

Politics and Christian Civilization: Class Fifteen

Ethics and Politics Moral and Intellectual Virtue

Review:

Why is Wisdom the sumum bonum?

What is contemplation the highest act of the highest faculty of man?

Is wisdom a means or an end?

How do the practical and the speculative intellect differ?

What is the starting point of the practical intellect. What does it regulate

What is the starting point of the speculative intellect

What is more certain the practical or speculative intellect?

Are the practical and speculative two intellects, more or less?

According to Adams, Aristotle, Aquinas and many others, the happiness of the soul is dependent upon the acquisition of what?

How many types of natural virtue are there?

Is virtue an end or a means?

How many types of intellectual virtue are there?

Name and define the practical intellectual virtues?

Name and define the speculative

How many types of MORAL virtue are there.

Which moral virtue is a special case because it is also an intellectual virtue?

Name the moral virtues and define two of them.

What does "*Virtus en medias stat*" mean"? Why is there a relative mean?

What is the difference between irascible and concupiscible passions. What virtue moderates the former?

Is hatred and anger a good or bad passion? Explain

How does it become good, how bad?

Justice greatest of the social virtues. Involved in all our social relationships, doing good to others and the community. Realization that being just to others assists their pursuit of happiness. Consists in giving each person his due, that which is necessary for development.

JUSTICE

Keeping balance in human social relationships. **The only virtue relating to our neighbor. Giving to each his due**

Has to do with keeping things in proportional balanced p. 379

JUSTICE IS A SPECIAL PART OF MORAL VIRTUE THAT HAS TO DO WITH RELATIONSHIPS IN COMMUNITY. IT IS NOT ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL ALONE AS ARE TEMPERANCE AND FORTITUDE.

THIS IS THE PART OF MORAL VIRTUE PAR EXCELLENCE THAT IS THE CONCERN OF POLITICS WHICH GOVERNS HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS IN COMMUNITY AS WE WILL SEE WHEN WE EXAMINE POLITICS.

3 TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS IN SOCIETY.

I-I

S-I

I-S

I-I: COMMUTATIVE (CIVIL LAW) Regulates action between individuals Example LEX TALIONIS. EYE FOR AN EYE = LIMIT ON REVENGE AND RETRIBUTION TO KEEP JUST AND BALANCE.

LAW SUITS NECESSARY IF DO NOT VOLUNTARILY REMEDY SITUATION. RESTORES BALANCE.

Example - accident due to negligence. Just man will repay when understands it is his fault, unjust man will avoid payment.

S-I: DISTRIBUTIVE = **Give to equals equally and unequals unequally** but fairly p. 378

Pay to Ph. D and BA. Universal destination of goods. Reason person is in society to begin with will study later in politics

I-S: SOCIAL = JFK: "Ask not what your country can do for you but...."

Realization that my good depends on your input and thus others who have rights to the goods as I do. Because human nature is the same, needs are the same as mine. Thus everyone has same rights and same need to benefit from good of others.

If everyone a taker no one is a giver and thus everyone suffers.

In summary, intellectual virtues needed to know the end and purpose of life, moral virtues needed as equipment to aid us in our sojourn to happiness. Moral virtues include

Prudence which is unique as both an intellectual and moral virtue,
Temperance and Fortitude, that discipline and regulate appetites, and
Justice which involves us in our relationships to each other in community.

If live a just life can be said to acquiring happiness. Politics not about speculative philosophy, but about practical life, about action and thus involves the moral virtues and the practical intellectual virtues more than the speculative ones. What are the practical intellectual virtues?

Of these Aristotle said that prudence is the most necessary for politics and most difficult to attain.

Politicians should study virtue above all else because it is the hope of every legislator to make men good.

But the laws cannot make people good, can only provide the environment and persuasion to help people move toward the good they all can know and possess.

After identifying the virtues and the importance the next question becomes which one is more important and when we have an answer to this question, what do we do with people who have one and not the other or neither which leads us right to the topic of politics which concerns the regulating of social life in which very real human beings developed and underdeveloped must live together in close proximity for the achievement of their ends.

According to Aristotle = goal of every legislator is to make men good.

Question arises, how to make men good = Must first acquire virtues which are means to the end of happiness or living a good life in which all our potentials are developed and fulfilled.

In the process, which of two types of virtue (INTELLECTUAL OR MORAL) is primary. Is it better to know the good or to do it? Discussion.

Is knowing not equivalent to doing, how is virtue actually acquired? (LAW= HABITS, SELF DENIAL). Socrates thought that it was. But Aristotle disagreed

KNOWING NOT DOING = CIGARETTES AND SEAT BELT EXPERIMENT.
CAN TEACH WHAT VIRTUE IS, BUT KNOWING THESE THINGS DOES NOT MAKE ONE MORAL OR GOOD. PAGE 351

WHICH IS BETTER, KNOWING OR DOING THE GOOD? IN OTHER WORDS IF LIVE UNDER THE SWAY OF LOWER PASSION WILL NOT AND CANNOT DEVELOP YOUR INTELLECT. SO IT SEEMS THAT GOOD MUST BE DONE BEFORE IT CAN BE KNOWN.

