

**Chapter 1 : Christian Virtue of Persistent Prayer – Trying to Hear**

*Virtue ethics focuses on the development of sound moral character rather than moral rules. In this theory, it is believed that having a virtuous character leads to virtuous decisions. Virtue-based ethical theories place less emphasis on which rules people should follow and instead focus on helping.*

References and Further Reading 1. A faculty seminar I attended a few years ago was mired in the opinion that Aristotle thinks the good life is one of mindless routine. Can it really be that Aristotle thought life is lived best when thinking and choosing are eliminated? On its face this belief makes no sense. It is partly a confusion between an effect and one of its causes. If this is what sticks in your memory, and leads you to that conclusion, then the cure is easy, since habits are not the only effects of habituation, and a thing that makes all the difference is indispensable but not necessarily the only cause of what it produces. We will work through this thought in a moment, but first we need to notice that another kind of influence may be at work when you recall what Aristotle says about habit, and another kind of medicine may be needed against it. Are you thinking that no matter how we analyze the effects of habituation, we will never get around the fact that Aristotle plainly says that virtues are habits? The trouble, as so often in these matters, is the intrusion of Latin. Socrates makes the point that knowledge can never be a mere passive possession, stored in the memory the way birds can be put in cages. Some translators make Aristotle say that virtue is a disposition, or a settled disposition. This is much better than calling it a "habit," but still sounds too passive to capture his meaning. We somehow set them free to speak, and give them a particular language to do it in, but they--Mr. Wilson called them "little geniuses"--they do all the work. In neither account is it possible for anyone to train us, as Gorgias has habituated Meno into the mannerisms of a knower. Habits can be strong but they never go deep. Authentic knowledge does engage the soul in its depths, and with this sort of knowing Aristotle links virtue. The word "disposition" by itself he reserves for more passive states, easy to remove and change, such as heat, cold, and sickness. He confirms this identity by reviewing the kinds of things that are in the soul, and eliminating the feelings and impulses to which we are passive and the capacities we have by nature, but he first discovers what sort of thing a virtue is by observing that the goodness is never in the action but only in the doer. This is an enormous claim that pervades the whole of the Ethics, and one that we need to stay attentive to. No action is good or just or courageous because of any quality in itself. Virtue manifests itself in action, Aristotle says, only when one acts while holding oneself in a certain way. The indefinite adverb is immediately explained: This stable equilibrium of the soul is what we mean by having character. It is not the result of what we call "conditioning. Skinner, the psychologist most associated with the idea of behavior modification, that a class of his once trained him to lecture always from one corner of the room, by smiling and nodding whenever he approached it, but frowning and faintly shaking their heads when he moved away from it. That is the way we acquire habits. We slip into them unawares, or let them be imposed on us, or even impose them on ourselves. A person with ever so many habits may still have no character. Habits make for repetitive and predictable behavior, but character gives moral equilibrium to a life. The difference is between a foolish consistency wholly confined to the level of acting, and a reliability in that part of us from which actions have their source. It should now be clear though, that the habit cannot be any part of that character, and that we must try to understand how an active condition can arise as a consequence of a passive one, and why that active condition can only be attained if the passive one has come first. So far we have arranged three notions in a series, like rungs of a ladder: What we need to notice now is that there is yet another rung of the ladder below the habits. We all start out life governed by desires and impulses. Unlike the habits, which are passive but lasting conditions, desires and impulses are passive and momentary, but they are very strong. How can such powerful influences be overcome? The latter word, that can be translated as being-at-work, cannot mean mere behavior, however repetitive and constant it may be. The moral life can be confused with the habits approved by some society and imposed on its young. What he considered good breeding is for us mere habit; that becomes obvious when some student who stood up at the beginning of a lecture occasionally gets bored and leaves in the middle of it. In such a case the politeness was just for show, and the rudeness is the truth. When a parent

