and attitudes here and now. Because Jesus rose from the dead, Christians are confident that his promise of redemption is trustworthy. They trust in an eternal future with a perfect relationship with God—no separation from him, no doubt about his goodness and love—and where relationships with other people are not damaged by lies, mistrust, selfishness or revenge.



PETER

from

2 Peter 3:13

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

As we negotiate our way through life, the Christian hope in this future provides motivation for action and attitudes here and now that reflect the future renewal of all things. In God's plans, good has a future; evil does not.

① ④ DISCUSS

If you believed your purpose and destiny was to live in a right relationship with God and others for eternity how would that impact your daily decisions?

THE QUICK VERSION

The challenge for biblical ethics is there isn't always a 'quick version' for knowing what is best. Not even the most mature Christian can claim to always know what God wants us to do or think about an ethical situation. A great help in discerning the best way is to consider the big picture of the Bible—how God made the world, how it got messed up and how God brought redemption through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

In the opening chapters of this course, we tested out various ethical theories and slogans like 'If it's good for me, it's good' (hedonism), or 'The end justifies the means' (consequentialism). However, these approaches could be viewed as too simplistic and fail to deal with the wonderful and challenging complexity of life.

So, it doesn't make sense to conclude this exploration of biblical ethics with a 'quick version'. Instead, in the final lesson of your Student handbook is a 'toolkit' of questions that can help you evaluate different life issues from the biblical perspective. For convenience, we will call this approach a Jesus-shaped ethic.



SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW / Go to pages 35–36 of your Student handbook to fill out this lesson's section.

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

LESSON 1-INTRODUCING ETHICS

1 Ethics is about ...

2 Write a very brief dialogue between you and a friend where you say something objective, and they reply with a subjective comment.

LESSON 2-INDIVIDUALISM

The Principal decides that unrestrained individualism should be the approach of the school. Describe what your classmates (and yourself) might do now if they were hedonists, romanticists or rationalists.

Hedonists:

Romanticists:

Rationalists:

LESSON 3-RULES VS RESULTS

Batman believes killing is never OK. Describe what might eventuate for Gotham City if he kept this rule (deontology) or if he decided his actions based on results (consequentialism).

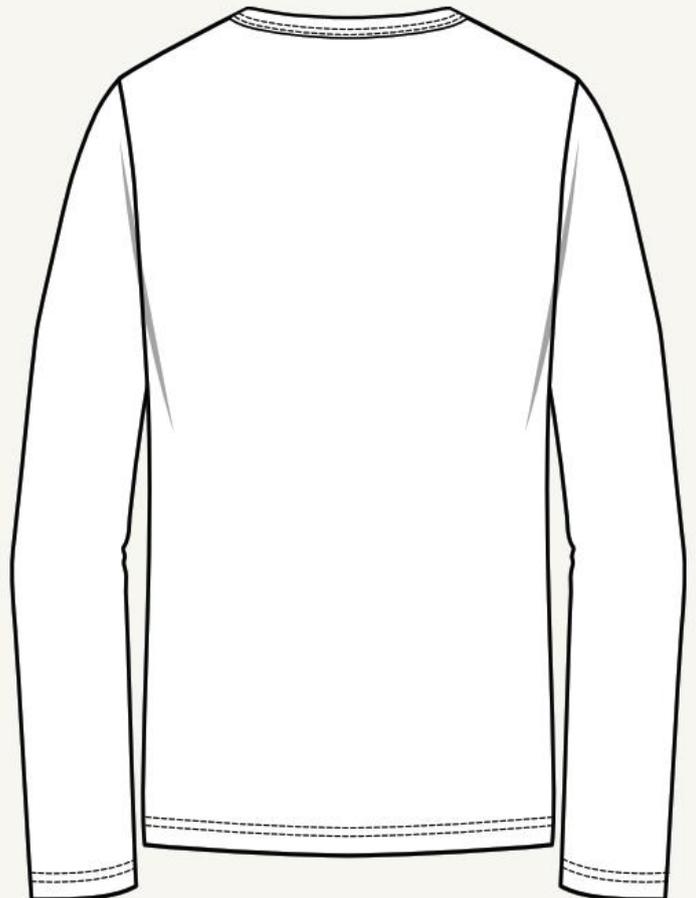
LESSON 4-VALUES AND VIRTUES

One value missing from the Department of Education list is forgiveness. Describe a situation where forgiveness would be a great value (or virtue) to possess.

LESSON 5-CREATED: HOW GOD MADE IT

God designed the world with a built-in pattern of right and wrong. He also designed every person as precious in his image.

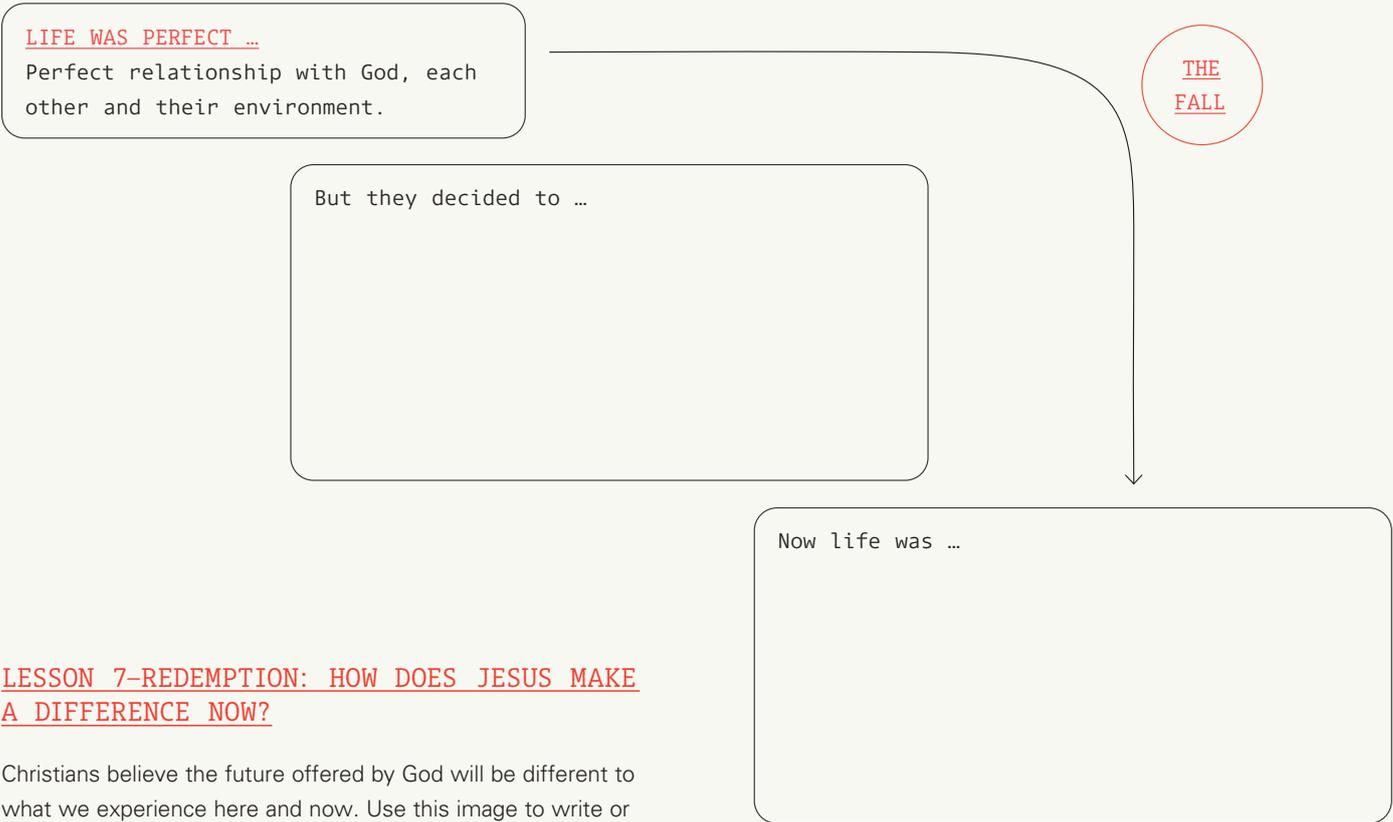
Design a Year 12-style jersey with both a distinctive pattern and the words 'Image of God'.



SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

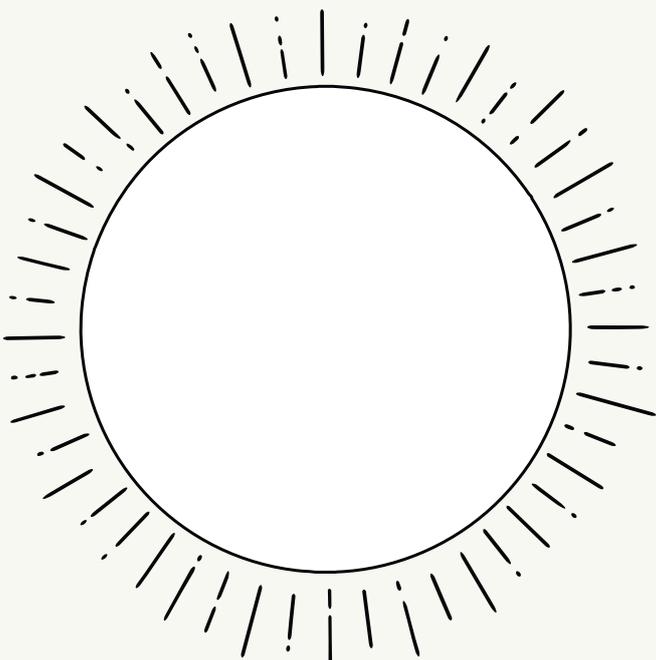
LESSON 6-THE FALL: HOW DID IT GET SO MESSED UP?

Christians have termed the events of Genesis 3 as 'The Fall'. Represent this idea by finishing the captions that show the Fall from things being great ... to not so great.



LESSON 7-REDEMPTION: HOW DOES JESUS MAKE A DIFFERENCE NOW?

Christians believe the future offered by God will be different to what we experience here and now. Use this image to write or draw things that will be left behind in eternal life with God.



LESSON 8-A JESUS-SHAPED ETHIC

Match the headings with the key implications for ethics.

JESUS'
LIFE

JESUS'
DEATH

JESUS'
RESURRECTION

justice and forgiveness

shapes our future now

example and teaching

LESSON 9

WAR

NICK_RAILLE_07 / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

LIFE AND DEATH

As we begin looking at the application of ethics to big life issues, we see that knowing the best or right way requires us to do some hard mental work and be seriously reflective ... especially if it's a life-or-death issue like war!

WAR OR NOT?

The ethical issue of when, and if, a country might decide to go to war has always been difficult and important. After all, the consequences of such decisions are enormous. Let's consider some of the different approaches to ethics from all the way back in 'Part 1: Ethical systems'. Each one raises questions as well as contributing ideas.

 1 DISCUSS

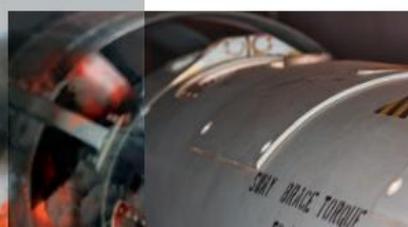
Individualism suggests that 'if it's good for me, it's good'.
Collectivism says the good of the majority is more important.
 What might a conversation between a devoted individualist and a collectivist look like when asked about going to war?

 2 REFLECT

The slogan 'the end justifies the means' is associated with *consequentialist* ethics. Describe a couple of consequences that could arise from this view in the issue of war.

 3 YOU

Some people base their ethical choices on certain values. What values might guide someone to go to war? What values might lead to rejection of war.

GO TO WARREJECTION OF WAR

AI AND LAWS

In this course, we've repeatedly seen real-life scenarios reveal that if right and wrong is up to individuals to decide, then evaluating decisions like war, which may affect thousands of individuals, is complicated.

More complications enter due to the increasing involvement of AI (artificial intelligence) in warfare; in particular, LAWs (lethal autonomous weapons).

REFLECT

1—What problems might arise from using LAWs?

2—What is appealing about the use of LAWs compared to historical warfare methods (for example, bombing of cities and soldiers in combat)?

3—LAWs are able to kill based on profiling. So, who gets to determine the 'bad guys'? What conditions should be used?

4—All users of the internet 'give away' huge amounts of data about themselves such as their political views, celebrities they like, where they study, their religion. Of course, our phone usage also means our location is constantly known. LAWs can target people using such data. Those programming LAWs might decide that people who support a certain political party are 'the bad guys' and target them. How might this impact freedoms such as free speech and diversity of opinions?

PACIFISM VS MILITARISM

One way to simplify the decision about war is to hold hard and fast to a pacifist or militarist approach.

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 are protected.

The continuum below represents the contrast between pacifism and militarism. Mark a line to indicate your position on the issue.



JESUS-SHAPED PACIFISTS?

In 'Part 2: A brief introduction to biblical ethics' we considered Jesus' teaching to 'love your enemies'; it can be difficult to reconcile this instruction with going to war in order to kill and destroy. Some Christians have therefore taken a pacifist stance, renouncing all actions of war as counter to the words of Jesus. What do you think? Is it that simple or are there other parts of the Bible that lean to a more pro-war view? Show where you think a Jesus-shaped ethic might sit between *pacifism* and *militarism*.



JUST WAR THEORY

6 The biblical analysis of two Christian theologians and philosophers, Augustine (354–430 AD) and Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274 AD), has been combined and boiled down into what is known as ‘Just War Theory’. This has often been the approach the church has taken, rejecting the extremes of both 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.

<p><u>1. Just cause</u></p> <p>War may be waged in self-defence or to deal with a grave public evil, such as massive violation of human rights. <input type="radio"/></p>	<p><u>2. Competent authority</u></p> <p>Only a duly constituted public authority within a political system that allows for genuine justice may declare war. This excludes, for example, military regimes that are neither elected and/or oppress true justice. <input type="radio"/></p>
<p><u>3. Right intention</u></p> <p>This relates to the motive for action—it must involve striving for justice and peace and not stem from hatred and malice. <input type="radio"/></p>	<p><u>4. Probability of success</u></p> <p>Force must not be used when chances of success are very poor—success must be probable. <input type="radio"/></p>
<p><u>5. Last resort</u></p> <p>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. <input type="radio"/></p>	<p><u>6. Proportionality</u></p> <p>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. <input type="radio"/></p>
<p><u>7. The means must be absolutely necessary to achieve the end.</u></p> <p>We must ask whether the whole exercise would be worthwhile given the suffering and loss it is likely to create. <input type="radio"/></p>	

Write 'A' next to the points that relate to reasons for going to war. Write 'B' next to the points directing the way in which a war may be fought.

DISCUSS

Of the seven points to the left, highlight what you consider to be the three most important. Why these?

REFLECT

Just War Theory isn't necessarily totally different to other, secular approaches to ethics. For example, point 1 could be classified as Rules-based (deontology).

Which points of Just War Theory are related to:

RESULTS/CONSEQUENTIALISM

VALUES/MOTIVATION

Just War Theory demonstrates that the ideas of values and rules vs results are relevant considerations in discerning what is best. But the Bible says our thinking needs to be bigger.



EHAB OTHMAN / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

MATT LEANE / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



GOLDEN BROWN / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

JESUS-SHAPED ETHIC AND WAR?

9 The first column of the table below summarises some of what we have seen about the elements of a Jesus-shaped ethic. Use the table to consider how the Creation, Fall, Redemption aspects of the Jesus-shaped ethic could be used to determine whether war is appropriate.

Big picture of the Bible	Reason(s) war might be appropriate	Reason(s) war might be the wrong choice
<p>CREATION</p> <p>Human beings are all equally precious, created for loving relationships with God and one another. There is objective right and wrong built into the world and it's decided by God.</p>		
<p>FALL</p> <p>The world is fallen—people have evil desires, do selfish things, and don't always make the best decisions. Relationships are messy and broken (on a personal and global scale).</p>		
<p>REDEMPTION</p> <p>We saw that Jesus' life, death and resurrection made an entryway to an everlasting future free from all violence and conflict. One day there will be no war, but the brokenness is not gone yet.</p>		

⇒ 10 LIFE

In light of your reflections in the table, how might a Christian respond if told they had to join the army and go off to war? Explain your answer.

THE QUICK VERSION

11 While it is nice to have clear-cut answers (like pacifism or militarism or rules versus results), war is arguably too complex a subject for that. Asking Jesus-shaped ethic questions helps us avoid a simplistic answer to a problem that really is a life and death issue on a grand scale. Instead, we can start to form appropriately nuanced and sophisticated approaches to life's ongoing ethical issues.

YOUR TAKE-AWAY

What is one thing you'll take away from this lesson?

YOUR QUESTIONS

Do you have any remaining questions?





