

Study Questions 2

Socrates decides not to escape because he believes it unjust.

To Socrates, justice is to never do harm even to bad people. He believes that leaving and not abiding by the laws of his city would be to do harm to the laws of his city. The laws of his city have made it possible for him to live a good life, and it is because of law abiding civilized men that he is able to have discussions about the good life.

Socrates also believes that to escape would cause more harm to his friends and family than good. If he escapes, he can't raise his children in a city that would provide them the best education, and the best life. He would also lose all value to any man because the only value he seems to hold is the wisdom of the good life. Once he turns his back on laws that have given him so much, he is unable to speak of justice anymore.

After escaping, he would be unwelcome in any law abiding city, and to live in a city of uncivilized men would not worth living.

Another injustice would be that he did not submit banishment as a punishment when it was legal to do so. To have gained from laws, but then to not attempt to challenge them would also be shameful.

He also seem affected by his old age. He believes that having lived a just life is the only way to die and face the uncertainty of an afterlife. I like this argument the most. I am not religious, but I believe that if I'm a good person in life, then any potential just god should not punish me for a lack of faith, and I don't see any merit in worshiping an unjust god.

As such, my opinion is that the argument of harming the laws I find least compelling. Doing harm to his friends, family, and reputation a bit more compelling, and dying a good just man the most.