

Objections to Moral Values being abstract and not properties?

Summary

To say that God is the same thing as kindness is ridiculous for kindness is not a thing or a power but an abstract quality. It doesn't exist any more than the number two exists. Yes we know what kindness is but it is not a thing like a Christmas cake. If God is kindness then God doesn't exist as a being. Kindness is real but not in the way a spirit or a doughnut is real.

To say kindness is a thing and not abstract is to in fact oppose real kindness for real kindness is abstract. If you know what kindness is you will not need to pretend it is real as a doughnut to get yourself to exercise it.

Religion says, "Unless morality depends on the existence of God, there is no God. An all-good being would not qualify for worship and obedience unless he and morality are somehow the same. He would not be God to us no matter how powerful or good he is." That is reification. Reification is when something that is not real but merely an idea is confused with something real. For example, there is no such thing as number 1. It is useful but it is not a thing. If you think of God as morality you may not worship him but morality. If you worship him and not morality then that says a lot about you as a hypocrite. You do not value right and wrong as you should. If you think of God as a person you do not worship morality. Religion hypocritically keeps switching back and forth!

Whatever could religious teaching about good being good objectively because it is the character of God mean? If justice for example is abstract and not a property or power what's fair is fair whether God exists or not. Believers tend to believe that since justice is God's character it is a property or power. It is not just a concept.

Good - is it a property or just an idea that is true? It is an idea that is true.

Believers may object to the idea of justice/love/morality being an abstract concept and not a property. You can read the objections on page 90, The Future of Atheism.

Christian philosophers say that good or morality is an abstract concept but it is also a property. There is good which is a concept and not a thing or substance. Then there is the quality of being good. But these two forms of good need to be seen as separate and distinct. It is a contradiction to say that good can be both a concept and a property in the same way at the same time. Having the property of being good is more important than having the concept of what good is. For example, if you were bleeding to death would you care if the person who helps you does so because they understand good or just because they feel an urge to help?

They will say you can't say the moral values exist if they are just abstract concepts. But it is not existence that matters. It is if they are true that matters. Justice doesn't have to be a thing or power to be true. $1 + 1 = 2$ - these are numbers not things. But they are true.

They will say that unless there is a God and or people to act justly you cannot say justice exists. That is nonsense. Even if there was absolutely nothing at all it would still be true that it is cruel to hurt an innocent baby. This is obviously true whether babies exist or not.

Even if say justice were a property and not simply an abstraction, how would you know that the property is really good? Just because something is a property or a power does not mean that it is good. You need an abstract concept of justice to show that this property of justice is good. So you can't get away from the abstract. To say things like God having the power called love means we must be loving as well makes no sense unless an abstract quality says this love is good.

The psychopath may have no sense of love as a power or of justice as a power. He does not feel the power of love in his heart. Yet we expect him to love others by doing good. We cannot ask him to love by his feelings for he cannot. We expect him to love others by doing right by them. Love in action is the most important. If you have to sacrifice love as in emotion for love as in action you should. Essential love is action. The idea that love is a property or power is absurd. The love that is the property or feeling has to be judged by the abstract to see if it is really love. The love of a mother that urges her son to kill everybody else so that the mother will have nobody to love but him is love as in power but when judged by the abstract of love, that is judged by love the abstraction, it is seen that it is not love at all.

If justice and kindness and love are abstract that does not mean we can ditch them. Religion tells us to ditch them unless they are not abstract and are God! Religion argues that we are to be good because God's character is good. Why should we

be good if God not only has the power of good but is the power? If we agree with religion that we should then we are saying that good being an energy and a power and not an abstraction means we should be good. A person who will not value goodness unless it is an entity does not understand what goodness is and is engaging in counterfeit goodness. If you cannot be fair because you see fairness as abstract then you are not a decent person. Goodness with a "but" is not goodness.

Suppose you want justice and mercy and love to be entities or powers. Then why bring God in? Why can't we say that mother has the power of good so us, her children, should be good too? To say that our mother having the power of good does not imply we should be good too and to say that God having this power does is really snobbery. Just because God is big and powerful does not mean we should be like him. To disagree is insulting the mother you see in favour of a being you don't see, a being who may not exist at all. So rather than defending morality and the concept of moral obligation, faith in God actually condemns and mocks them and advocates a semblance of morality - not morality.

Suppose that love being a power means we must love. Then it is love being a power that obligates us not who does the loving. It is love being the power that matters not that love is good and beneficial. Who is going to value love with an idea like that?

If love does not exist but should, then it would be loving to try to love even if it is not possible. Love means doing your best. Love exists by default. It is not a power.

What is right or best is a true idea. If you see three dogs that does not mean the number three in itself really exists like a block of concrete exists. But it is a true idea that there are three dogs. To try and turn right and best and moral into powers and to say that they are nothing else is actually to deny them. If they are true ideas, then to say they are not but they are something like things or forces is to oppose them. It is like looking at a banana and saying that the banana is three and the abstract concept of three does not exist. To say that a hen is the sound ZZZ is to deny that the real ZZZ is the real ZZZ. The attempts to use God to establish an objective morality establishes only a pretend objective morality. Nothing more.

Nobody should say that because God has the power of love we must love like he does. And if we do say it, we can also say that because we experience the power of love in our hearts and that we get our obligation to love from that. We see nothing that commands us to take our sense of moral obligation from belief in God.