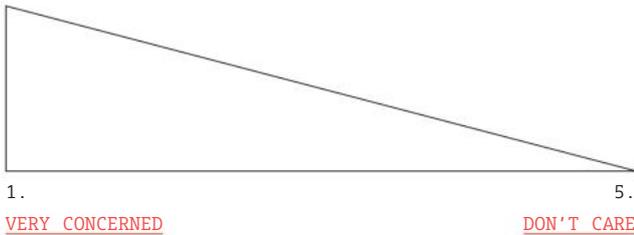
PHOTO BY SEBASTIAN PICHLER ON UNSPLASH

LESSON 10

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

1 YOU

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



AN UNAVOIDABLE PROBLEM

Issues surrounding environmental ethics are considered by many to be some of the most important that we face today. Fifty 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 'for the planet'.

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

2 YOU

Ethics is about living the best way—discerning good vs bad, right vs wrong—as we make our way through life. Do you consider care of the environment to be related to ethics? Why/Why not?

3 DISCUSS

Are issues only 'ethical issues' if they directly impact humans? Why/Why not?

4 YOU

What attitude do you think we should adopt regarding our planet? (Tick the one you most relate to.)

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

REFLECT

What other possible attitudes are there?



SAVE SHREK'S SWAMP!

In 2019 thousands of students joined in mass 'school strikes' to raise the issue of climate change. Students marched with posters bearing slogans like 'This is our future', 'You'll die of old age, I'll die of climate change', 'There is no Planet B' (along with 'Save Shrek's swamp').

⇒ 5 DISCUSS

What concerns are revealed in slogans like these (other than the concern for Shrek)?

⇒ 6 LIFE

Early in the course we looked at the way people can base their ethics on a variety of things like consequences, values and rights. Thinking back to these, what might motivate people to an ethic of caring for the environment?

CONSEQUENCES

VALUES

RIGHTS

⇒ 7 LIFE

Consider someone who essentially favours a hedonistic approach to ethical issues ('good for me = good' 'Lesson 2- Individualism'). Describe in the space below how their life might look in terms of their impact on the environment. Consider their attitude to recycling, other species, and use of energy, water and fuel. Think about how they might make decisions regarding consumer goods, waste disposal, their local environment and their attitude to global ecological issues. (Draw symbols or pictures if you prefer.)



Ⓢ YOU

Consider your own family and lifestyle. Give your household a rating out of 10 for each of the following items in terms of what you think is the 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 or fly on holidays).
- ___ Electricity consumption (think of charging electronic devices, heating, air conditioners, lighting, washing machines, dryers, etc).
- ___ Water usage (do you love a long shower?).
- ___ Plastics and other non-biodegradable products.
- ___ Chemicals and pesticides.
- ___ Garbage, recycling.
- ___ The number of consumer goods in your home.
- ___ How much clothing or other large stuff you throw out.

🔄 REFLECT

How do you feel about your assessment of your home?

📌 SIDENOTE ——— THE BIBLE AND CREATION

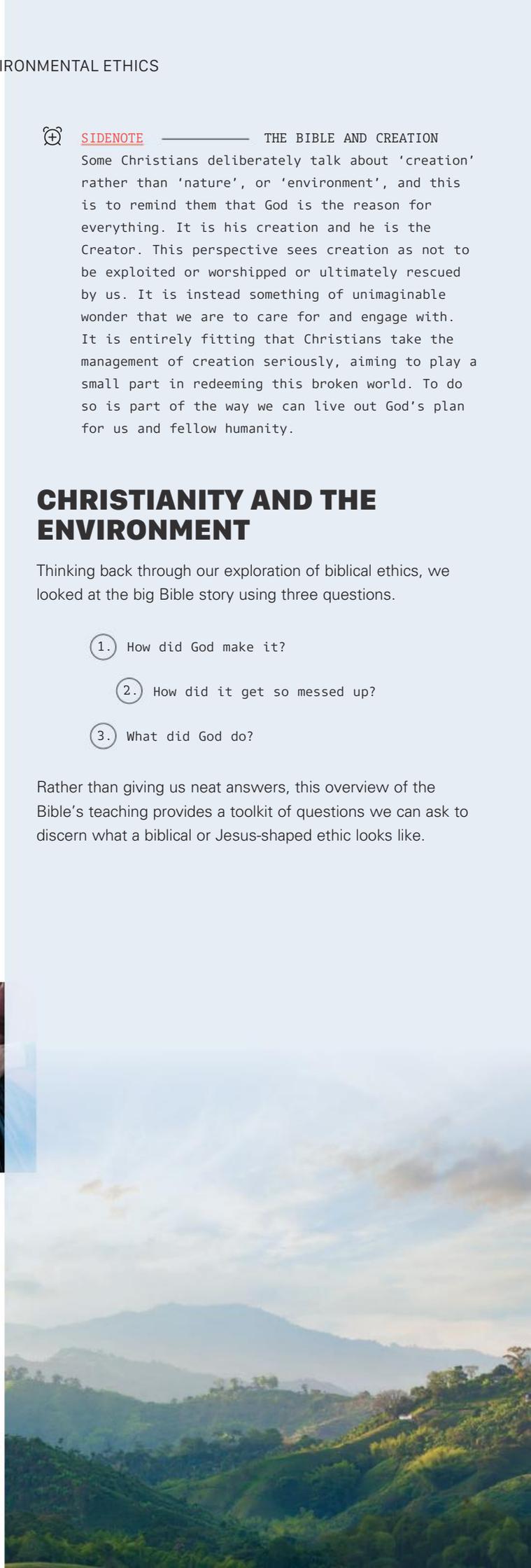
Some Christians deliberately talk about 'creation' rather than 'nature', or 'environment', and this is to remind them that God is the reason for everything. It is his creation and he is the Creator. This perspective sees creation as not to be exploited or worshipped or ultimately rescued by us. It is 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 part of the way we can live out God's plan for us and fellow humanity.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Thinking back through our exploration of biblical ethics, we looked at the big Bible story using three questions.

1. How did God make it?
2. How did it get so messed up?
3. What did God do?

Rather than giving us neat answers, this overview of the Bible's teaching provides a toolkit of questions we can ask to discern what a biblical or Jesus-shaped ethic looks like.



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JESUS-SHAPED ETHIC AND THE ENVIRONMENT

🔄 REFLECT

CREATION / How did God make it?

🗨️ Questions to consider ... Whose world is it? What was it like at the start? What job did God give humanity?

IN SUMMARY / God made the world and declared it to be good. In Genesis chapter 1 we learn that God made humans as his precious creation ('in his image'). They were to rule over it and take care of it. This world 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 love others and please him.

THE FALL / How did it get so messed up?

🗨️ Questions to consider ... What do our hearts default to wanting? How are we at treating others as equally precious to us? Will my actions (regarding the environment) negatively impact others? Do I care?

IN SUMMARY / The problem of the environment has partly arisen from human hearts. In the Fall, humanity rebelled against God and an aspect of the rebellion is that people began to use creation for whatever they felt like without thought for others or the natural world or for its creator. People's rule over creation has frequently been characterised by selfishness, cruelty, greed and exploitation. In Genesis 3:17-18 God paints a picture of how sin also led to the environment itself being fallen, which we experience in what we describe as 'natural disasters'.

REDEMPTION AND FUTURE / What did God do?

🗨️ Questions to consider ... How can caring for the environment be an act of love? What might pursuit of fairness and justice (regarding the environment) look like? How does Jesus' resurrection bring hope? Why don't we need to be worried to the point of anxiety about the environment?

IN SUMMARY / Jesus' death and resurrection brings forgiveness for our messed-up hearts and relationships. However, it means not just eternal life for those who trust him, but a day when God will renew our whole broken world. Jesus' gift of eternal life means a gift of an eternal creation in which to live that life. We are freed from anxiety. In the meantime, Jesus calls us to pursue love for others which includes understanding the way our actions impact others. It is frequently the poor who suffer first when the environment is damaged.

🗨️ THE QUICK VERSION

1️⃣ A Jesus-shaped ethic compels us to care for our environment, even while we confidently wait for the new creation where everything will be restored. Enjoying God's creation in a way that is responsible, and considers the impact on others, is a way of showing love to him and to others.

YOUR TAKE-AWAY

What is one thing you'll take away from this lesson?

YOUR QUESTIONS

Are there any questions you still have on this issue?



LESSON 11

HUMAN RIGHTS

LIFE ON MARS

1 Imagine it's 2035 and billionaire Elon Musk's SpaceX has succeeded in its mission to begin colonising Mars. You are part of a group sent to the red planet 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 grow on Mars.

In groups, discuss and list five human rights you consider necessary.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____



JPL-CALTECH/NASA



DISCUSS

Was there disagreement among your group about what should be on the list? How did you decide whose opinion was best?

