

Ethics

Wester, T.I.

Autumn 2023

Contents

1		2
2		3
2.1	christian forgiveness	3

Chapter 1

Forgiveness is a rather commonsensical idea. On the face of it, forgiveness is given by a victim to a wrongdoer. Forgiveness is something the wrongdoer can ask for, and is in some sense connected to the emotions of both the parties involved.

This simple images becomes complicated in reality however, as the asymmetrical system of “victim forgives wrongdoer” does not always apply. There is the concept of forgiving oneself, as well as third-party forgiveness (such as presidential pardons, or Biblical forgiveness).

Chapter 2

There is a distinction to be made between immediate reaction and true resentment. It is natural – and unavoidable – for someone to instinctively react to injustice before they even think. Resentment follows after a moral judgement. The taking of revenge occurs only in cases of immediate reaction, or in cases of failed moral judgements.

2.1 christian forgiveness

Jesus tells us to forgive, and furthermore claims to have forgiven our sins. However, the question remains how this forgiveness works, as there are not obvious victims for sins other than the sinner themselves.

According to Griswold, forgiveness is not about administration of justice, but rather changes the relationship between the wrongdoer and victim in a healthier direction. Forgiveness then is an ethical response to wrongdoing which forswears revenge.

In the case of Christianity then, the forgiveness granted by Jesus would be more akin to forgiving one's self.

Being in a state of resentment furthermore makes one vulnerable, thus adding another Christian angle, as forgiveness makes us less vulnerable and more God-like.