**Euthyphro Dilemma**

* **The Euthyphro Dilemma deals with the nature of piety (goodness). Centres around the issue of what it is that makes an action right or good**
* **“Is what is good, approved by the gods because it is good, or is it good because the gods approve it?’**
* **Or another way of putting it- Is something good because God says it is good or does God say it is good because it is good?**
* **If ‘it is good, simply because it is good’ then there must be something higher or more important than the gods themselves, to which they look to for knowing what is good. Consequently the gods are just like us and need a higher authority to know what is right or wrong.**

**BACKGROUND TO THE DILEMMA**

* **Socrates is on trial. He’s been stirring up the young people of Athens with troubling questions. Whereas Euthyphro is appearing at the courts to prosecute his own father for having been the cause of his slave’s (his father’s slave), death. Socrates asks Euthyphro what he thinks holiness (goodness or good actions) is. Socrates implies that actions are good in themselves .**

**Utilitarianism**

* **The greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.**
* **It’s a consequentialism ethical system, meaning it is concerned with consequences.**
* **Jeremy Bentham and John Stewart Mill were leading philosophers who believed in the idea of utilitarianism.**
* **There are 2 types of utilitarianism:**
* **Rule Utilitarianism- Following rules that are there to ensure the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.**
* **Many rules are made to ensure the greatest good for the greatest number, therefore following these rules is the right moral choice e.g. everyone obeys road traffic rules, like stopping at red lights, which makes the roads safer for everyone.**
* **Act Utilitarianism- a different rule applies for each case, as long as the decision made follows the main principle of utilitarianism e.g. if 20 people were held hostage by four criminals, it would be correct in this case, for the police to kill the four criminals to save the 20 people. In other words, the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.**

**Kant –Ethics**

* **Ethics should be based on duty and reason.**
* **Ethical decisions should be made because they are right in themselves e.g. shopkeeper gives the correct change because it’s the right thing to do not because of any reward that might be gained.**
* **Your action can have a negative consequence but still be considered a moral act if it was made for the right reasons. Therefore, a person’s inward motive must be good in order for an action to be good.**
* **For Kant, an action cannot be good unless it was performed out of ‘good will’ (linked to previous point.)**
* **Kant believed in the Categorical Imperative – if something is a categorical imperative it is always right no matter what the situation. It is a rule that everyone must live by. It is an absolute moral obligation**
* **Kant believed that we should act as if we are the lawgiver.**

**Autonomy**

* **Moral autonomy is the ability to choose right by oneself, without any outside pressure or influence e.g. Autonomous moral values are decided with no reference to religion**
* **Reason should be used in order to come to a moral decisions rather than following a set of rules. (Uses human reason to work out for ourselves what is right.)**
* **Gives people freedom of choice as nobody tells them what to do.**
* **Acts are good because they just are-the person decides for himself.**

**Sources of Christian Morality**

* **Scriptures as source of guidance – used by religious people as an authority for moral guidance as a whole e.g. The Bible contains the Ten Commandments , the teachings of Jesus (give examples)**
* **Tradition as source of guidance – is the corporate wisdom of teachers and leaders in religious traditions as a source of guidance for moral teaching;**
* **Reason as source of guidance – is the use of one’s own mind, argument, evidence, research (of morality within scriptures and tradition etc);**
* **Some see human reason as God-given and for this reason we can treat it as being a reliable source of our knowledge of right and wrong.**
* **God-given conscience which helps to make the right moral decisions.**
* **Guidance of God’s Holy Spirit- He helps Christians to interpret the Bible. Through such things as prayer and meditation God guides humans how to behave through the Holy Spirit.**

**In addition to these notes you must check the answer plans as there are a number of different types of questions which could catch you out.**

**Heteronomy/Divine Command Theory**

* **The divine command theory is a guiding moral principle which states that something is right/wrong if God says so and should be obeyed because God commands it.**
* **If God says you should do something you should do it.**
* **Most religious people would argue that God is:**

**– all loving**

**– all powerful**

**– all good.**

* **Therefore anything God commands must be obeyed because God is always right**
* **Example would be the Ten Commandments- e.g. Do not kill, do not steal.**
* **Often heteronomous values are absolute (that is they never change);**