As of 2021, SpaceX seems the most likely group to achieve colonisation of Mars. Elon Musk considers it essential that humans become a 'multi-planetary' species: 'If something goes wrong with planet Earth', he states, 'that's it. It's game over.'

Musk doesn't believe in any God and one thing that is missing from his discussions of this Mars project is what rights, responsibilities and principles will exist in a Martian society. And what their basis will be.

YOU

Do you think a peaceful, fair and happy society on Mars could exist with people who have different views of right and wrong? Explain why or why not?

Why should there even be any human rights on Mars? After all, it's not Earth. It's a completely different planet!

1. Bensaïd, A 2020, 'Elon Musk's astonishing mission to colonise Mars: here's how he'll do it', *TRT World*, December 10 2021, viewed November 16 2021, <<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/elon-musk-s-astonishing-mission-to-colonise-mars-here-s-how-he-ll-do-it-42246>>.

HUMAN RIGHTS

3 Where communities exist, certain rights exist. Your school has the right to expel you if you break certain rules. You have rights too, such as the right not to be bullied in the playground.

Across the globe some rights are given particular status. These are known as human rights.

In 1948, representatives from 46 nations agreed to sign the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is a document based on the belief that people have 'fundamental human rights' due to 'the dignity and worth of the human person and the equal rights of men and women ...'²

Here is a sample of the human rights statements from the declaration. Give a score between 1 and 5 to show how important you think they are (5 = very, 1 = not at all).

THE RIGHT:

- ___ to life
- ___ to liberty
- ___ to be free from slavery or involuntary servitude
- ___ to be free from torture
- ___ to free and full consent in choosing one's spouse
- ___ to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion
- ___ to change one's religion or belief
- ___ to manifest, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, one's religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance
- ___ to be presumed innocent until proven guilty
- ___ to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution
- ___ to freedom of opinion and expression
- ___ to take part in government
- ___ to have the will of the people as the basis of the authority of government, expressed in periodic and genuine elections
- ___ to receive an education.

⇒ 4 LIFE

Describe situations in the 21st century that involve a violation of these human rights.



2. United Nations, 1948, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, viewed November 16 2021, <www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>.

DISTORTED FREEDOM

Read the news on any given day and you will find examples of these human rights being broken. One challenge is that when people have the right to ‘freedom of thought, conscience and religion’, they then have the freedom to disagree with other human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not legally binding, that is, even countries who have signed it can’t be forced to protect these rights for their people.

DISCUSS

Every country should be forced to make the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into law.

TRUE TO YOUR PRINCIPLES

Democracy, equal rights for men and women, freedom to convert to any religion, free speech and many other human rights seem obviously ‘right’ (ethical) to most of us. But if right and wrong are subjective (up to individuals to decide) then it is hard to justify imposing laws on other nations. Who are we to tell other governments that their laws are unethical or unjust?

In 2021, the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan and began re-introducing Sharia law (which is based on the Qur’an and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed). These laws reduced the freedoms and protections of women. The new leaders also reportedly executed opponents without trials. The world was in uproar. They declared these actions to be wrong. But the Taliban acted according to their religious beliefs, convinced their actions honour their God. They believe Sharia is the best way to live and govern. Senior commander Waheedullah Hashimi stated, ‘Islamic government will be guided by Islamic law, not the principles of democracy’.³ Many citizens (Muslim and non-Muslim) don’t agree with this approach to government and immediately voiced concerns, even panic.

3. Ibrahim A 2021, ‘Explainer: The Taliban and Islamic law in Afghanistan’, *Aljazeera*, August 23 2021, viewed November 17 2021 <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/23/hold-the-taliban-and-sharia-law-in-afghanistan>>.

KARL ALLEN LUGMAYER / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



LIFE

Write a letter to the editor of a major newspaper arguing that the Taliban’s actions are wrong. How would you justify your view?

THE BOOK THAT SHAPED YOUR WORLD

Whether you are Christian or not, the nations who have legal systems based on the Declaration of Human Rights are societies heavily influenced by the Bible’s teaching. This is obvious in the extract below which is one of the most famous summaries of individual human rights—the American Declaration of Independence.



IN CONGRESS,
JULY 4, 1776

The unanimous
Declaration of the
thirteen united
States of America

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.

REFLECT

Underline the basis for human rights according to the American Declaration of Independence. What difference does this statement make to how you view yourself and others?

LIFE

Despite the fact it is not legally binding, some nations have adopted much of the Declaration of Human Rights as a basis for national laws. Look again at the list of human rights and tick the ones you think have become laws in countries such as Australia, England or the US.

A JESUS-SHAPED ETHIC AND HUMAN RIGHTS

To consider the relationship between biblical ethics and human rights, we ask some of our 'toolkit' questions related to the big picture of the Bible: Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and the culmination of it all in Jesus.

CREATION—HOW DID GOD MAKE YOU?

Ⓢ 9 YOU

Recall the phrase that encapsulates God's view of people:

God's view of people is that they are made
in the _____ of _____.

Repeatedly we've discussed that the teaching that humans are all created in the image of God is an essential part of a biblical ethic meaning we all have intrinsic (built-in, undeniable) worth. Consequently the biblical ethic tends to align closely with the movement for human rights, indicating that the rights of the poor, outcast and vulnerable are of equal importance to those of the wealthy and privileged.

Can you think of an example where Jesus treated the poor, sick or needy with love or taught others to do so?

THE FALL—HOW COME IT'S SO MESSED UP?

⇒ 10 LIFE

Why do we need a document to spell out fundamental things that seem like they should be self-evident, such as the equal value of men and women or the right to be free of torture?

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

REDEMPTION AND FUTURE

1 Peter 2:24 says, 'Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins (self-centredness) and live for righteousness (other-person centredness)'. His death was ultimately to achieve eternal justice and forgiveness, but

the Bible also describes that it should have an impact on the behaviour of Christians here and now.

↻ 11 REFLECT

Given this call to other-person centredness, what attitude should Jesus' followers have to human rights?

JESUS-SHAPED ANSWER

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection the Bible teaches that there will be a day in the future when justice will be done and those who have violated others' rights will be punished. It is natural, therefore, for Jesus' followers to share this concern in seeking freedom from oppression for those who are treated as less than precious to God. In the meantime, God wants his people to share his concern for those who are treated as less than precious to God (Isaiah 1:17; Micah 6:8).

Ⓢ 12 YOU

What is one way you could pursue justice for those whose human rights are abused?

🧠 THE QUICK VERSION

13 For the Christian, human rights are not optional guidelines based on a majority opinion; they are based on the intrinsic worth of all people as created in the image of God and Jesus' own sacrificial love and concern for justice. This means Christians are to treat others as they would want to be treated, which is exactly what Jesus commands in Matthew 22:39.

YOUR TAKE-AWAY

What is one thing you'll take away from this lesson?

YOUR QUESTIONS

Are there any questions you still have on this issue?

LESSON 12

COMPASSION

BEYOND WORDS—COMPASSION AND MERCY

What does compassion mean?

While a thesaurus suggests words like 'empathy, sympathy, pity and concern' as synonyms for compassion, they lack the essential aspect of **compassion**—action. Compassion doesn't mean just feeling sorry for people; compassion means taking action for their good. We'll also be talking about **mercy**—compassion in action by showing unearned love and kindness.

PEOPLE IN NEED?

1 In the box below, brainstorm as many groups of people/ types of individuals as you can who might be vulnerable or in need of compassion and mercy in modern society.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

Australia's foundations are strongly influenced by Judeo-Christian ethics (ethics based on at least the Old Testament section of the Bible). 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 'Lesson 4—Values and virtues', puts 'care and compassion' at the top of the list.)

It seems kind of obvious to be compassionate towards people. Not many people would say outright, 'Stuff everyone else, let them look after themselves'. But do elements of this attitude lurk in our hearts?

While there might be occasions when we doubt the appropriateness of giving to everyone who asks us, the Bible indicates that we need to be mindful that our hearts are sinful so we can try to avoid any pressure to inconvenience ourselves for the sake of others.



SMALL TOWN
BIG WORLD /
SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



KRYSIA / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



WHY IS IT LIKE THIS?

Watch the news and you can't deny there is a lot of poverty, inequality and pain in the world, and it doesn't seem to go away. International aid efforts, charity after charity, government policy changes, education programs, royal commissions, new laws, volunteering, petitions ... they may help but they haven't eradicated the problems.

↻ REFLECT



CLIVE HAMILTON
AND
RICHARD DENNISS

Affluenza

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.

