

Acts over and Above the Call of Duty

Duty means doing good that you are bound to do. For example, you are required and obligated to pay your bills. You owe your father care in his old age because he once looked after you. You are bad and to be condemned and hopefully punished if you neglect a duty. A duty is like a law. A law that you can break with impunity is not a law at all.

Superogation is doing good that isn't your duty.

Duty would appear to be based on the notion that you must do the least possible evil and the best possible good. If you try and get it wrong at least you have tried to do your duty and so are not to be afforded blame.

Suppose you see a man and his child walking on a dangerous road in the dark. Do you tell him its his duty to look after his child and go home? Most people say you have no right to do that. They say its not your responsibility but his. But if you said something and he listened you would possibly have saved the life of his child. If the child is killed on the road, your silence - and it was your "choice" to be silent that contributed to the death or at least might have contributed.

Some absolutists believe in superogation. Acts of superogation are good actions that you don't have to do and which are not sinful if you refrain from them. An example would be giving alms to the poor or going to the hospital to give flowers to a stranger who is a patient there. We would call superogation generosity – good deeds which are not your duty. If you see morality in terms of doing what is or will be for the best then it follows that what is called generosity is an obligation and there is no generosity except in the will.

Doing good means the lesser evil. Anybody who says that it is okay to buy a car even if it means that the starving will die because they never got the money is being hypocritical and yet helping the starving with the money is put down as a work of superogation. The doctrine denies that there is such a thing as being righteous at all.

Once you teach the doctrine you can invent your rules to your heart's content regardless of rhyme or reason. You can say it is better for a person to commit suicide than to tell a lie. The doctrine of actions over and above the call of duty is evil.

Rome says that some good acts are your duty and others are not and the latter are called acts of superogation. Acts of superogation are acts above and beyond the call of duty. If the concept of acts of superogation makes sense (it doesn't) then it means that for Catholics morality is not about doing what is best. Yet they say that it is best to believe in duties. If it is best to believe in duties then it is a duty to do what is best. If duties are not for the best then they are the useless inventions of control freaks. Typical of a lying religion, it cannot get its ethics straight. So God according to Catholicism, says works of superogation are works that you don't have to do though they are for the best. Then God is saying that morality is not for the best which is really an affirmation that morality is anything more than an illusion. The damned are hated and sent to Hell over a lie made up by God.

Utilitarianism opposes the doctrine of superogation because Utilitarianism commands the best and says that doing the best is a duty. It is correct in this. Many ask if Utilitarianism is a moral doctrine at all. If it is right to reject superogation then that may be the proof you are looking for that it is.

In today's liberal world, bringing a baby to full term when it is sick or when you don't want it is seen as above and beyond the call of duty. That is inferring that abortion must be a duty! What about euthanasia? Is it a duty or an extra? These questions show that in very serious matters the ideas of duties and superogation run into huge trouble.

Some will say that it is terrible to make a duty out of something generous. Here is an answer. If all good acts are duties you can still wish they could be superogation if superogation were right and praiseworthy. Intent is what counts in these things. You can be generous in your heart, "I wish this wasn't my duty because I want to do it freely and out of generosity". Another answer is that we might have no choice.

Even if there is no such thing as superogation and alleged acts above your duty are actually your duty, generosity is still possible in the sense that there is a way that you still don't have to do them. It might be your duty to pay your debts but you may refuse to do it and go to jail.

If you do not intend it you are neglecting to turn a good motive into a better one though it costs you nothing. That defiles what you do for that is not a rational or sensible attitude. It is holding back on kindness that costs you nothing so the result is an evil act that is disguised as a good one. Anything done with a bad or defective motive is bad and unloving.

The reason for the dogma of superogation is that people want to be called moral despite their refusing to do all they can for others. It is nothing to do with logic and everything to do with laziness and self-righteous hypocrisy.

