

# Crito

Philosophy



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" Crito" Socrates, who was one of the most influential thinkers of the fifth century, is remembered for having played a greater role in the philosophical arena. Socrates is characterized by his firm conviction of striving to seek the truth rather than adopting in-genuine knowledge of any situation. Socrates was ready to subject any matter into questioning, and strived to account for any situation presented by nature. Later in his life, Socrates blended his philosophical thinking into politics. He would apply his reasoning techniques in accounting for political issues. His association with then Athenian regime landed him in prison (Melchert 103). Even after being locked behind bars, Socrates held on to his philosophic principles of life. Socrates was unwilling to abandon his quest for truth even after being advised so by his trial jury. He believed in his wisdom and the power of reasoning rather than illusion reality. His firm devotion to his convictions and beliefs is illustrated well in the Crito incident.

Socrates was known to display a calm spirit concerning serious issues in his life. Even after being sentenced to death, Socrates accepted the jury's decision and maintained that giving up his philosophy at the expense of freedom signifies defeat. In this Crito incident, Socrates friends who had visited him in jail devised a plan of getting Socrates out of prison. However, Socrates engaged his friends through a series of rational evaluation of their plan. His friends were faced with an obligation to rescue Socrates because of the society's expectations on them, concerning Socrates' sentence. As usual, Socrates subjected his friends' idea into an evaluation on whether it was in concert with any moral values.

The basis of his friends' plan was the expectation of the people after Socrates had been unjustly sentenced to death. Despite this underlying

reason for the plan, Socrates opted to question the plan's validity at the moral arena. He engaged his friends on the quest for what is truly right. Socrates always argued that in the context of decision-making, what matters most is not the public's opinion but an individual's knowledge on the subject problem (Melchert 107). He argued that the public are fond of acting randomly and usually fails to come up with rational justification of their actions. Socrates also based his argument on his belief that no one should think of doing something wrong, regardless of the state of affairs. He acknowledged the moral principle that it is not right to pay injustice with injustice. Socrates also strongly believed that it is morally unacceptable to disobey the state and its authorities. Based on these two lines of reasoning, Socrates came to conclude that he would not escape from prison because that act would constitute disobedient and immoral acts.

With regard to the first argument, that it is not right to pay injustice with injustice, Socrates had a rational conclusion concerning the concept. In this premise, it is obvious that Socrates acknowledges the injustice surrounding his bending death. His decision with respect to the premise makes us to agree with him. Paying injustice with injustice is not consistent with the ideal moral values. We all agree that Socrates' sentence was unjust. We also acknowledge the fact that escaping from prison constitutes an immoral act. Therefore, Socrates' decision in this premise is rational.

His other argument revolves around obedience and loyalty to the state. Socrates was born and raised in Athens. Just like a child is should remain be loyal to the parent, Socrates has an obligation of loyalty to the state. The escape plan entailed Socrates exile from Athens upon breaking out from jail. According to Socrates, this act would constitute disloyalty to the state in

general. Socrates chose to accept his underlying fate in respect to the loyalty principle (Melchert 104).

Socrates comparison of state obedience to the parent-child relationship seems to raise some arguments. It is rational to state that an individual's degree of obedience to the parent decreases as one grows older. After attaining a certain old age, one is capable of making reasonable and independent decisions about his life. Therefore, to say that state obedience should match parent-child context raises questions. Socrates was bound to respect the state's rational decisions. In the case where the state decisions seems to run contrary to one's beliefs, an individual is suppose to make his/her own rational decisions concerning the situation. Therefore, Socrates would have disrespected the state because of the unjust sentence and made his own rational decision to escape.

With regard to the second premise concerning state loyalty, Socrates seems to contradict his own philosophical principles. The underlying reasoning concept in the Apology is that what matters is not the public's opinion but the individual's knowledge on the truth. The law that guides state loyalty is formulated from the public's general principles on moral standards. In this context, Socrates seems to be conforming to the public's opinion. This is not consisted to his principle of decision-making. In his evaluation of the escape plan, Socrates chose to go acknowledge the public's expectations unlike in his argument concerning decision-making. Therefore, Socrates failed to provide a rational ground to defend his beliefs.

#### Work Cited

Melchert, Norman. *The great conversation*. 5th ed., New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Publishing, 2002.

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