Hamilton, C & Denniss R 2005, *Affluenza*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

⇒ ② LIFE

Do you agree with the quote? There is enough wealth in Australia to adequately provide for every citizen, yet there are still people hungry and homeless. Will it ever change? Explain your view.

⇒ ③ YOU

Do you think we should care about people less fortunate than us? Why/Why not?

CLAUDINE VAN MASSENHOVE / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



⇒ ④ LIFE

Review the different secular ethics explored in this course ('Part 1: Ethical systems') and complete the table together.

Ethic	Reasons to be compassionate	Reasons to not bother
<u>HEDONISM</u>		
<u>ROMANTICISM</u>		
<u>RATIONALISM</u>		
<u>VALUES</u>		
<u>RULES</u>		
<u>RESULTS</u>		

While these approaches to ethics may (and do) produce people who devote themselves to showing compassion to others, they remain subjective. If people are free to choose for themselves what is best, then they are free to choose not to be compassionate. A study of God's word shoots down any hope that we humans can create a perfectly fair, just and equal society on earth. Yet, the Bible also presents solid hope which is found in Jesus.



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JESUS THE COMPASSIONATE MAN

Recall that living out a Jesus-shaped ethic means we are shaped by Jesus' _____ and _____.

It doesn't take long to find examples of Jesus' teaching and example of compassion and mercy to those in need.

JESUS' TEACHING—WHO DO I HAVE TO LOVE?

5 In 'Lesson 8—A Jesus-shaped ethic' we heard Jesus' answer to the question, 'What is the greatest commandment?' Jesus affirmed the Old Testament teaching of loving God ... and loving your neighbour as yourself. But people wanted to narrow down who qualified as a 'neighbour'. So, in answer to the question, 'Who is my neighbour?', Jesus told the following story:

📖 READ / LUKE 10:30–37

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'.

🔄 REFLECT

What is the main point of this story?

🗨️ 6 DISCUSS

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

In Matthew 25:31–46 Jesus warns that if people claim to love God, then this must be shown by caring for people in need. He goes as far as saying if we don't love those who are 'hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison' we are failing to love God. The 'neighbour' that we are to love according to the greatest commandment has a special focus on people who particularly need care. Luke 6:32 records Jesus making this point: 'If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them'.

➡️ 7 LIFE

Choose some examples from the list of vulnerable people you made at the start of the lesson. What might it look like to show 'Jesus-shaped' compassion to them?

JESUS' EXAMPLE—LOVING THE UNLOVED

We'd need days to examine all the examples in the Bible of Jesus showing compassion to the poor, crippled, untouchable, prostitutes, despised, foreigners, God-haters, hungry, lonely, enemy soldiers, criminals, women, children and men.

Consider this one example from Matthew 20:30–34.

³⁰ 'Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" ... ³² Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. ³³ "Lord", they answered, "we want our sight". ³⁴ Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.'

📖 8 READ

Where in this passage do you see the two key words of this lesson?

As the perfect man, Jesus taught and showed us how to live with compassion and mercy in the brokenness of this world. But the world needs more than an inspirational teacher and example.

JESUS THE COMPASSIONATE GOD

9 Jesus' life certainly is an inspiration to be compassionate, and some people want to leave it at that: Jesus the humanitarian, the great moral teacher. But what about ourselves?

Jesus offers much more than a good example. As God, he is able to open the way to a future, a new creation (which we often call heaven). It is not just 'people out there' that need compassion and mercy. The Bible says that anyone who has ever sinned needs God's mercy to be granted forgiveness and welcomed into a life free of all brokenness. All of us need God's compassion.

REFLECT

When you think of heaven, what do you think it should/will be like?

READ

What are two key characteristics about the new creation found in these verses from the last page of the Bible?

JOHN
from
Revelation
21:3-4

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away".

Even with the greatest efforts of compassion, we can't create heaven on earth. But that doesn't mean we give up being compassionate. A Jesus-shaped ethic means seeking to bring as much as possible of the future good to life here and now. Jesus shows us the best way to live among the brokenness of our world while we wait for the new creation. An important trait of that best way is compassion.



ONE PERSON EVERY TWO SECONDS

A difficult ethical issue related to human rights and compassion is the question of the treatment of refugees. In 2020, 24 million people had to leave their home country to seek refuge from war or persecution. Another 48 million were 'internally displaced', meaning they had to flee their homes.¹ To help you get your head around the numbers, 'A staggering 42,500 people are uprooted every day. That's one person every two seconds. Half of them are children'².

COMING TO AUSTRALIA

YOU

With the exception of Indigenous Australians, all of us are the descendants of immigrants. How many generations back in your history do you have to go to find family that immigrated?

GETTING SOME THINGS STRAIGHT

1 1 Put a 'T' in the left box for true statements, or an 'F' for false in the right.

TRUE



FALSE



It is not illegal to enter Australia and seek asylum even if it is done without permission.

Since 1945, over 2.1 million refugees and displaced persons have been resettled into Australia.

As of 2019, 30% of Australian citizens are immigrants (born overseas).

Only 21% of officially approved refugees find resettlement as a citizen in a new nation.

The longest period anyone has been held in detention awaiting asylum status is two years.

Over 90% of asylum seekers who arrive without a visa are found to have genuine claims for refugee status.

1. UNHCR 2020, *Figures at a glance*, UNHCR, viewed November 16 2021, <<https://www.unhcr.org/en-au/figures-at-a-glance.html>>.
2. Johnstone, P 2016, *Serving God in a Migrant Crisis*, IVP, Downers Grove.

🔄 1 2 REFLECT

Why might someone choose to pursue other ways to find a safe home, rather than waiting for a resettlement option through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Australia’s policies have meant that many people seeking asylum have been held in detention for over eight years in offshore facilities or in Australia. Others have been permitted to live in the Australian community, but not given an opportunity to apply for a permanent refugee visa. These policies create uncertainty about the future for refugees, as they cannot plan for a stable life or reunite with family who remain overseas.

There is not a simple solution. The obligation of helping refugees must be weighed against the need to manage immigration.

⇒ 1 3 LIFE

In the space below, list two or more reasons for and against accepting refugees into our country. Consider a variety of arguments, not only ones you agree with.

REASONS FOR

REASONS AGAINST

🗨️ 1 4 DISCUSS

We’ve emphasised that compassion means taking action. What might Christians do to live out a Jesus-shaped ethic regarding refugees and asylum seekers?

Secondly, what actions are you aware of that show compassion to the poor, vulnerable and needy (other than refugees)?

‘And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.’ Micah 6:8

🕒 **THE QUICK VERSION**

1 5 The Bible is not a government policy document that spells out how to deal with refugees, the poor and other vulnerable people. As we’ve seen with other ethical issues, there can be many ‘Jesus-shaped goods’ when considering what is the best way. However, one thing is indisputable: a Jesus-shaped ethic challenges us to be people who show compassion to the vulnerable and needy. What this looks like requires constant wisdom.

YOUR TAKE-AWAY

What is one thing you’ll take away from this lesson? Start by going back through the pages, highlighting information that was new to you.

YOUR QUESTIONS

Are there any questions you still have on this issue?



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LESSON 13

LIFE ONLINE

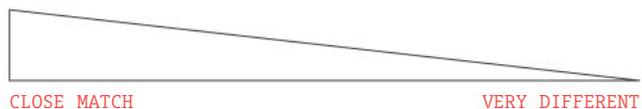
UPLOADED

REFLECT

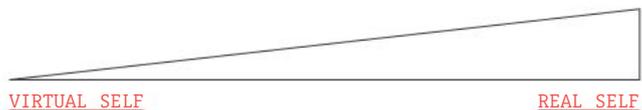
If a virtual you were created based on your social media accounts, apps and internet usage, and 'uploaded' what would you be like? Describe the characteristics your social media and internet usage would create. Consider appearance, interests, personality, dreams, emotional state, etc.

YOU

How well do you think this virtual self matches your real self, using the scale below.



Which version do you think you'd prefer? Again, use the scale below.



REFLECT



SEAN PARKER
played by
Justin Timberlake
in *The Social Network*, 2012

We lived on farms, we lived in cities, and now we're going to live on the internet.

Fincher, D (director) 2010, *The Social Network*, Columbia Pictures with Relativity Media, United States.

Do you agree with this? How much of your life is lived on the internet—not just in hours, but in the value you place on it and the headspace it consumes?