PROBABLY CANNOT KNOW IT IF DO NOT DO IT FIRST = HABITUATE BODY TO GOOD ACTS AS A CHILD AND BRING PASSIONS UNDER SWAY OF REASON AS A PREREQUISITE TO HIGHER STUDIES.

INTERESTING THING IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO, CANNOT ACT CORRECTLY UNLESS HAVE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUE, BUT CANNOT HAVE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUE UNLESS ACT CORRECTLY AND ORDER PASSIONS.

SOUL TOSSED TO AND FRO ON WAVES OF PASSION IS UNFIT FOR HIGH STUDY. PASSIONS BLIND REASON.

IF CANNOT ACT FREELY UNDER GUIDANCE OF REASON WILL NEVER REALLY BE A FULLY DEVELOPED HUMAN BECAUSE A MATURE HUMAN SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THEIR OWN GOVERNANCE BY REASON AND FREE ACTS OF WILL.

ULTIMATELY A MATURE PERSON WILL PARTICIPATE IN THEIR OWN GOVERNANCE AND WILL POLITICALLY PARTICIPATE AND BE INVOLVED IN LEADERSHIP AT LEAST BY VOTING AND PARTICIPATION IN WORK GROUPS OR INTERMEDIATE SOCIAL GROUPS EFFECTING FAMILY, NEIGHBORHOOD, WORK, SCHOOL ETC

IF NEVER DO THESE THINGS ALWAYS LIKE A CHILD BEING LED BY ANOTHER

ULTIMATELY THEN, THE ONLY POSSIBLE WAY TO DO GOOD IS NOT FIRST OF ALL BY DEVELOPING YOUR OWN REASON BUT BY THE DICTATE OF REASON EXPRESSED IN LAWS.

AS AQUINAS SAID, "LAW, AMONG OTHER THINGS, IS A DICTATE OF REASON."

EVERY HUMAN FIRST MUST KNOW THE GOOD BY LAW, BY MEMORY AND **NOT** NECESSARILY BY UNDERSTANDING THAT COMES LATER WHEN WILL IS DISCIPLINED AND THUS MIND CAN PURSUE AND ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

THUS, BOTH ARISTOTLE AND AQUINAS REFER TO LAW AS A PEDAGOGUE OR A TEACHER WHO FORMS, TRAINS, ENLIGHTENS, GUIDES AND COMPELS UNTIL ABLE TO DO SUCH THINGS FOR YOUR SELF.

CHILDREN NEED PEDAGOGUES TO GUIDE THEM IN WHAT ADULTS SHOULD KNOW AND DO THEMSELVES.

THUS, LAW IS COERCIVE AND CAN FORCE MEN TO DO GOOD.

AS AQUINAS SAID BY CONTINUAL ACTS OF GOOD UNDER COMPULSION BAD MEN ARE BEING FORMED IN HABITS THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING THEM GOOD AND MORE CAPABLE OF RATIONAL ANDS FREE ACTS.

SEEMS THEN THAT IT IS BETTER TO DO THE GOOD THAN TO KNOW THE GOOD, BUT CAN'T DO IT UNLESS KNOW IT FIRST.

SO HOW KNOW IT = WHEN LAW COMPELS (PARENTAL OR CIVIL). BETTER TO DO AND NOT KNOW REASON FOR IT THAN TO KNOW REASON AND NOT DO IT.

MORE BLEST IS THE MAN WHO SAID HE WOULD NOT **DO** HIS FATHER'S WILL, AND ULTIMATELY **DID** OVER THE MAN WHO SAID HE WOULD DO HIS FATHER'S WILL AND THEN DID NOT. BUT BOTH ARE INCOMPLETE ACTS IF DO NOT INVOLVE INTELLECTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

FOR ARISTOTLE BETTER TO KNOW AND TO DO BUT NOT REALLY FREE UNLESS APPREHEND THE TRUTH AND FREELY ASCENT TO IT BY MORAL ACTIONS AND STRENGTH OF WILL.

THUS, HABIT IS NECESSARY AS A CHILD AND BECOMES A VIRTUOUS WHEN UNDERSTOOD AND PERFORMED FREELY WITHOUT EXTERNAL PERSUASION BUT RATHER UNDER INTERNAL IMPULSE OF THE INTELLECT IN UNION WITH AS DISCIPLINED WILL ABLE TO CARRY OUT DIRECTION OF A PROPERLY FORMED MIND.

BUT IF HAVE CHOICE, WHICH IS BETTER? ARE ALL MEN PHILOSOPHERS, IF DO NOT KNOW THE TRUTH MIGHT IT BE BETTER TO DO IT FOR YOUR OWN GOOD ON AUTHORITY?

HESIOD

***BEST IS HE WHO KNOWS ALL THINGS HIMSELF;
GOOD, HE THAT HEARKENS WHEN MEN COUNSEL RIGHT;
BUT HE WHO NEITHER KNOWS, NOR LAYS TO HEART ANOTHER'S WISDOM IS A USELESS
WIGHT.***

VIRTUES UNLIKE INSTINCTS ARE ALL ACQUIRED, THEY TAKE EFFORT.