makes a child repeatedly refrain from some desired thing, or remain in some frightening situation, the child is beginning to act as a moderate or brave person would act, but what is really going on within the child? What seems more likely is that parental training is needed only for its negative effect, as a way of neutralizing the irrational force of impulses and desires. We all arrive on the scene already habituated, in the habit, that is, of yielding to impulses and desires, of instantly slackening the tension of pain or fear or unfulfilled desire in any way open to us, and all this has become automatic in us before thinking and choosing are available to us at all. This is a description of what is called "human nature," though in fact it precedes our access to our true natural state, and blocks that access. This is why Aristotle says that "the virtues come about in us neither by nature nor apart from nature" a, What we call "human nature," and some philosophers call the "state of nature," is both natural and unnatural; it is the passive part of our natures, passively reinforced by habit. Virtue has the aspect of a second nature, because it cannot develop first, nor by a continuous process out of our first condition. But it is only in the moral virtues that we possess our primary nature, that in which all our capacities can have their full development. The sign of what is natural, for Aristotle, is pleasure, but we have to know how to read the signs. Things pleasant by nature have no opposite pain and no excess, because they set us free to act simply as what we are b, , and it is in this sense that Aristotle calls the life of virtue pleasant in its own right, in itself a, , Our first or childish nature is never eradicated, though, and this is why Aristotle says that our nature is not simple, but also has in it something different that makes our happiness assailable from within, and makes us love change even when it is for the worse. And the road to these virtues is nothing fancy, but is simply what all parents begin to do who withhold some desired thing from a child, or prevent it from running away from every irrational source of fear. They make the child act, without virtue, as though it had virtue. Assume a virtue if you have it not. That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat Of habits evil, is angel yet in this, That to the use of actions fair and good He likewise gives a frock or livery, That aptly is put on. Refrain tonight, And that shall lend a kind of easiness To the next abstinence; the next more easy; For use almost can change the stamp of nature Hamlet is talking to a middle-aged woman about lust, but the pattern applies just as well to five-year-olds and candy. We are in a position to see that it is not the stamp of nature that needs to be changed but the earliest stamp of habit. A habit of yielding to impulse can be counteracted by an equal and opposite habit. This second habit is no virtue, but only a mindless inhibition, an automatic repressing of all impulses. Nor do the two opposite habits together produce virtue, but rather a state of neutrality. Habituation thus does not stifle nature, but rather lets nature make its appearance. The description from Book VII of the Physics of the way children begin to learn applies equally well to the way human character begins to be formed: We noticed earlier that habituation is not the end but the beginning of the progress toward virtue. If the human soul had no being-at-work, no inherent and indelible activity, there could be no such moral stature, but only customs. But early on, when first trying to give content to the idea of happiness, Aristotle asks if it would make sense to think that a carpenter or shoemaker has work to do, but a human being as such is inert. His reply, of course, is that nature has given us work to do, in default of which we are necessarily unhappy, and that work is to put into action the power of reason. Later, Aristotle makes explicit that the irrational impulses are no less human than reasoning is. Responsible human action depends upon the combining of all the powers of the soul: These are all things that are at work in us all the time. Good parental training does not produce them, or mold them, or alter them, but sets them free to be effective in action. This is the way in which, according to Aristotle, despite the contributions of parents, society, and nature, we are the co-authors of the active states of our own souls b, The Mean Now this discussion has shown that habit does make all the difference to our lives without being the only thing shaping those lives and without being the final form they take. Quantitative relations are so far from any serious human situation that they would seem to be present only incidentally or metaphorically, but Aristotle says that "by its thinghood and by the account that unfolds what it is for it to be, virtue is a mean. Cowardice is -3 while Rashness is In our number language Aristotle points out twice that every moral virtue is an extreme a, , , but he keeps that observation secondary to an over-riding sense in which it is a mean. Could there be anything at all to the notion that we hone in on a virtue from two sides? The protagonist is not a human being, but a border collie named Nop. The author describes the way the dog has to find the balance point, the exact distance behind a herd of sheep from which he can

