

ARE WE FORCED TO ENDORSE THE REALITY OF REAL MORALITY?

Most religious believers insist that moral doctrines are facts. They are objectively true no matter what anybody thinks. They say you hold them because they are true and not just because you believe or think they are. If good and bad are real, or facts or objectively real (all these terms mean the same thing) then they are not just ideas in your head. It is more important that they are true than that you have them in your head. The truth does not care what you want or think so one way or another the principles will force.

What if you think it was morally objectively true that stealing was wrong last year but this year it is okay? That would suggest that objective morality can change with the times or fashions. That is not belief in objective morality at all.

So though moral principles may have to be applied differently to suit a situation, the principles themselves do not change.

Believers want moral principles to be fixed and unchangeable. All attempts to say God is the basis of morality are about trying to say that moral rules are fixed. They go as far as to say there is a God who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow in terms of his support for moral principles. They go as far as to say God is the reason morality is set and irrevocable and certain. So there is a principle of moral unchangeability. For example, a principle says that it is always completely wrong to lie to somebody in a way intended to hurt them. It excludes any attempt to put out a moral doctrine that says it could be right tomorrow.

The idea that morality and its evaluations of right and wrong is set in stone brings us to the question of how moralists will try to force all that on others. It would be insane to impose a changing morality on people. If you are going to force you need a fixed and unchangeable one.

Objective morality forces itself on us and we end up having to co-operate and force it on ourselves and thus on each other. Nobody is an island. When you claim that your doctrine and morals are objectively true that is saying it is others business what you do and especially what you think in relation to morality. What you think becomes what you do. And it becomes your business what they think.

THE QUESTION

Believers want the principles of morality to be unchanging. Is the unchanging as important to them as the wrongness?

Some say it is. Others say the

unchanging matters more than the wrongness. Others say the wrongness matters more than the unchanging.

If something is wrong then if it is more important for it to be unchangeable than for it to be wrong then morality inherently implies a right to impose its will on people. In practice, the moral

WHAT WE STAND TO PROVE

If you believe morals are facts then you stand for compelling others:

Psychologically they are pressured to agree.

They are forced to suffer if they break the rules.

They are emotionally blackmailed perhaps in a subtle way but subtle makes it no less real.

And as nobody has the right to choose what is a fact, facts are not about what you think or want, facts involve compulsion.

We see then that it is vital to get it right on morality and moral rules. We must not condemn too much or too little

YOU ARE BULLIED TO COMPLY

Most God believers say that you cannot believe in moral goodness or moral badness unless you believe in a God whose authority makes actions morally good or morally bad. In other words, doing the best thing, doing the right thing is an incoherent idea if there is no God!

They say, "If the law or God's law allowed raping children would it be okay? Or is it wrong in itself? How do you measure standards? Whose standard matters if mine differs from yours? You see that you need to worry about God's standards and

nobody else's." This is a plot to stop you deciding what the standards should be and to stop the next person doing that too. The plot is to get people to agree to let one person, God, set the standards. This may make things simple but what is simple is not necessarily right.

Notice too how the raping of children is used to emotionally blackmail you to accept the argument. An argument full of threats and which uses the rape of children to implement and deliver the threats can hardly pass for an argument for morality!

When God is not provable and when it is fashionable and common for people to doubt, they are virtually saying, "Drop morality if you don't believe!"

Nobody wants to do that. Even moral relativists and subjectivists oppose some things totally. They are not relativist or subjectivist all the way. You can see how there is a bullying underlying tone to faith in God. It is not true that the concept respects free will or your freedom. It is: believe or suffer. It is: believe or else.