HUMAN BEINGS MUST BY ACTS OF INTELLECT AND WILL ASCENT TO GROWTH. IF CANNOT DISCOVER TRUTH = BEST TO TAKE DIRECTION FROM SOMEONE ELSE.

HUMAN BEING = ONLY CREATURE THAT CAN SAY NO TO ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT. IT DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN.

THUS, THERE IS VALIDITY FOR AN ARGUMENT FOR NECESSITY OF AUTHORITY BASED ON INTELLECTUAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT AND MORAL WEAKNESS.

ARGUMENTS FROM AUTHORITY VERY IMPORTANT IN SOCIETIES WITH LARGE AMOUNTS OF IGNORANCE = IF IGNORANCE AND NO USE OF HIGHER REASON HOW WILL MEN KNOW THE GOOD THEY ARE TO DO WITHOUT LAWS AND AUTHORITY TO COMPEL THEM.

IF LAWMAKERS DO NOT KNOW THE GOOD AND MAKE LAWS TO GUIDE US TO IT, WE ARE ALL IN TROUBLE.

THE GOAL OF HAPPINESS IS PREDICATED ON GRASPING THE GOOD WITH INTELLECT (YOURS OR SOMEONE ELSE'S) ANY FREELY ASSENTING TO OR MOVING TOWARD IT WHICH REQUIRES MORAL VIRTUE.

HAPPINESS NOT GUARANTEED = DEC OF I DOES NOT GUARANTEE IT BUT ONLY THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. GOV'T SHOULD PROVIDE THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE PURSUIT CAN BEST TAKE PLACE.

HAPPINESS THUS NOT INSTINCTUAL, HUMAN MUST CONSCIOUSLY SEEK IT BY FIRST KNOWING IT AND THAN ACQUIRING VIRTUES NECESSARY TO HELP THEM ATTAIN IT.

TRICK: NONE OF THE MORAL VIRTUES BY THEMSELVES MAKE A MAN VIRTUOUS, MUST HAVE ALL OF THEM NOT JUST SOME.

THERE IS REALLY ONLY 1 VIRTUE WITH 4 PARTS. IF MISSING ANY PART DO NOT HAVE VIRTUE AND WITHOUT VIRTUE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTAIN HAPPINESS.

Example = soldier wild in field or man seeking wisdom not getting out of bed.

KNOWING GOOD BUT NOT HAVING THE COURAGE TO DO IT

HAVING COURAGE BUT NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO

HAVING BOTH COURAGE AND PRUDENCE BUT LACKING DISCIPLINE (NOT TRUSTWORTHY)

HAVING PRUDENCE, DISCIPLINE, COURAGE BUT NO JUSTICE = CHEAT AND STEAL AND HURT OTHERS.

Good life = life spent in acquiring all that is really good totum bonum guided by the greatest good or summum bonum, wisdom.

WHEN ACQUIRED = MAN CAN BE SAID TO HAVE REACHED THE END FOR WHICH HIS INTELLECT AND WILL EXIST = **KNOWING THE GOOD THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE TRUE AND POSSESSING IT.** This is the end of the study of ethics **BASED ON A DEFINITION OF MAN INCLUDING FREE WILL, AND RATIONAL THOUGHT.**

KNOWING = **INTELLECTUAL VIRTUE OF WISDOM**
ACTING IN ACCORD WITH IT = **MORAL VIRTUE OR ACT OF THE WILL**
RESULTING IN ACQUISITION OR UNION WITH ALL THAT IS KNOWN AND LOVED BY THE HIGHEST FACULTIES.

HAPPINESS IS THE RESULT OF MIND AND WILL SEEKING TO KNOW, TO ACT IN ACCORD WITH AND TO POSSESS ALL THAT IS GOOD AND TRUE AND BEAUTIFUL. = **CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE OF WISDOM ACQUIRED BY ONLY A VERY FEW.**

CONTEMPLATION = THE HIGHEST GOOD =- SIMILAR TO EASTERN ANSWER OF TRANSCENDING FLEETING PLEASURE OF BODY AND CHANGING FLUX OF THE MATERIAL WORLD AND RESTING IN THE UNCHANGING TRUTHS AND BEAUTY OF THE SPIRIT.

EXERCISING MAN'S HIGHEST FACULTY TO ITS HIGHEST EXTENT.

ANY OTHER ACT OF PLEASURE IS ONLY FLEETING AND SIMPLY AN PHYSICAL ACT OR ACT OF MAN NOT A HUMAN ACT BECAUSE IT IS NOT WHAT MAKES A HUMAN BEING.

HUMAN ACTS MUST FLOW FROM HUMAN FACULTIES AND THESE ARE FREE WILL AND INTELLECT.

THUS TO KNOW THE TRUTH, PURSUE, IT AND CAPTURE IT IN SUBLIME CONTEMPLATION IN A TYPE OF UNION IS THE HIGHEST AND ULTIMATE END FOR MAN, RESULTS IN HAPPINESS THAT CANNOT BE TAKEN AWAY.