drive the whole herd forward in a coherent mass. When the dog is too close, the sheep panic and run off in all directions; when he is too far back, the sheep ignore him, and turn in all directions to graze. While in motion, a good working dog keeps adjusting his pace to maintain the exact mean position that keeps the sheep stepping lively in the direction he determines. Now working border collies are brave, tireless, and determined. They have been documented as running more than a hundred miles in a day, and they love their work. There is no question that they display virtue, but it is not human virtue and not even of the same form. Some human activities do require the long sustained tension a sheep dog is always holding on to, an active state stretched to the limit, constantly and anxiously kept in balance. Running on a tightrope might capture the same flavor. But constantly maintained anxiety is not the kind of stable equilibrium Aristotle attributes to the virtuous human soul. I think we may have stumbled on the way that human virtue is a mean when we found that habits were necessary in order to counteract other habits. This does accord with the things Aristotle says about straightening warped boards, aiming away from the worse extreme, and being on guard against the seductions of pleasure. Alone, either of them is a vice, according to Aristotle. The glutton, the drunkard, the person enslaved to every sexual impulse obviously cannot ever be happy, but the opposite extremes, which Aristotle groups together as a kind of numbness or denial of the senses b, 8 , miss the proper relation to bodily pleasure on the other side. It may seem that temperance in relation to food, say, depends merely on determining how many ounces of chocolate mousse to eat. The example is given only to show that there is no single action that can be prescribed as right for every person and every circumstance, and it is not strictly analogous even to temperance with respect to food. What is at stake is not a correct quantity of food but a right relation to the pleasure that comes from eating. Suppose you have carefully saved a bowl of chocolate mousse all day for your mid-evening snack, and just as you are ready to treat yourself, a friend arrives unexpectedly to visit. If you are a glutton, you might hide the mousse until the friend leaves, or gobble it down before you open the door. If the state of your soul is in the mean in these matters, you are neither enslaved to nor shut out from the pleasure of eating treats, and can enhance the visit of a friend by sharing them.

**Chapter 2 : The Character of Virtue - Stanley Hauerwas : Eerdmans**

*Aristotle on virtue. STUDY. PLAY. What does Aristotle say about traits of character? 2 marks. Anything part of the soul is either a passion, a faculty or a state of.*

Our true character is revealed by normal, consistent, everyday attitudes and behavior, not by self-conscious words or deeds or rare acts of moral courage. Like a well-made tower, character is built stone by stone, decision by decision. Each of these virtues are independently important but together they provide the foundation for a worthy life. People of good character have the moral awareness and strength to know the good, love the good and do the good. A person of character is a good parent, a good friend, a good employee and a good citizen. Thus, to have a strong, great or honorable character is to be a person of merit, worthy of admiration and honor. The tree will always be what it is but the shadow we see depends on where we stand and the angle of the light. Everyone, regardless of social background, financial status, race, or sex, enters the world with an equal opportunity to become a person of great or petty character. Michael Josephson Good character is more important than wealth, good looks, popularity and even education. These things do not guarantee happiness and often they become obstacles to developing good character. But whether we give in to or overcome the negative messages we are exposed to as we wend our way through life is often determined by whether our parents, teachers, mentors and friends exposed us to good examples and morally inspiring ideas. Josephson It can be frustrating and even frightening to observe the success which sometimes comes to outlaws and rogues who seem to refute notions of universal justice. Every time we see a villain enjoying the fruits of dishonorable acts we find ourselves doubting the value of character and the validity of the virtues we have been taught. Thus, it takes character to believe in character, but that belief is always rewarded, often by material success, but always by the esteem it earns from those who matter. Character is established by conscientious adherence to moral values, not by lofty rhetoric or good intentions. It is created little by little, day by day. Protracted and patient effort is needed to develop good character. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit. We are born to them all, all of us, and when a person comes along with the necessary stimulus, then those qualities of the personality are awakened, so to speak, from their slumber. What infirmity have I mastered today? Our vices will abate of themselves if they be brought every day to the shrift. He that does good becomes good; he that does evil becomes evil. By pure actions he becomes pure; by evil actions he becomes evil. Just as no worthy building can be erected on a weak foundation, so no lasting reputation worthy of respect can be built on a weak character. Without character, all effort to attain dignity is superficial, and results are sure to be disappointing. Samsel Character is power. Washington Of all the properties which belong to honorable men, not one is so highly prized as that of character. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing. Only one thing endures and that is character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy. Martin Luther King, Jr The habits of feeling, action and judgment that comprise good character depend on personal self-discipline and powerful aspiration to become a good person, all of which must be drawn from within. Albert Einstein I have a dreamâ€”that one day my four little children, will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skins, but by the content of their character. You choose your socks by their color, but your friends by their character. Be grateful for the joy of life. Be glad for the privilege of work. Be thankful for the opportunity to give and serve. Good work is the great character-builder, the sweetener of life, the maker of destiny. Let the spirit of your work be right, and whether your task be great or small you will then have the satisfaction of knowing it is worthwhile. There is a secret self that has its own life, unpenetrated and unguessed. It is therefore highly important that you should endeavor not only to be learned but virtuous. Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, fix your thoughts on such things. Arthur Schopenhauer In great matters men show themselves as they wish to be seen; in small matters as they are. Our character is our profile of habits and dispositions to act in certain ways. Somerset Maugham Character is a diamond that scratches every other stone. Dwight Moody Character is revealed by how you act when you think no one is looking. It is the noblest possession of a man, constituting a rank in