LIFE

What is easier in life online?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> looking attractive | <input type="checkbox"/> arguing your opinion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sharing feelings | <input type="checkbox"/> seeming funny |
| <input type="checkbox"/> seeming happy | <input type="checkbox"/> meeting new people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> criticising others | <input type="checkbox"/> developing relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 'checking people out' | <input type="checkbox"/> being right |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sexual acts | <input type="checkbox"/> feeling affirmed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> getting advice | <input type="checkbox"/> learning stuff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reaching out for help | <input type="checkbox"/> seeming successful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> expressing opinions | |



ON VS OFFLINE

5 What are your thoughts?

1 = True, 2 = Somewhat true, 3 = Not at all

- ___ 1. I compare myself more against online versions of people (rather than f2f).
- ___ 2. My friends seem different online.
- ___ 3. I get anxious that I'm missing out if I'm not online.
- ___ 4. I carefully analyse and/or edit my photos before I post or share them.
- ___ 5. Viewing porn isn't cheating.
- ___ 6. I can't help but check my posts for likes or nice comments. I feel good when I get lots.
- ___ 7. If people are nasty or cold online, I feel awkward seeing them f2f next time.
- ___ 8. I feel less guilty saying something nasty online than f2f.
- ___ 9. I feel more popular online.
- ___ 10. I find it easier to show my need for help online.
- ___ 11. I have felt hurt or bullied online.
- ___ 12. I find it easier to text or message friends/bf/gf than call.

6 YOU

Describe how you would feel if your access to all life online was completely cut (apps, social media, texting, etc)? Why?



CREATING MY SPACE, MY BOOK, MY WORLD, MY SELF

If the internet is our new home (to an extent) then we are the creators of it. Social media platforms are designed to put us at the centre. The first social networking site was MySpace (which got overtaken by Facebook, which will one day be overtaken by something else). MySpace was an accurate name. You are the creator of a 'space' online. It is your little world where people can visit. It's primarily about you. Social media encourages us to think that people should know and care about everything we do and think. Even our comments on other people's pages or photos can be deliberate attempts to construct an image of ourselves.

'Happy birthday, Jack, I hope you're smashed already!'



'Love you girls! Great night out!'

'Disaster road trip #carsickpuppy'



7 DISCUSS

What are these people trying to convey about themselves with their comments?

8 LIFE

Write a fictional post that is 'subtly' trying to get people's sympathy for you or trying to indirectly point out a recent sporting achievement without seeming boastful.



CC BLOOM
long before
social media,
in the hit movie
of 1988 *Beaches*

Enough about me, let's talk about you. What do you think of me?

Marshall, G (director) 1988, *Beaches*, Touchstone Pictures with Silver Screen Partners IV and All Girl Productions, United States.

9 DISCUSS

Does social media risk encouraging this kind of self-focused communication?

Do you think people worry about what people think of them online ... even while trying to seem like they don't?

PLEASE 'LIKE' ME

↻ 10 REFLECT

'... having lost sight of the Creator God who loves us, we've become forced into a destructive battle to create our own self-worth, and found ourselves abandoned to anxiety, fear and directionlessness ... They're often linked, directly and logically, to our loss of God.'

⇒ 11 LIFE

Do you think your generation is in a 'battle' or under pressure to create their own self-worth? How have you seen people seek validation through their online lives?

⊖ 12 YOU

Many teenagers have high rates of anxiety and fear. Describe how this might be connected to the loss of belief in God.

1. Lowman, P 2005, *After God*, viewed November 17, 2021, <<https://www.bethinking.org/atheism/after-god/3-ethics>>.

PLEASE HELP ME

↻ REFLECT



KATIE
speaking about high school in the 90s

I was able to leave the bullies at school. At home I had my mum to reassure me and tell me that it wasn't about me, that bullies always have their own insecurities. The main voice was my loving family. By the next day I could face the b*tch* 'friends' again with renewed self-confidence and perspective.

⇒ 13 LIFE

What impact has life online made to bullying?

⊖ 14 YOU

Have you or friends used their online life to cry out for help? What are the pros and cons of seeking help this way?

PROS

CONS

↻ 15 REFLECT

The supposed connections that come from social media and endless messaging apps can actually be a great disappointment. Sherry Turkle wrote a book about social media titled *Alone Together*. What does the title suggest about social media and its impact on loneliness and depression? Do you agree?



THE BEST WAY? JESUS-SHAPED INSIGHTS

As we move through this course we keep coming back to the idea that ethics is about deciding the best way when it comes to issues of right and wrong, good and bad. By now you may be picking up on the fact that all parts of life are related to ethics. What is the good life? How do we work it out? Christian or not, we are examining what the Bible’s view of the world offers in helping us navigate life. Again we’ll do this and again we’ll start not with answers but with three big questions.

CREATION—HOW DID GOD MAKE IT?

16 YOU

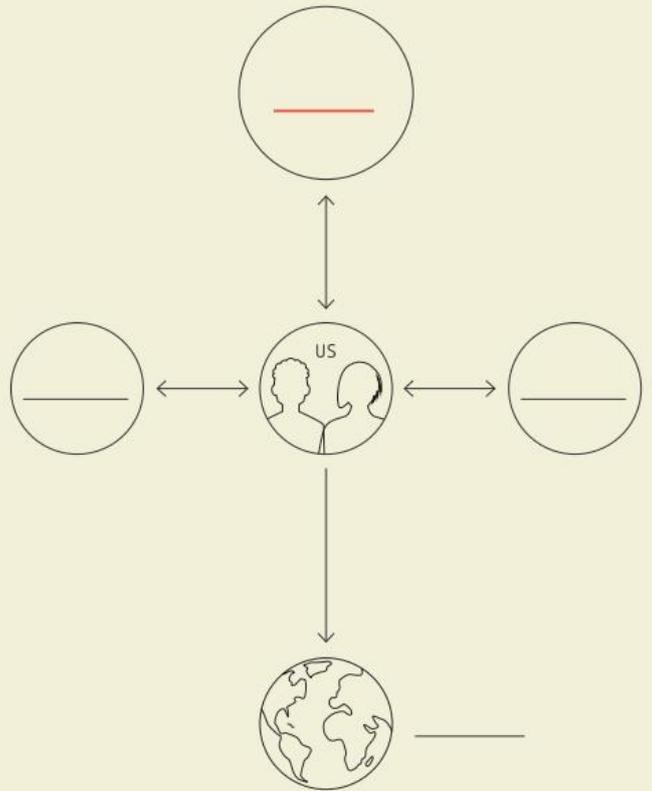
Assume God is the creator of you and your world and he gives you value that no-one can take away. How would knowing this affect what you need and expect from your life online?

How might it impact the way you relate to other people?

17 DISCUSS

Do you think trying out different filters to enhance your photographs or sunsets or food distract you from enjoying the physical thing itself?

18 A key part of how we were created was for relationships. We’ve seen that represented in this diagram in an earlier lesson. Fill in the missing words.



JESUS-SHAPED ANSWER

God created us for flourishing relationships:

- WITH HIM (worshipping him above all else)
- WITH EACH OTHER (all equally precious with God-given worth and value)
- WITH HIS WORLD (enjoying the physical creation we inhabit)



FALL—HOW DID IT GET SO MESSED UP?

⊖ 1 9 YOU

Describe a negative experience you (or a peer) have had online?

⇒ 2 0 LIFE

How might life online look different if no-one was sinful?

JESUS-SHAPED ANSWER

In the Fall, humanity rejected having God as God:

- _____ we default to putting ourselves as number 1 (worshipping ourselves) which damages relationships
- _____ we all choose right and wrong for ourselves
- _____ good things can be used in bad ways including the opportunities created by online relating.

REDEMPTION—WHAT DID GOD DO?

↻ 2 1 REFLECT

The God of the universe became 'flesh'/embodied/physically human. What might this say about the value of life offline (the physical life)?

⇒ 2 2 LIFE

Living online provides lots of opportunities to do things you might regret. How does Jesus' death and resurrection bring comfort for those who feel they've really stuffed up online?

💬 2 3 DISCUSS

Sean Parker of Facebook promised a new, better world with his words 'now we're going to live on the internet'. Do you think 'the internet' is the better life he promised?

JESUS-SHAPED ANSWER

Jesus' life, death and resurrection create access to a truly better world where there is nothing bad and no-one sad. In the new creation, the good of human technological advances may be enjoyed (after all the new creation is depicted as both a garden and a city).

🧠 THE QUICK VERSION

2 4 Technology is not necessarily evil, but imperfect hearts create it, and our sinful, imperfect hearts use it. It creates another realm where sin can thrive.

Social media intentionally tempts us to use it to worship ourselves (put ourselves first). But the Bible teaches that you don't have to create yourself, worth, or purpose or hope—God gives you that.

