

## Lesson 6

### Morality and Education

#### Morality and Education

- ☐ Why do you think people commit actions that they know are sinful or wrong?
- ☐ What makes something wrong?
- ☐ What makes something right?

#### I. What is Morality?

- Comes from Latin word “moralis” – manner, character, proper behavior
- The differentiation of intentions, decisions and actions between those that are distinguished as proper and those that are improper
- Synonymous with goodness or rightness

✚ What would you do if you found 5 million in a bank bag on the way home from Mater Dei tonight? Would you turn in and hope for a reward? Or would you keep it for yourself? Or would you just keep it for 24 hours so you could roll around in it for a while before returning it?

So what is morality?

- Human attempt to define what is right and wrong about our actions and thoughts, and what is good and bad about our being who we are
- Over the years Philosophers have been attempting to provide answers to this question
- If we stand upon their shoulders – that will be meaningful for us.
- What is good?
  - Lots of things are referred to as good
  - But a list of things we personally find to be good doesn't offer much help in understanding morality, or what it means to be good.
- Five Elements
  - a. Pleasure – without pleasure, nothing can be truly enjoyable. In order for anything to be good, we must enjoy it. Long term ramifications and that we can impact others with our pursuit of pleasures.
  - b. Happiness – search for long term and personally meaningful happiness
  - c. Excellence – higher form of pleasure that leads to a deeper satisfaction in life
  - d. Creativity – necessary element within the definition of goodness
  - e. Harmony – we must be able to have the chance to enjoy our pursuits of pleasure, happiness, excellence and creativity

## II. The Sources of Morality

- We can judge whether our actions are good or bad by reflecting on three traditional sources of morality.

- ❖ The Object
- ❖ The Intentions
- ❖ Circumstances

- The Object Chosen (what I choose to do)

- In morality the object chosen is what we choose to do, *the act itself*
- The act can have good matter, bad matter, or just be neutral
- An example of good act could be tutoring a classmate in math
- Bad matter automatically makes an act evil, example, gossiping about a classmate is consider bad matter, spreading half truths about someone is always wrong
- Questions: what is one thing you would consider bad in itself?

What is one thing you would consider good in itself?

- The Intention (Why I choose to do something)

- Our intentions answer why we acted in a certain way
- Intentions can be good, bad, or mixed.
- Intentions determine whether our acts are morally right or wrong.
- An example of a good intention is you tutor a friend because you want him or her to do well on the upcoming test.
- In this example, what you choose to do, the object, and why you choose to do it are both good. The act is good.
- Our intentions may also be mixed. Example, you can give money to a charity for two reasons: first, you wish to help the poor, second, you want to be praised for your generosity
- Question: How would you feel if you discovered your friends are nice to you just to get something out of you?

- Circumstances (The what, where, when, how of my actions)

- It includes the act's consequences
- Circumstances can lessen or increase our responsibility for an act.
- Ignorance, fear, psychological, and special factors can lessen and in certain cases cancel out our responsibility for our actions.

## III. Morality in Relation to Education

- From the moment a child is born, certain forces are at work influencing his/her development. As his/her inherited powers and tendencies surface and interact with his/her environment and will, he/she takes on the characteristics of his/her adulthood.
- One purpose of education is to help make children virtuous – honest, responsible, and compassionate.

- Another is to make mature students informed and reflective about important and controversial moral issues.
- On most account, morality isn't intellectually free-floating, a matter of personal choices and subjective values.
- Moralities are embedded in traditions, in conceptions of what it means to be human, in worldviews.
- Robert Coles – one of the world's most respected scholars on the inner working of children, has explored the dimension of morality in several of his works.
  - His studies suggest that the moral lives of children are very rich and begin developing in infancy as they learn about good and bad, how to behave and be through interactions with others and observing behavior.
- Our morals are greatly affected by our social environments. In the important and influential early years, that environment is largely the parents and immediate family. As children become socialized and enter schools, more and more of their moral character is open to the influence of peers and society.
- Education influences both individual and collective moral development. What takes place in the classroom can either encourage or discourage the ability and desire to seek truth and serve the greatest good. Education is a moral endeavor as is life. The classroom is saturated with moral meaning (Hansen, 1995).
- Teachers are to create a moral environment in their classrooms where justice and caring prevail. Educational leaders, administrators, and teachers are to be models of moral intelligence, exemplifying the virtues they seek to engender in others.
- Educators need to help students learn how to reason and what principles should guide them in deciding what to do in situations where their well being is at stake. Students need to develop a sense of genuine caring for themselves and others. They need to learn alternatives to violence and human exploitation
- Seeing moral lives and having moral values integrated into daily thoughts, feelings and actions is essential.
- Developing morality is a daily practice that extends throughout a lifetime.