The Categorial Imperative – Immanuel Kant

Review Questions:

1. Explain Kant’s account of the good will.

Kant’s account of the good will is that it constitute the indispensable condition of our very worthiness to be happy. Good will is good because of its willingness alone. It is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes but because of its fitness for attaining some proposed end.

1. Distinguish between hypothetical and categorial imperatives.

Hypothetical imperative means that you don’t know the content beforehand until its condition is given. While categorial imperatives is the other way around. Beforehand, you already know what it contains.

1. State the first formulation of the categorial imperative (using the notion of a universal law), and explain how Kant uses this rule to derive some specific duties toward self and others.

The first formlation of the categorial mperative is when a man feels sick of life as the result of a series of misfortunes that has mounted to the point of despair. Kant says that a system of nature by whose law the very same feeling whose function is to stimulate and furtherance of life should actually destroy life would contradict itself and consequently could not subsist as a system of nature. Therefore, he concluded that maxim cannot hold as a universal law of nature and it is entirely opposed to the supreme principle of all duty.

1. State the second version of the categorial imperative (using the language of means and end), and explain it.

The second version of the categorial imperative is when a man finds himself driven to borrowing money because of need. Kant concluded that everyone believing himself to be in need can make any promise he pleases with the intention to to keep it would make promising. Since no one believes that he was being promised anything.

Discussion Questions:

1. Are two versions of the categorical imperative just different expressions of one basic rule, or are they two different rules? Defend your view.

No, they are not two different rules. They have the same purpose and meaning.

1. Kant claims that an action that is not done from the motive of duty has no moral worth. Do you agree or not? If not, give some counterexamples.

I don’t agree with Kant’s claim. I believe that the every action we do has a moral worth whether it is with motive or not.

1. Some commentators think that the categorical imperative (particularly the first formulation) can be used to justify nonmoral or immoral actions. Is this a good critism?

Yes, I think it is a good critism.