You are designed for flourishing relationships—to enjoy friendships, experience life, know meaningful sex, appreciate the created world, seek help, show care, communicate different ideas, and so on. All these things are better 'offline'. Life online isn't always bad, but the best way and the most satisfying life is when life online is just a subset of our offline (physical) life.

YOUR TAKE-AWAY

What is one thing you'll take away from this lesson?

YOUR QUESTIONS

Do you have any remaining questions?





LESSON 14

SANCTITY OF LIFE

Sanctity may not be a word that you hear regularly around school (or ever). It's related to the Christian belief that humans are made in the image of God and are therefore intrinsically precious and valuable.

In the field of medical ethics there are some key questions regarding the nature of human life and when it begins, which largely determine views on some controversial issues.

 1 YOU

When do you believe you began?

- A. Conception (that is, the moment an egg is fertilised)
- B. Birth
- C. When your heartbeat could be detected
- D. When you could first feel pain
- E. When you were old enough to survive if born (babies have survived being born at only 20 weeks)
- F. Some other point during your time in the womb

 2 REFLECT

How would you explain your choice above to another person?

Choose a different option (A–F) and consider reasons someone might take that view.

GRIEF FOR THE UNBORN

Meghan Markle (who married Prince Harry) wrote these words in an article for *The New York Times*:


MEGHAN MARKLE
who married Prince Harry

I knew, as I clutched my firstborn child, that I was losing my second ...
Losing a child means carrying an almost unbearable grief, experienced by many but talked about by few.

When Meghan was pregnant a third time, other reporters wrote, 'as we know they sadly lost a baby last year'.² These articles refer not to the death of a newborn baby, but a miscarriage in July 2020. Meghan's quote of feeling 'almost unbearable grief' is common among couples who have suffered a miscarriage. Some mark the anniversary of death for years afterwards.

 3 REFLECT

What do such deep-seated emotions convey about the preciousness of life?

There is widespread sympathy within our society for those who have experienced the pain of losing an unborn child through miscarriage. At the same time, there is widespread support within our society for those who choose to end the life of an unborn child through abortion. This mixed messaging from our culture is seen in NSW passing Zoe's Law which brings tougher penalties for crimes that result in the loss of an unborn baby, but in no way affects lawful abortion.³

1. Victor, D 2020, 'Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, Shares Her Miscarriage Grief', *The New York Times*, viewed November 16 2021, <www.nytimes.com/2020/11/25/world/europe/meghan-markle-duchess-sussex-miscarriage.html>.
2. Hosie, R 2021, 'Meghan Markle and Prince Harry's pregnancy may feel 'bittersweet' after their miscarriage, midwives say', *Insider*, viewed November 16 2021, <<https://www.insider.com/meghan-markle-pregnancy-may-feel-bittersweet-after-miscarriage-2021-2>>.
3. Rawsthorne, S 2021, 'Longer prison terms for offenders whose crimes cause loss of unborn child', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, November 20 2021, <<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/longer-prison-terms-for-offenders-whose-crimes-cause-loss-of-unborn-child-20211120-p59ajy.html>>.

4 YOU

Summarise your opinion on this debate at the moment.

ABORTION

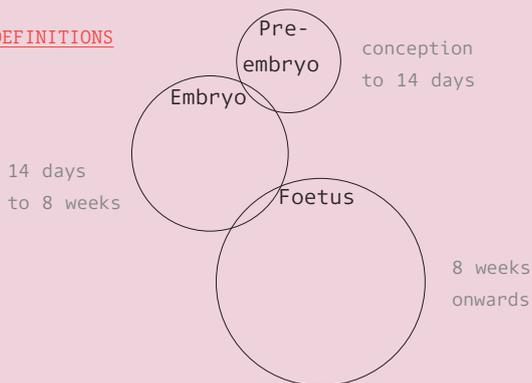
Abortion is the intentional early ending of a pregnancy through medical procedure (which varies depending on the length of pregnancy). It is an extremely controversial ethical topic that evokes highly charged emotional reactions on both sides of the debate.

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

Some opponents of abortion argue that there should be more support and information for women who may be interested in other options, and that having an abortion can cause lasting trauma.

Most commonly, 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. In this lesson we’ll take time to consider all different perspectives.

DEFINITIONS



The Bible teaches that God’s forgiveness covers all sins. Women can carry emotional pain after they’ve had an abortion and part of that pain may be guilt, shame and a sense of not deserving forgiveness. Jesus does not want women to live with this pain; he wants them to know his love and forgiveness. God is the ‘God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles’ (2 Corinthians 1:3–4).



PRO-ABORTION

5 REFLECT

Consider the slogans below:

A collection of nine slogans in rounded rectangular boxes:

- My body, my rights
- My body, my choice
- Reproductive freedom
- ABORTION IS A BLESSING
- NO FORCED BIRTH
- ABORTION IS A CIVIL RIGHT
- I’m a woman not a womb
- Abortion is good healthcare

How would you summarise the view of abortion represented by such slogans?

FEMINISTS AND PRO-LIFE

Contrary to common opinion, not all feminists are pro-abortion.

6 REFLECT

Consider the anti-abortion/pro-life slogans below from feminist groups.

A collection of ten slogans in rounded rectangular boxes:

- Women need love, not abortion
- EMPOWERED WOMEN
- EMPOWER WOMEN TO CHOOSE LIFE
- ONE HEART STOPS. ANOTHER HEART BREAKS.
- Provide real choice
- Women’s rights begin in the womb
- PREGNANT? YOU ARE NOT ALONE. CONTACT ...
- LOVE THEM BOTH
- ABORTION BETRAYS WOMEN
- Abortion hurts women
- Pro-women. Pro-life.

How would you summarise these feminist reasons for opposing the pro-abortion movement?

CHOICE?



RACHAEL WONG
CEO of Women's Forum Australia

But what kind of 'choice' is abortion for a woman who is scared of her abusive partner, or worried about being unable to complete her studies or support her family? Real choice entails a range of viable options, but the reality is that women in such desperate circumstances often view abortion as their only choice.

Wong, R 2017, 'A better cause than Marie Stopes', *Spectator*, September 29 2017, viewed November 16 2021, <www.spectator.com.au/2017/09/10258841/>.

REFLECT

Summarise Rachael Wong's main point.

More than 73,800 abortions are performed each year in Australia—more than one for every four live births. Less than 5% are for foetal abnormality (what some would consider a medical justification), the others being for social or economic reasons.⁴

DISCUSS

Think of some different ways to support the mother (and father) in the examples below so abortion isn't the only option.

1. Jasmine is just getting going in her career with a large law firm. She discovers she's pregnant. She's not in a steady relationship and can't imagine abandoning her career for a baby.
2. In Alexia's culture, boys are valued more highly than girls. An ultrasound reveals her baby is a girl and her husband wants to abort. She's worried she'll regret it; she feels attached to her baby.
3. Anne is 18 and her mother said she has to get an abortion or leave. She's a Christian and doesn't want an abortion but feels it's her only option.
4. Rocco and Sonja have been told that the baby she is carrying will have serious structural birth defects. The doctor says they can abort the baby with surgery. He can do it tomorrow. Their minds are reeling with shock.
5. Eve's doctor has found her to have a condition where to continue with the pregnancy would put her life at serious risk.

4. Abort73.com, *Australian Abortion Statistics*, viewed November 16 2021, <https://abort73.com/abortion_facts/australian_abortion_statistics/>.

WHICH ETHIC?

Recall some of the approaches to ethics that we examined in 'Part 1: Ethical systems'. Many of these come into play when considering abortion. Draw a line from the following ethics to an attitude that would match.

PRO-ABORTION

HEDONISM	A woman has the right to decide what happens to her body
VALUES	It's legal therefore it shouldn't be questioned
RIGHTS	The problem of the unwanted baby will go away so it's a good decision
CONSEQUENTIALISM (RESULTS)	Having a baby will make life too hard
DEONTOLOGY (RULES)	Freedom of choice is an important value in our society

AGAINST ABORTION

HEDONISM	The right to live is the ultimate human right
VALUES	'Do not kill' applies to unborn babies
RIGHTS	Equality among people includes equality for the unborn
CONSEQUENTIALISM (RESULTS)	Having even an unexpected baby can be among life's most precious experiences
DEONTOLOGY (RULES)	Abortion can cause lifelong regret and trauma for women

COMPASSION IN A COMPLEX SITUATION

The perspectives we've seen so far are mostly focused on the pregnant woman and her predicament. Previous lessons have made clear that a Jesus-shaped ethic is particularly concerned to show compassion to the needy and vulnerable. Pregnant women may fall into this category and should be shown Jesus-shaped love. A biblical view acknowledges the extremely complex and painful circumstances that frequently accompany such a decision. While not denying the obvious burden placed on women who carry and usually care for the child, biblical ethics is also concerned with the nature and purpose of the growing embryo or foetus. Christian understanding takes the debate beyond the realm of individual choice and into the big-picture and foundational messages of who God is, how God made us, and the purpose and future he has for us.

