

Philosophy - 'Is that which is right because God commands it? or does God command that which is right?'

Discuss.

Email your essay to: kerry.wardle@dhsb.org by Friday 28th May.

The idea that that which is right because god commands it, is called the divine command theory. This means that whether you think it's right or wrong, it is only right or wrong if god commands it to be. This means that there are set guidelines or rules to follow, for example, the ten commandments. Its known as people believing that things being right or wrong is just a fact. So no matter what the circumstances, lying is wrong; and the same for every other situation that is to be considered as wrong. There is no question in decision making, when it comes to the divine command theory.

On the other hand, although emotions might cloud judgments, every different situation has a different answer, so you might not be able to answer some complex questions. Also, it takes away the human right, to make your own decisions and not just follow instructions. This is also sometimes known as or called Moral Absolutism.

Instead, some people believe God commands that which is right. This is different from the first view because it means that things that are right, were always right, but God is the person who is telling everyone these. In addition, everyone has their own opinion on what is right or what is wrong, so some people might think it is right to do things others might think is wrong. The world would also be much more boring, if everyone had the same rules and opinions. For example, this essay may show many peoples views, but it can't possibly show everyone's opinions, because there are so many different opinions in the world. This is known as Moral relativism, which is where people believe that the answer of a situation depends on the situation and its surrounding facts and solutions, such as the personal situations, social context and cultural context that you are in. For example what if you had to steal or lie to save someone's life and you were just stealing something small that made no difference to that person's life. Or what if you were stealing from the person you were saving, to save him.

The negatives of this are that, people say that god is omnipotent and god cannot be omnipotent, if he is bound by the laws of what is right and wrong, therefore leading us to the statement that there is a power above god, making him not omnipotent if this statement is true. This would also limit his free will and power, making him even less powerful than if the other statement were true. This also, instead of making him a lawmaker and giver, almost a law transmitter, which causes a lot of controversy, maybe leading us to believe that the other statement is true instead.

In my opinion, I believe in moral relativism and that god commands that which is right because its means that we have our own opinions and human rights and we can choose our own paths, and think our own thoughts. It shows that you can't please every single thing on planet earth, but you can please people who have similar thoughts to you. Also, sometimes, you might have to tell a lie to make someone feel better, and telling the absolute truth can sometimes cause harm. For example, if someones hat looked bad, you might say it looked good, to be polite and make them feel good rather than bad.