itself, and an estate in the general good-will; dignifying every station, and exalting every position in society. It exercises a greater power than wealth, and secures all the honor without the jealousies of fame. It carries with it an influence which always tell; for it is the result of proved honor, rectitude, and consistency—qualities which, perhaps more than any other, command the general confidence and respect of mankind. But the real struggle is here, now, in these quiet weeks. Now it is being decided whether, in the day of your supreme sorrow or temptation, you shall miserably fail or gloriously conquer. Character cannot be made except by a steady, long-continued process. It fortifies a woman as her youth fades. A mode of conduct, a standard of courage, discipline, fortitude and integrity can do a great deal to make a woman beautiful. Therefore, nothing is actually trivial in our lives. To grow in character development, pay attention to seemingly trivial matters. Someone who grows from each minor life event will eventually reach high levels of character perfection. Those who loved you and were helped by you will remember you when flowers have withered. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble. Spurgeon How important is the heart! It is there that character is formed. It alone holds the secrets of true success. Its treasures are priceless — but they can be stolen. Subjection to moods is the mark of a deteriorating morality. There is no baser servitude than that of the man whose caprices are his masters, and a nation composed of such men could not long preserve its liberties. We must not permit our disputes over thorny political questions to obscure the obligation we have to offer instruction to all our young people in the area in which we have, as a society, reached a consensus: Bennett You can easily judge the character of others by how they treat those who can do nothing for them or to them. Forbes The difference between a moral man and a man of honor is that the latter regrets a discreditable act even when it has worked. Mencken, Weakness of attitude becomes weakness of character. We all have patterns of behavior or habits, and often we are quite unaware of them. When Socrates urged us to Know thyself, he clearly was directing us to come to know our habitual ways of responding to the world around us. Do your best no matter how trivial the task. Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong. Look out for the group before you look out for yourself. Judge others by their actions and not by their race or other characteristics. By pursuing this process, a man sooner or later discovers that he is the master gardener of his soul, the director of his life. He also reveals, within himself, the laws of thought, and understands, with ever-increasing accuracy, how the thought-forces and mind-elements operate in shaping his character, circumstances, and destiny. Dormann Great occasions do not make heroes or cowards; they simply unveil them to the eyes. Silently and imperceptibly, as we wake or sleep, we grow strong or we grow weak, and at last some crisis shows us what we have become. Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself. Never spend your money before you have it. Never buy what you do not want because it is cheap; it will never be dear to you. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, and cold. Never repent of having eaten too little. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly. Always take things by their smooth handle. When angry, count to ten before you speak; if very angry, count to one hundred. No one knows our own faults and tendencies better than we do ourselves, so that it is up to each one of us to keep the weeds out, and to keep all growth vigorous and fruitful. This is how character is built. Some little, unassuming, unobtrusive choice presents itself before us slyly and craftily, glib and insinuating, in the modest garb of innocence. Then it is that you will be summoned to show the courage of adventurous youth. We do not need more knowledge, we need more character. Watt The greatest pleasure I know is to do a good action by stealth and have it found out by accident. Letterman As you live your values, your sense of identity, integrity, control, and inner-directedness will infuse you with both exhilaration and peace. I can choose to sit in perpetual sadness, immobilized by the gravity of my loss, or I can choose to rise from the pain and treasure the most precious gift I have — life itself. To that end, each of us must work for his own improvement and at the same time share a general responsibility for all humanity, our particular duty being to aid those to whom we think we can be most useful. This is simply the constant radiation of what man really is, not what he pretends to be. And if our words and our actions come from superficial human relations techniques the Personality Ethic rather than from our own inner core the Character Ethic, others will sense that duplicity. The will to put himself in the place of others; the horror of forcing others into positions from which he would himself recoil; and the power to do what seems to him to be right without considering what others may say or think.