They arbitrarily make rules about when it is our duty to help those to whom we owe nothing and when it is not. Proof of this is in how they would say giving your mother a birthday present is generous though you owe it to her! They also say it is not your duty to contribute a kidney to save your baby's life when you could get by perfectly on one kidney. Bizarrely, it is not a duty to save your child in this way and if you hit the child it is against your duty. Damage and caring seem to have little say in determining what duties are.

Duty is an assumption. If I only imagine I have free will and I am programmed to feel free though I am not then it follows I have no duties. Duties imply you are a free being that deserves to get good things back for the good you did and bad things back for the bad you did. People assume we have free will so duty is an assumption not a matter of reasoning or evidence. A drunk person isn't free but feels free. Animals are said to have no free will but they look as if they exercise free will too. Feeling free or seeming to be free means nothing.

Anybody that does wrong does not deserve to be forgiven. Forgiving them is giving them something they don't deserve. To forgive a person who has earned it is not forgiveness. Forgiveness is a free gift. But religion and absolutism say that it is a duty to forgive. This is incoherent.

Forgiveness is a gift not a duty and so it implies that the harmful doctrine of superogation is true. Perhaps it is a duty to yourself to forgive for you have faults and are better off forgiving? Resentment causes a lot of pain to the one who resents. But that would not be real forgiveness for you have to forgive for the other person's sake not just your own. Forgiveness means wishing well to the other person because you value them as a person despite their evil. It's for them. In so far as you forgive for your own sake you are not forgiving them at all but just practicing a near cousin of forgiveness. It is refusing to love that person.

Forgiveness says then that it is a sin to pay any attention to justice, letting the person get what they have asked for by their evil actions. Why? Because you are to value all people for themselves and you can't do that without forgiveness.

This shows the incoherence of the doctrine of superogation. Forgiveness and kindness are based on justice, giving a person the value they are entitled to as persons. And superogation denies justice!

Superogation is a major doctrine in the Roman Catholic faith. Unsurprisingly, the law is that money be donated to the Church and it is optional to look after the poor.

Every religion - except orthodox Protestantism - has the same doctrine that there are such things as works of superogation. In Buddhism, it is not your duty to become a monk and live out the teaching of the Buddha fully. The Hindus built beautiful temples at the expense of the poor. The Muslims build nice mosques and raise families instead of being where they can do the most good.

It was the doctrine of superogation that contributed to Martin Luther's rejection of the Roman Catholic religion. He went to confession nearly every day because he realised that it was wrong and his hell ended when he decided that salvation was by faith and faith only and that sin did not keep the saved person out of Heaven.

It is a mortal sin, a sin that makes you an enemy of God in a big way, to encourage religious error or heresy by silence or other means according to the Catholic Church. All Catholics do this all the time for not all are in the mission fields and most are ashamed to talk about their faith. Catholics reply that not everybody is called to become a missionary in that sense. They are arguing then that God calls people to sin for what better work can there be to look after those who hunger for God? They should be consistent for a change and say that sins like adultery are right for God calls some to commit them. A vocation can only be decided on rational grounds for feelings are notoriously unreliable. Their reply denies this though they say they agree.

And this is the religion that boasts of putting faith before people. God is believed in and since the law is that he comes first and is to be your only love it is clear that death and suffering must be welcomed to protect and create faith.

The honest Catholic will have a mental breakdown and despairingly see salvation as impossible if one has to avoid mortal sin to get it. With the collapse of the doctrine of superogation, everybody is declared to be a mortal sinner and there is no good work that one can do that could not have been replaced with a superior one. So, good works are virtually all mortal sins. When we are mortal sinners all the time we cannot do good for sin make your devotion to God into a sham.

I testify that the Catholic Church nearly destroyed me because of her lies for I saw through the doctrine of superogation when I first heard it. The anger of being forced by a Catholic society to remain in her made me vile.

Superogation is a basic doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Here are the questions.

