

RELIGIOUS MORALITY SAYS THAT VALUES SUCH AS LOVE AND JUSTICE ARE SO REAL THAT THEY ARE PART OF GOD

ESSENTIALS

People fear relativism, the view that morality is only a guess or opinion. They want to say that even if we don't understand morality well, love and justice are real things. They are facts.

They say that they are as real as God is. Love and justice are God's nature, the way he is. That is their answer to this, "Is love or justice good regardless of what God says? Or are they only good for God says so?" But the obvious problem is that who says that the love and justice that are God's nature are really love and justice? So the answer is worse than the issues in the question.

Given that human nature is prone to relativism, it is best to assume that even if God grounds real morality as opposed to relative, nobody cares at all. If they do they don't care enough. It is actions not words and it is devotion to principles that provide evidence that a person claiming to be non-relativist is telling the truth. It is not something you have the right to claim. It is something you must demonstrate.

It does not follow that if God behaves morally that morality is objective and grounded in him. It could still be relative.

Believers could be trying to get people to follow one moral authority, God. It might not be about morality being objective at all. It probably is not for if a believer could have you forced to help a starving baby outside your door

WHY GOD BELIEVERS ARE IN DENIAL ABOUT OBJECTIVE MORALITY

God by definition represents a real morality. If real morality exists without God, then there is no God. At best you have a being that claims to be morality but is he really?

For religion, God's character is moral. Usually it is argued that God does not invent or create justice and love for example but IS them. He is these values.

Rules are a different matter. The rule can never be as important as the value. For example, justice is more important than the rules that are created in the hope of serving justice. The rules can change if circumstances demand. The notion that God is moral values and moral rules is too absurd for words.

From a moral perspective, we have no obligation to follow anyone's command—whether it's God's, Putin's, or Queen Elizabeth's—just because it is a command. Rules of conduct based on the arbitrary only encourage people to do wrong.

Moreover, it is no solution to say that God commands only what is good. This response presupposes that we can tell good from bad, right from wrong, or, in other words, that we have our own independent standards for moral goodness. But if we have such independent standards, then we don't need God to tell us what to do. We can determine what is morally right or wrong on our own. And we should. Bringing God into it is bad for it denies that.

Even if belief in God stops you having arbitrary moral values, it does not stop you having arbitrary or seemingly random moral duties. As we have seen, if God values love it does not follow that God cannot make it a duty for you to murder someone. Religion is more worried about what you think of moral values than about how the application of these values can seem or be random. The God belief encapsulates that vicious attitude. We should not follow God or religion if we fear arbitrary laws and commands. Hypothetically, it doesn't really matter if a person believes in morality or not as long as they do good things all the time. And making it matter hypothetically is itself immoral.

There is a baby. Should we torture the baby for fun? There are reasons why we should not. These reasons stand for themselves. There is nothing arbitrary about it. To say what is good is good even if there is no God to command it is to say our stopping point is those reasons. We can't choose God as the stopping point for that would mean if he commanded us to abuse the baby it would be right to do so. What the believers are saying is another proof that they are supporting the divine command theory, the theory that murder is good if God commands it - and thus insulting decent people.

Religion says that God can give rules that seem cruel but they are not. Perhaps he might command a war because more lives will be lost if there is no war.

People use the God theory to argue that you should not say molest a child. They say God would not allow it. But they also say that a nasty universe needs tough love. God lets evil things happen for they help increase the chances that evil will damage itself and good will be the final result. When God can create viruses to kill that child in an agonising death he can ask you to molest a child. It does not follow that God's rules have to be pleasant to be good. God can say that his telling you to molest was kind under the circumstances. And if you believe you have to admit that he could be right! You will admit it if you are honest. It is a terrible evil to accuse somebody of hurting a baby evilly. Should we not assume then that if somebody does that that they were responding to a prompt from God to do so? Obviously yes!

If you need God to create the wrongness of hurting a child for fun then what about the perpetrator? It follows that you hate the perpetrator by unnecessarily wanting him to be condemned as doing a grave evil. The idea that God is needed to decree and create moral facts is full of passive aggressive hate which oddly enough contradicts God's alleged law of love.

To say that God and morality are the same is to say that there is no morality without belief in God. It is to deny the fact that they are not the same for even if there was nothing, hurting people for no reason would be bad. This in itself shows more concern for God and believing in him than in morality. Its evil. The only moral justification for believing in God is to help yourself and others and him. Not caring about right and wrong means that the reason you believe in God is not because you care about him so its not a good reason you have for believing! If we need belief in God before we can see that we must not torment a baby for fun then we are monsters.

