

# *Kant's Ethics of Duty*

*What do we owe one another?*



George Matthews, Pennsylvania College of Technology

2020

# *Kant's question*

- All of the moral theories we have looked at so far have tied morality to *something else* -- culture, God, human nature, personal advantage, the social good, happiness...
- But don't moral demands *override* all of those at times?
- Having a moral conscience means that sometimes we can see that we just shouldn't do something ***no matter what*** else is telling us that we should.

## *Kant's question is:*



*How can we possibly step back from all of our other concerns and act based only on what is right?*

# *The Moral Ideal*

"Two things fill the mind with ever-increasing wonder and awe . . . the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*

Setting aside all thoughts about the real world and real human beings,

1. What might a **morally perfect world** look like?
2. Why **should we** try to live up to this ideal?
3. How **can we** go about doing that?
4. What would the **content** of morality be?

*Why should we strive for moral ideals?*

*How can we live up to moral ideals?*

# *An important distinction*

conditional

unconditional



Credits

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