JESUS-SHAPED VIEW OF LIFE

📖 1 0 READ / PSALM 139:13–16,
JEREMIAH 1:4–5 AND LUKE 1:39–45

PSALM 139:13–16

¹³ For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and
wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.

JEREMIAH 1:4–5

⁴ The word of the Lord came to me, saying,
⁵ ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I set you apart;
I appointed you as a prophet to the nations’.

LUKE 1:39–45

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah’s home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!’ ⁴³ But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfil his promises to her!’

What do these passages suggest about when life begins?

The Bible is clear that there are two people who need care and protection in the event of a pregnancy. From the moment of fertilisation there is a unique human DNA code that will go on a continuous journey to becoming a child. Repeatedly, we’ve discussed the ultimate identity-shaping truth that humans are created ‘in the image of God’ and have intrinsic (built-in) value. They don’t have to be a certain size or age or have certain abilities to count as a human. This means that a baby 30, 20, 10, or just two weeks before birth is equally human. There isn’t a magic point in a pregnancy where the child suddenly earns ‘personhood’ and becomes worthy of protection. In light of this, the Jesus-shaped ethic sees abortion as denying the foetus this personhood. A strong sense of the need to protect the life of the child within the womb is the basis for opposing abortion.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

1 1 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.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Have a quick look back at ‘Lesson 11–Human rights’ and write the first human right from the list.

HUMAN RIGHT NUMBER 1

The right to ...

Pro-life advocate and journalist Kelsey Hazzard explains that young atheists like herself oppose abortion because ‘We see abortion not as a culture war issue or as a religious issue but as a human rights issue’.

‘Most secular (non-religious) pro-choice people are well-meaning and affirm a commitment to human rights. Most are horrified by ableism—but close their eyes to the often lethal consequences of prenatal genetic testing. Abortion advocates would never murder a defenceless sleeping or comatose person—yet they argue that, because children in the womb lack consciousness, killing them is permissible.’⁵

1 2 YOU

What is your reaction to Kelsey’s view? Do you identify with her view that abortion is a human rights issue? If not, when should a human’s right to life begin? Why?

5. Hazzard, K 2017, ‘The atheist’s case against abortion: respect for human rights’, *America the Jesuit Review*, October 19 2019, viewed November 16 2021, <<https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2017/10/19/atheists-case-against-abortion-respect-human-rights>>.

GLAD TO BE ALIVE

1 3 Perhaps one of the most famous women of our time, Oprah Winfrey, wrote these words to her dying mother.

OPRAH
to her
dying
mother

'Thank you. Thank you, because I know it's been hard for you. It was hard for you as a young girl having a baby in Mississippi. No education. No training. No skills. Seventeen, you get pregnant with this baby. Lots of people would have told you to give that baby away. Lots of people would've told you to abort that baby. You didn't do that. I know that was hard. I want you to know that no matter what, I know that you always did the best you knew how to do. And look how it turned out.'

Bomberger, R 2020, 'No Oprah. COVID-19 isn't ravaging us. Abortion is', *The Radiance Foundation*, April 16, 2020, viewed September 16 2022, <<https://www.theradiancefoundation.org/oprah/>>.

What do Oprah's emotive words to her mother suggest about the potential of every life?

1 4 YOU

Oprah says lots of people would have pressured her mum to abort her baby. Why do you think she resisted? What do you think of her decision?



THE QUICK VERSION

1 5 God's Son, Jesus, became a microscopic clump of human cells in the womb of an unmarried teenage woman. He reduced himself to perhaps the most vulnerable state possible. In doing so he showed the preciousness of human life from its very beginning.

In pregnancy, there are two people who are made in the image of God and are worth protecting and caring for. For those who find themselves with an unplanned pregnancy, Jesus' love can cover all grief and fear and uncertainty and pain.

YOUR TAKE-AWAY

What is one thing you'll take away from this lesson?

YOUR QUESTIONS

Do you have any remaining questions?





LESSON 15

SO WHERE ARE WE NOW?

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

In the first lesson we considered that:

ETHICS explores the 'best way' for life when deciding what makes actions, speech, thoughts and proposals right or wrong.

It soon became obvious that ethics infiltrates life every day; it is an issue of identity and purpose.

Therefore, if we leave our thinking about ethics until moments of big decisions, we can find ourselves doing catch-up thinking about what we believe is right or best. It also means we are left to fumble our way through the smaller (but often identity-shaping) ethical decisions of each day.

So, for 14 lessons now you've had the space to do some thinking about different approaches to deciding the best way for life.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Today is the day for considering where you are now in your thinking. How will you navigate life the best way?

As a kid, you had a lot less control over your decisions. For example, your parents probably decided what kind of snacks you ate (and thus contributed to healthy or unhealthy eating habits). Once you had your own money (or at least packed your own lunchbox), you had more power over what you ate (e.g. how much sweet sugary food you can consume).

🗣️ 1 YOU

As you get older you have more control over your decisions. List some below:

Use of the internet

QUESTIONS BEFORE ANSWERS

Life online has gotten us accustomed to quick answers, but in the area of how to live a good life, the answers are more nuanced and complex than Google acknowledges. In 'Part 3: Ethics in the real world', we considered some big ethical issues and our Jesus-shaped approach showed us we need to start with questions since many questions in life don't always have a quick right or wrong answer.

🗨️ 2 DISCUSS

Go right back through 'Part 1: Ethical systems' of your Student handbook and review the key approaches to ethics explored. Note them down in the space below.

A. HEDONISM	E. DEONTOLOGY
B. ROMANTICISM	F. CONSEQUENTIALISM
C. RATIONALISM	G. VALUES AND VIRTUES
D. COLLECTIVISM	

Match an analytical question from below to each of the approaches to ethics in the above list.

1. What will make me happiest? ____
2. Would this be honest and kind? ____
3. Which decision is best for the majority? ____
4. Have I got all the facts? ____
5. It seems bad, but will the impact be good in the end? ____
6. Is this legal? ____
7. What is my gut feeling? ____

LOOKING BACK

③ YOU

Head back to 'Lesson 1—Introducing ethics' again and see your answer to the question, 'How do you decide what is right and wrong? What helps you to make those decisions when they come up?'

What would you add or change in your answer now that you've done this unit?

④ REFLECT

In 'Lesson 5—Created: How God made it', we asked how you think Christians make ethical decisions. Find your answer. Having explored the Jesus-shaped ethic, would you change your answer? If so, why did you change your answer?

⑤ LIFE

Choose one of the areas of life below.

- ___ Alcohol and drug use
- ___ Fairtrade food, coffee, clothes
- ___ Career choices
- ___ Voting and politics
- ___ How to spend your payslip

OR

- ___ Another example from your list at the start

⑥ Use these questions to analyse your chosen area.

- 💧 What ethical/moral issues and questions could this topic involve?
- 💧 What questions might help you work out what is the right or wrong action or attitude?
- 💧 If I had to make guidelines or rules for people to follow with this topic, what might they be?
- 💧 What could go wrong with such guidelines?
- 💧 What types of ethics (from what you know from Lessons 1–7) have influenced your views?

⑦ LIFE

ETHICS is not just about occasional decisions about right and wrong. It is about deciding what kind of person you want to be, which is tightly tied to how you view the purpose of your life. As we've said all along, ethics is about seeking to find the best way to live in this complex world. In the box below, write questions, statements, a mind map, images, a cartoon, diagrams (or whatever works for you) to show the way(s) you might go about determining the best way to navigate through life with its constant ethical issues.



THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE ETHICAL

TAKING MY
PLACE IN
A COMPLEX
WORLD

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

- Lesson 1 Introducing ethics
- Lesson 2 Individualism
- Lesson 3 Rules vs results
- Lesson 4 Values and virtues

PART 2: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL ETHICS

- Lesson 5 Created: How God made it
- Lesson 6 The Fall: How did it get so messed up?
- Lesson 7 Redemption: How does Jesus make a difference now?
- Lesson 8 A Jesus-shaped ethic

PART 3: ETHICS IN THE REAL WORLD

- Lesson 9 War
- Lesson 10 Environmental ethics
- Lesson 11 Human rights
- Lesson 12 Compassion
- Lesson 13 Life online
- Lesson 14 Sanctity of life
- Lesson 15 So where are we now?

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