**Chapter 3 : Character Strengths and Virtues - Wikipedia**

*Character Strengths and Virtues is a groundbreaking handbook that was created built on reports from a prestigious group of researchers who have attempted to create a systematic classification and measurements of widely valued positive traits.*

Gier published in *Dialogue*: The virtue of a knife is to cut well, and the virtue of a racehorse is to run well. According to Aristotle, human excellence is found in rational and moral activity, and the specific virtues, such as courage, temperance, justice and wisdom, are cultivated so that we function well and attain happiness eudaimonia within society. Nineteenth Century English philosopher Leslie Stephen described virtue ethics as follows: The only mode of stating the moral law must be as a rule of character. For John Stuart Mill the application of internal sanctions ones by which people restrain themselves have much more moral value than the imposition of external sanctions, those that most often used by parents and societies to control human behavior. In the last section I will argue that virtue ethics in the form of character consequentialism is a distinctively different view than English utilitarianism. Kant and contemporary Christian ethicists join virtue ethics in favoring internal sanctions. For the Greeks, the Roman Stoics, Buddhists, and the Confucians, virtue is its own reward, but popular Christianity appears to have made the incentive for good deeds eternal life in heaven, with eternal damnation for those who do not follow the rules. Moral imperatives are abstractions from thousands of years of observing loyal, honest, patient, just, and compassionate behavior, just as moral prohibitions have come from equally ancient experiences with the vices. Strong circumstantial evidence for compassion among the Neanderthals can be joined with the hypothesis that their very high larynx made it impossible for them to articulate the basic vowels. Michael Spangle and Kent Menzel state that As spoken language transformed our species and was a major factor in forging the human world as we know it. While there is now a consensus that gestures are integral to all natural languages remarkably, the blind gesture when they speak , it is generally agreed that they do not express abstractions very well. It should be even more clear that divine virtues precede divine law, because they would remain as part of the divine nature even if God chose not to create a world. The doctrine of the Trinity allows the possibility that the divine virtues are not exclusively self-regarding. Unitarians need not worry about a totally self-occupied God if they choose a theology, such as the process theology, that conceives the deity as socially involved with the world. The imperatives of virtue ethics--be patient, be kind, be generous, be compassionate, be courageous--better equip an individual to negotiate the obstacles of the moral life. The virtue ethics approach is not to follow a set of abstract rules, but to develop an ensemble of behaviors, dispositions, and qualities that lead to human excellence and the good life. Virtue ethics may not have pat answers to specific cases--no ethical theory could offer this--but it does prepare the moral agent for adaptation, innovation, and self-discovery. As Martha Nussbaum states: Obeying rules can be made specific in a legal contract, but it would of course be impossible to cover the exigencies of our lives with such formal arrangements. It is the virtue of trust that is basic to human interactions and only a few of the myriad promises necessary for the smooth running of human life could ever be spelled out in contractual form. Again, it is the virtues that come first and they are the tools that do the work of the moral life. For example, generous people do not lose their virtue if they do not give to all charities as a rule to give might command, or what Peter Singer requires for maximum world-wide utility. Let us imagine a burning house where a hedonic calculator is indicating that it is too dangerous to go in and save the children inside. Turning to yet another virtue, it is clear that even the virtue of justice always amounts to more than simply conforming to the strict letter of the law. The craft excellence of judicial review, as well as daily extralegal decisions, always lead to unique, distinctive, and noncompulsory results. Aristotle used the legend of Milo to show the absurd consequences of this view. Milo was a strong man who was said to have pressed a calf over his head every day as he was growing up. We each have a mean relative to us, so Milo can eat much more than I can before becoming a glutton. The principal determinants in finding a workable mean for eating are objective not subjective. If people ignore these objective factors--e. For Aristotle all the moral virtues are found in a personal mean, so this virtue ethics can claim to be distinctively personal and normative

