

Example of divine command theory and the goal of moral objectivity thesis

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



In regards to Relativism and subjectivism we can establish that holding a moral belief is a subjective opinion, but using the divine command theory can lead us to the conclusion that morality has the possibility of objectivity. Opinions could be based on your culture/folklore, your parents/grandparents, TV/videogames, and unless you can strip away all of these subjective opinion inducing factors, your specific morality cannot be objective and it probably won't be relevant to a large amount of ethical situations.

This basis obviously limits objectivity, you're opinions are decided by where you come from and who you're with as opposed to what is always right and what is always wrong.

Divine command theory attempts to extract subjectivity from ethics, the goal of the Divine command theory is to move ethics to a position of complete objectivity, completely free of human bias/prejudice.

Their perspective in a nut shell is basically that human minds are incapable of seeing ethics as completely objective without any forms of bias because they're invariably flawed and even the sharpest most objective person will be to some extent affected by their surroundings/upbringing/past experience and have subjective opinions.

This theory attempts to take human moral calculations out of the hands of man and completely eliminate their judgement from moral decision making and instead put it in the hands of a higher power.

In theory by putting moral decision making in the hands of a god, who is not human and thus can be completely impartial on human ethical issues, they will have no bias whatsoever and can be completely free of subjectivity and thus by one hundred percent accurate.

The divine command dictates that whatever god says is morally correct is morally correct and whatever god says is morally wrong is morally wrong. This makes moral dilemmas as easy as looking it up in an instruction manual, moral decision making can be as simple there's doesn't necessarily need to be a discussion because god can just settle all ethical disputes because he/she is totally impartial and morally correct. He/she has given you explicit rules to follow and it should essentially be a no-brainer what is morally wrong and right.

This in theory completely resolves the issue of subjectivity in morality. On the hand the first problem is that this theory presupposes a belief in god and if you don't believe in god you certainly won't be willing to accept an imaginary deities codes of conduct because obviously if he isn't real these rules were not made by a deity but instead by a very manipulative liar. Other criticisms are if morality is as objective as a science then god's commandments are redundant. This becomes clearer in Plato's Euthyphro, in which Socrates is discussion with Euthyphro the nature of piety.

Euthyphro basically says that piety is what all gods love but do the gods love something because it is pious or is something pious because gods love it?

In other words is something good because god commands it or is it just good so god commands it. Is god actually defining what is good and we're just going along with what he says because he god or is good something separate from god and he/she is simply directing/guiding us to it?

Because obviously if the first is true god telling everyone to wear bowler hats and clogs becomes morally correct, which makes no sense.

If we believe that everything god says is to be believed as the utmost in

morally correct facts simply because he's god and he's meant to be perfect and we believe it without question then in theory anything can be considered morally correct.

Theists would argue that every command given by god is right in any given context so you should be able to when confronted with a problem and find a rule that applies. They won't think to question rules created by god even if they don't make sense, because even if they don't make sense to you, who are you? You're not god, you don't make the rules, god is all knowing and all powerful and we assume he has our best interests at heart even if he's telling us to kill people.

For example god sets out that killing is wrong in the Ten Commandments written in stone but then tells Abraham to kill just to see if he would, so basically god's word in that situation directly from his mouth overrides his previous decision set in stone. So if god can change his mind if we believe morality is defined by what he says and what he says is not consistent and in this case completely contradictory that must mean that morality is just as inconsistent.

Can we be sure what he actually said is even interpreted correctly? What if the bible caught the wrong end of the stick or clergymen don't understand what it is they're really saying?

However in the other perspective morality becomes something independent of god and god just tells us about it, so we don't really need god to be objectively moral at all, because he's served his purpose, we don't need god to be moral because we already have his basic schema we just need to follow on it and or build on to adapt it to our changing lives.

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