1. What is Socratic elenchus and how is it featured in Plato’s “Euthyphro?” What is the dilemma that Socrates presents to Euthyphro? How does the dialogue demonstrate the fallacy of “*petitio* *principii*” [begging the question] and *απορία* [aporia]? What do you think Socrates means by suggesting Euthyphro has “turned away?”

* The Socratic Elenchus is the process of dialogue by which Socrates deals with nearly all of his friends and counterparts in the works of Plato. It is the foundation of the “Socratic Method” and consists of two people, one playing the part of the guide and the other playing the part of the interlocutor. The interlocutor has his/her knowledge questioned by the guide, and the guide asks leading questions in an effort to help the interlocutor to understand some sort of information on their own, without the guide teaching it to them directly. An example of the Elenchus is found in the Meno, when Socrates “teaches” a slave boy mathematics, without actually telling him anything. Socrates just asks the boy the right questions, and the boy learns mathematics on its own. In the Euthyphro, Socrates is playing the part of the guide with his interlocutor Euthyphro. The entire dialogue consists mainly of just Socrates asking Euthyphro questions in an effort to help him understand that his preconceived notions of “what is piety” are wrong. Euthyphro’s dilemma is this: “is the pious loved by the Gods because it’s pious? Or is it pious because it is loved” (Euthyphro 10a)? Euthyphro doesn’t totally understand this question so Socrates tries to explain it with the following idea. A loved thing is defined by it being loved by someone else, in the same way “Again the led thing is so, then, because it’s led and the seen thing because it’s seen?” (Euthyphro 10b). This means that the things loved by the Gods are defined as loved because the Gods loved them in the first place. This causes Socrates to ask a different version of the original question again. Why do the Gods love pious things? Is it because they are pious or is it because of something else? Euthyphro responds to this question by saying the God’s love pious things because they are pious, but by doing so he has just committed a logical fallacy, begging the question. Socrates points this out to Euthyphro, that he is saying simultaneously in his argument that ‘piety is what is loved by all the god’s’ and that ‘All the gods love pious things because they are pious.’ This doesn’t work. By replacing pious with “What is loved by the gods” Euthyphro is suggesting that ‘What is loved by the gods is loved by the gods because it is loved by the gods.’ This is assuming what he’s trying to prove, and is a logical fallacy known as begging the question. The dialogue represents Aporia in that, like most platonic dialogues, it ends with no satisfying definition of what piety is, it just ends in puzzlement. Aporia is translated literally as “no path forward” which is a perfect example for how this dialogue plays out. We see that Socrates walks Euthyphro’s argument into a circle, and then he walks it back again, ultimately getting Euthyphro to admit towards the end of the dialogue that he is saying that piety is just “what is loved by the gods.” I believe that the whole point of this dialogue isn’t to find out what piety is, but that it’s to show the arrogant and young Euthyphro that he *doesn’t* know what he was certain he did. If Euthyphro understood this, it would cause him to become curious about what he’s realized he doesn’t know, which would cause him to start asking questions and *do philosophy* to find out the answer. The whole point of the Elenchus is for the guide (Socrates) to leave the interlocutor (Euthyphro), with a sense of puzzlement and confusion (Aporia) about something they felt certain about. This puzzlement in turn *inspires people to do philosophy*, to find out the answers to what they don’t know. Socrates is trying to create philosophers like him, for he is declared to be the wisest because ‘he knows one thing, which is that he knows nothing’. Towards the end of the dialogue, Socrates is asking Euthyphro what he thinks is the finest result that service to the god’s produces, and Euthyphro answers a different question, which is an attempt to define piety again (Euthyphro 14a-b). Socrates wanted Euthyphro to answer this question but instead Euthyphro just tried to prove that he had the right answer, and wanted to shut Socrates up by giving it to him. I believe that this causes Socrates to say that Euthyphro has turned away. I think that the point that Socrates was trying to get at was that pious acts are simply acts of service to the gods which *improve our character and make us better*. Socrates using many of people tending to things, and producing good results. Such as the farmer, who tends to the ground and produces food. All of these examples followed by Socrates question on what good is produced by service to the Gods, causes me to believe that Socrates doesn’t really care about what piety actually is nearly as much as what trying to be pious does for us as humans, or in other words, *what the good result is*. Euthyphro failed to understand that this was the point of the dialogue, not being right, and therein he had “turned away”.

1. What are the two (2) sets of charges that Socrates faces in Plato’s “Apology?” What is the narrative framework of the dialogue and what does it aim to accomplish? How does Socrates’ tone change over the course of his defense and what reason(s) does he give for not fearing death?