The doctrine of free will is basic to the Church. It is more important than creation in practical terms. The religion perhaps should be seen as the religion about God creating free agents more than as the religion about God just creating. If you say that an all-perfect God can or, worse, does give us free will to do good then is that doctrine as important as superogation or not? Does God give us free will to keep rules only and does he not care if we refuse to do good beyond what the rules ask for?

If I refuse to give a loaf to a starving person and they die of hunger over it that is superogation. I am guilty of murder by negligence if I refuse to do anything when I know what will happen. If I hope not giving the loaf kills then that is murder by intention.

If I take a loaf from a starving person who is not in danger of death I am considered immoral.

This makes no sense.

What about God and how he alone matters? What about the declaration that certain sinners must go to Hell for all eternity? There are many doctrines that have the potential to harm such as the Koranic condemnation of other religions. And what about the Bible God who Jesus supposedly said was his God commanding murders? If you want to teach such doctrines that are serious business you must earn the right to. If you teach such things you cannot be going about saying that good deed x is a duty for you and good deed y is not. Just like a prisoner has lost the right to pick and choose good, superogation is out of the question. Superogation even if right is not applicable to everybody's moral universe. Having the right to be good while you don't give money to the beggar outside is a conditional right.

Religious superogation is worse and more toxic than any other kind. It gives people more to disagree about on superogation for it has extra rules. And religion has different reasons for working out duties. For example, life is seen as a gift from God therefore abortion and mercy killing are wrong for God knows what he is doing. So a secular and religious person may agree that x is a duty but differ totally on why. And it sounds hypocritical to say that God gives you a loaf and will praise you if you refuse to share it when it is not your duty to share. It is an insult to God and man.

Love Sinner Hate Sin

Religion says you have to love the sinner not the sin - the sin is to be hated. The idea is the sinner is owed love and the sin is owed hate. Obligation is about owing. Do you really owe love to the sinner? A sinner by definition cannot be owed or deserve your love. The love then is a gift. That means there is nothing wrong with refusing to give that gift. Why? Because any pressure undermines the generosity. The gift must be completely free. Love the sinner and hate the sin fails and collapses if it is turned into a law or into a principle represented by God. Then you end up regarding the person who does not do it as immoral or sinful. You end up degrading them for the sake of the sinner and what love for anybody is there in that? Religion is pointless if it has no commands.

A God can only suggest how to treat others and sinners he cannot command. He cannot say, "You shall not kill them or covet or whatever." Thus the whole Bible and its commandments collapse. Philosophy shows Jesus had to have been a fraud or a mental case or a myth.

Reply: "If you owe love as in urging the sinner to repent that does not mean you owe love as in giving her a birthday present." How many people then tell the sinner who has a heart attack, "I will phone the ambulance if you repent first"?

Is love the sinner and hate the sin a duty or an extra? Is it superogation? It is superogation despite everybody pretending to be dispensers of moral obligation towards sinners! It effectively means morality with its rules and duties is nonsense.

An offshoot of love sinner hate sin is forgive sinner hate sin. When a person becomes a victim do we want to end up hurting them further by putting an obligation to forgive on them? Certainly not!

God v. Superogation

If there is a God of love who made me out of generosity, I owe it to him to give my last loaf to his child even if I have had no contact with that child ever. This contradicts the notion of supererogation.

Finally

Superogation makes a laughing stock of morality for nobody agrees on what is a duty and what is an extra. And many take advantage of the concept for their own ends. The concept is about taking advantage! Duty is a thankless drag and superogation is supposed to be better and more spontaneous. Duty then in that light is just about rules while superogation is superior for it is generous and about goodness. Why there is no duty to value good over rules makes no sense. It is irrational to call a person good who only does their duty and nothing else. A person paying their taxes but sitting on the couch all day at television is not much of a good person and is no advert for goodness. Some even think that because superogation is an extra and not a duty it should not be praised or rewarded. What bundles of joy they are!

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