**ETHICS**

**Ethics: Three definitions of ethics**

─ Ethics may be defined as the normative science of the conduct of human beings living in

societies ─ a science which judges the conduct to be right or wrong, good or bad or in

some similar way.

(**William Lillie, An Introduction to Ethics**)

─ Ethics is a branch of philosophy; it is moral philosophy or philosophical thinking about

morality, moral problems and moral judgments. (**W. K. Frankena, Ethics**)

─ Ethics may be defined as philosophical inquiry into the nature and grounds of morality.

(**Paul W. Taylor, Principles of Ethics: An Introduction**)

**The purpose of ethics**

− Ethics is necessary to resist social chaos where life is horrible, impure or miserable in other

words ‘solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short’.

− Ethics is a set of rules that if followed by nearly everyone, will promote the flourishing of

nearly everyone.

− These rules restrict our freedom but only in order to promote greater freedom and well-

being.

**− The five purposes of ethics are:**

1. To keep society from falling apart;

2. To minimize human suffering;

3. To promote human flourishing;

4. To resolve conflicts of interest in just and orderly ways;

5. To assign praise and blame, reward and punishment and guilt.

**Ethics and religion**

− Morality and religion both are related to duties and obligations. Both call for the exercise of

conscience. Morality as well as religion emphasizes goodness, truth and peace.

− The practice of morality need not be motivated by religious considerations. Moral precepts

need not be grounded in revelation or divine authority as religious teachings are.

− Ethics is grounded in reason and human experience.

− Religion includes wider range of duties than morality, for example, worship, rites, prayer

etc. are among the most important of religious duties but morality has only an indirect

concern with such duties in so far as they affect a man’s conduct in relation to his fellow-

men.

− Religion is characteristically an emotional experience whereas morality is grounded in

reason.

− Religion is knowledge based, morality is action based. For religion theoretical study of

knowing God is essential; knowledge is all important toward the behavior of the self. For

morality knowledge is for the sake of action.

− Religion has its center in God; morality has its center in man. Not to harm anyone is moral

duty, whereas, to be loyal to the supernatural God and to follow God’s commands are

religious duties.

**Ethics and law**

− The aim of ethics and law is human welfare. Ethical rules are to secure welfare of the

members of the community; state laws act as keeping peace among the citizens of the

state.

− Ethics is a normative or idealistic science which emphasizes moral values, on the other

hand, laws emphasizes on certain legality in order to maintain social security and progress

of the society. Law is always to the protection of human rights and welfare so it is with

ethics.

− Both ethics and law are dependent on value in order to fulfill their aims.

− Ethics is related with voluntary actions of individual person; law is related with collection of

people.

− Ethics examines on the basis of moral value; law is based on the interest or utility of the

people.

− Ethical laws are unwritten undocumented but laws are written and documented.

− Ethical bindings are should or ought, laws are forced to be followed otherwise punishment will be

faced.

**Ethics and psychology**

− Ethics is a normative science of conduct of human beings and psychology is a science of

behavior of human beings as well as animal beings.

− Both ethics and psychology study voluntary, involuntary and non-voluntary behavior of

human beings.

− In order to evaluate a certain conduct ethics reviews the will, motive, intention and desires

of the individual. Ethical studies of conduct require a focus on the psychological stages of

the individual. These show similarities between the two subjects.

− But ethics is evaluative science whereas psychology is a factual science. Methods of ethics

are analytic and deductive, methods of psychology are experimental and inductive. The

scope of psychology is broader than that of ethics.