* The two sets of charges that Socrates faces in the Apology are as follows: The first is “Socrates commits injustice and is a busybody, in that he investigates the things beneath the earth and in the heavens, makes the weaker argument the stronger, and teaches these things to others.” To generalize this charge, Socrates is being accused of being a sophist. The second charge is “Socrates is guilty of corrupting the young, and of not acknowledging the gods the city acknowledges, but new daimonic activities instead.” This charge is pretty self-explanatory, Socrates is being accused of not believing in the cities gods, essentially creating his own gods, and for corrupting the young. The narrative framework of the dialogue is one where Socrates is speaking to a courtroom, the whole dialogue just being Socrates speaking, barring one or two lines by Meletus. I believe that the purpose of this style is Plato’s attempt to be as truthful and accurate to Socrates’ apology as possible. Whereas Plato usually changes the approach to his dialogue to be a little more questionable in terms of its validity such as the Euthyphro, which places two people talking by themselves with no one else around, The Apology is basically just a court transcript, and it names many different people that were there. I believe that Plato did with the intent of logging this trial more as a historical event rather than a medium for conveying philosophy. Plato wanted to preserve the final public speech of his friend Socrates as authoritatively as possible. In terms of the tone of the dialogue, Socrates appears to be an old, fragile, and humble man at the beginning, but as the dialogue progresses, he gets increasingly proud and almost arrogant, repeatedly boasting about himself and insulting various members of Athens. A good example of this drastic switch in tone is seen towards the beginning and the end of the dialogue. In the start of the Apology, Socrates is humbly asking the men of Athens to forgive him if he speaks plainly, since he has never been in court before. At the end of the trial, however, when Socrates is asked what he thinks his punishment should be for being found guilty, Socrates says that he should live in luxury for the rest of his life! He also refers to himself once as God’s gift to the Athenians. Even though Socrates is sentenced to death, he shows no fear. Socrates says that to try and escape death is ridiculous, since it is unavoidable, but that one should try to escape villainy is far more important and difficult. Socrates says that to fear his death is silly because since he knows he has done no wrong, there is no way that death is going to be bad for him. In fact, he is looking forward to it, for it will either be as soothing and seamless and a dreamless slumber or he will be in a better place, where he will be able to do philosophy with great men who have passed. For these reasons Socrates does not fear death at all, rather he pities the Athenians, for they have sentenced a good man unjustly to death, which is more detrimental to them than it is to Socrates, even though he is dying. Thus, Socrates ends the dialogue with one of the most powerful statements in the entire piece, “But now it’s time to leave, I to die and you t olive. Which of us goes to the better thing, however, is unclear to everyone except the god.” (Apology 41c)

What are the five (5) reasons Crito gives Socrates for why he should escape? What is the point Socrates makes about listening to experts instead of majority opinion? Who do you think Plato intended to be the expert in this dialogue? How might you reconcile the obedient tone of this dialogue with the disobedient one found in the Apology?

* The five reasons Crito gives Socrates for why he should escape are as follows: 1. If Socrates doesn’t escape then it will appear as if Crito and Socrates friends let him die, since they didn’t try to help him escape, and no one would believe that Socrates would stay there willingly. This would be harmful to Socrates friends, in addition to the fact that they would lose a great friend in the process. So ultimately the first reason is that Socrates would be harming his friends. 2. Crito has lined up many of Socrates’ friends who would come and help him if Socrates would only ask, so Socrates doesn’t need to worry about causing his friends trouble, they *want* to help. 3. Socrates is being unjust in “throwing away his life”. Crito is accusing Socrates of taking the easy way out, and purposes that the just thing to do would be to live on and to keep doing philosophy. 4. Socrates would be betraying his sons if he died and left them as orphans, and good men don’t leave their sons. 5. Socrates and his friends might be considered to be cowards because of how the trial and execution were carried out, which may tarnish Socrates’ legacy. Socrates makes the point that when it comes to listening to majority opinion, one shouldn’t care about what the majority thinks, only about what the expert thinks. For example, when one needs to train a horse properly, does one take a general poll asking for majority opinion on how to train a horse? No, one goes to the expert, for their opinion is the only one that matters. It is for this reason that Crito and his friends should not care about what the majority deems to be just, unjust, cowardly, or etc. I believe that Socrates intended the Form of Justice itself to be the expert in this dialogue, naming the Form of Justice *The Laws*. I believe that this tone is justified in that Socrates refers to the Laws as having a tone and manner about them that is very much unlike the tone of the court of Athens that sentenced him to death. The Laws are intelligent, kind, honest, and true. A courtroom of men such as these surely would not have put Socrates to death. I personally reconcile the obedient tone in the Crito with the disobedient tone in the Apology by reflecting on my own personal principles when it comes to dealing with the world. I believe that I have a very small and finite area of influence, and that most things are out of my control. Because of this, I am calmed when things around me crumble, and I focus on my own actions, since they are what I can actually control. It is for this reason that Socrates’ tone has changed. In the Apology, he thought that maybe he could change the courts mind, so he threw everything he had at them in an attempt to help them see truth and act justly, but now that his sentence is nigh, he realizes all he has left to do is to turn inward and live the rest of his days as justly as possible. He really believes that the greatest harm that can befall him is that which he inflicts upon himself by not acting justly in his last moments, he doesn’t care what the Athenians do to him. I believe that Socrates is reflecting in his last days the mind of the Stoic school of philosophy, which would later rise up out of his teachings.