

Week 1, Chapter 1, pp. 3 – 13, 17 – 19

It doesn't matter if you haven't taken an Intro to Ethics course, but if you haven't (or even if you have), you want to make sure that you're familiar with ethics generally. So, the purpose of the first two chapters is to introduce you to some of the basic ideas in ethics.

As you're reading pp. 3 – 13, have in mind that you'll want to return to these pages throughout the semester to revisit some of the concepts.

Ethics and religion, pp. 17 – 19

The *natural law theory*, which is often associated with a religious stance, is covered in chapter 2.

The main purpose of this section on ethics and religion in chapter 1 is to analyze the *divine command theory*. It is widely agreed that this theory doesn't work, but understanding why can be a little tricky. Vaughn has a good explanation on p. 18. If you want to read a second explanation, see pp. 2 – 4 in this chapter: https://loighic.net/assets/pdf/intro/What_Is_Ethics_Anyway.pdf

I won't repeat everything that is on p. 18 and in "What is ethics anyway?", but you need to have in mind that the analysis begins with the two ways of interpreting the theory. These are the two ways:

- (1) Actions are morally right because God commands them.
- (2) God commands certain actions because they are morally right.

The issue, then, is the implications of each interpretation.