God's command to love the sinner and hate the sin is as silly as love the nurse and hate the woman who is the nurse. The teaching that we must love the sinner and hate the sin because we are sinners ourselves suggests that hating the sinner is good but only if you are not a sinner! It involves wishing you were in a position to be able to hate the sinner! Some love! This is hypocrisy. The God concept does not enhance morality at all. Indeed it implies that he invents it and it implies it in several ways as we have seen.

Trying to make out that morality is all about God means that you hold that God alone is to be adored. But they are using God to make man behave. That is not adoration but dishonest exploitation of God and man too.

God is only of use to religious people as an inventor of morality as in moral rules. If there is no God then they are the inventors and we are empowering them by serving God. If God is an inventor, how do we know that we are not mistaking the inventions of men for his?

The believers are only using God to control others. Unless a believer admits that God can tell you to molest a child that believer is not a real believer in a God who wants us to be moral. It is a grave insult to suffering and oppressed people to pretend that you adore this God when you do not.

If goodness is about voluntarily being good, then God is only an accessory or a distraction. If you cannot do good unless you think God is moral good or commands it then what does that say about you? You are not really good and are too self-important to do good for its own sake.

We see that if moral values are grounded in God you are still left with a God who can give moral rules that seem arbitrary to us and that is the God nobody wants. The argument that we need a God to tell us what right and wrong are is wrong. When we need to be told then we cannot figure it out so the result will be a morality that we obey just because God says so. That is just as dangerous as God inventing the ethics.

The objective morality argument is really about benefiting God. That is the motivation it cares about. It is not relevant for a person who wants to help people regardless of whether there is a God or not. Helping people if there is a God is about God not them. It is done for it is his will.

If good is a fact then does that not make it a necessary evil? Yes but in a sense. In one sense it is good to choose what you

want good to be. In another it is not. The joy people find in their "moral" God is suspicious. People who do not like the fact that they cannot make good to be whatever suits them are happy that others are in that position. That almost makes it up to them.

Most people seem to agree on certain moral principles. Nobody thinks you should let a wolf raise your baby. The wide consensus about morality is irrelevant if morality is independent of what we think. Religious leaders use that to manipulate their followers to endorse some odd moral ideas. We know that we would like morality to be objectively true but also true because most of us think it is correct. We do not like the irrelevance of consensus or near consensus. We cannot really rejoice in and love a morality that does not care what we think. Paradoxically, we need the illusion that what we think morality is makes an input to what morality is in order to follow morality at all.

If you take morality to be about our interactions with others and based on how we are social creatures then morality is your identity. Real morality would be your identity. What you think is moral but which is not should not be your identity but you will try to make it your identity. Without morality people cannot like or respect or understand each other. So morality and evaluation of the kind of person one is go together. So if we are wrong about objective morality and God being essentially the same thing then we have the wrong idea of objective morality. Then our dignity is degraded for we need real morality.

Morality is about justice - about hurting the bad and blessing the good. So it is not about interactions so much as carrot and stick. What we should do is just say our identity is to be social and to leave moral considerations out of of it. We do not need them or their passive aggression. Those who warm your heart by telling you they love you are not that great when they would put you in jail for not paying your tax bill. Their love is manipulative passive aggression not love. In some crimes the victim suffers worse than the perpetrator ever will. A rape victim is always sentenced for life and her attacker gets a few years. Nobody is really punished properly and the notion that what goes around comes around is rubbish. The victim is always hurt again by the "justice" system and by those who pretend that every criminal pays. She or he is insulted by those who say that God or whatever attaches the punishment to the crime. Do not be mistaken morality is not as caring as it wants you to think. Caring and morality have some overlaps but they are not the same thing.

Suppose objective morality may exist but we have no way of being sure what it is then the only thing we know is that it is objectively moral to create our own rules. In that circumstance, if we invent morality but all do it in such a way that there is an acceptable agreement among us all about what is moral and what is not that is fine if the morality matches the real thing closely enough. Objective morality and inventing morality are compatible in that sense.

Morality is not simply a social convention. But even if it depends on God that does not change the fact that it is still up to us. It is a point important as a social convention. A morality that dropped God and just kept the social convention thing would still be a good enough morality.

God adds clutter to morality. God makes it less useful than it can be at times. God makes it useless in principle. It is bad in itself and evil to make a big deal of what is useless. So it is not only useless for good but serves harm and evil. A moral theory that cannot answer the big questions about the ethics of war and euthanasia and abortion is useless. These are very difficult issues. What nobody needs, especially the person in grave trouble, is a God distraction adding to the mess.