at the same time. He is a man who essentially lives and works on his couch. His job is entering data via a modem attached to his computer. It does not take much thinking to enter the data, so he is able to view his favorite TV shows all the time. His refrigerator and microwave, of course, are handy for snacks, drinks, and frozen dinners. Our sofa slug is also a very religious person. He tunes into to his favorite TV preachers on Sunday morning and sends in his tithes by mail. Finally, let us say that this man has never broken a law or committed a major sin in his life. Our couch potato obeys all moral laws, but he does not aspire to cultivate the virtues of the good life. According to rule ethics of popular Christianity, however, this man is fully moral, and, assuming divine favor, saved as well. Bernard Mayo clearly sees the implications of this example: As we have seen, the sanctions of a rule-based ethics, in its popular religious form, are primarily external: Contemporary Christian ethical theory of course avoids this simple barter system of ethics, but one cannot deny that this is at the basis of popular religious belief. This may lead to a mere moralism rather than a genuine morality based on internal sanctions and the view that virtue is its own reward. Most people would agree that the latter is a more admirable form of ethical motivation, and we have seen that internal sanctions maximize utility. Most traditional religious ethics teaches us the wrong reasons to be moral. We should become moral so as to become a better person and be an example to others, rather than for the purely selfish reasons of avoiding punishment. Moral action should flow naturally from our selves; we should not have to be bribed to be moral. Justice will not be achieved by following rules, it will only be attained, as Plato, Confucius, and the Buddha envisioned, by people with balanced and harmonious souls and the particular virtuous acts that comes from such harmony. Another concern about duty ethics is the problem of legalism. True morality should be the foundation of law, and the virtues, as prior to law, would then serve as a guide and check to any law. Humans acted courageously, justly, beneficently before they laid down rules regulating human behavior. A rule-based ethics reverses this order. It speaks of law, usually divine law, first, and moral rules that come directly from the mind and mouth of the lawgiver. But true morality must always serve as a check for the possibility of unjust laws. If law and morality are the same, then this crucial idea of morality as the guardian of just law is undermined. For example, most of my students are able to condemn Zeus and other Greek gods as immoral deities because of the basic intuition, central to virtue ethics, that virtue precedes law. The king, earthly or heavenly, is not always right, and we must always guard against the false identity of the legislator and the source of the Good. Some virtue theorists believe that the virtues can stand alone with intrinsic value independent of consequences and moral rules. The argument that rules are abstractions from virtues is, I believe, quite persuasive, but the challenge of consequentialism is much stronger. In the burning house example discussed above, we saw that the virtue theorist is not bound to the hedonic calculus. Tying generous acts to a world-wide maximizing of pleasure leads to unacceptable demands on more fortunate people. Furthermore, utilitarians could never agree on the specific allocation that people would have to set aside for the poor and bereaved. To conclude, however, that the virtues have no necessary connection to consequences is to miss the point of the challenge. The examples above pertain only to utilitarianism consequentialism wedded to ethical hedonism ; they do not prove that virtues are in every instance independent of any consequence. An implication of our argument that virtues developed before moral rules is that they were chosen because of their good consequences. It seems strongly counter-intuitive to suggest there could be legitimate human goals which always or even usually led to bad consequences. First, as opposed to most hedonic calculations, character consequentialism focuses on the long-term benefits that the virtues bring to individuals and society as a whole. *Ivanhoe* illustrates this distinction between the short-term utility of quarterly results in American corporations and the lifetime commitment of Japanese companies to their employees. What the Japanese lose in terms of quick and large profits, they gain in the form of corporate, civic, and personal virtues of loyalty, perseverance, and benevolence. Some might say that the virtues are the means to the good life, but it is more accurate to say that practicing the virtues is the good life. One of the weaknesses of the hedonic calculus is the myriad contingencies and uncertainties that make prediction virtually impossible. In stark contrast, the value of the virtues is well-attested and the person of character is eminently predictable and reliable. Complex and variable contexts makes the application of rules difficult, but the virtue theorist, always working from concrete particulars, offers moral agents the freedom to adapt and to

improvise. Although critics claim that virtue theory is vulnerable to perfectionism, it appears that both rule ethics and utilitarianism have even a greater liability on this point. Their abstract and universal perspective may deceive them into thinking that there must be a solution to every moral dilemma. The particularism and contextualist perspective of virtue theory should save it from this danger. He is very concerned that both rule ethics and utilitarianism, primarily because both assume a disembodied moral agent, occasionally require actions that ignore the impact on personal integrity and character. Ivanhoe grants that it is conceivable that a few people in isolated situations may be forced to perform gruesome deeds in order to maximize the social good. But there must be something fundamentally wrong with a theory that uses the language of moral necessity in hypothetical actions such as torturing a child to save the lives of ten adults. There is also something terribly wrong with the Kantian rule that it is always wrong to lie, even when lying might save the life of your best friend. The Kantian allows that it is prudent for you to do so, but insists that your action has no moral worth. The virtue theorist saves nearly all our intuitions by replying: AYes, practical reason requires that you lie, but this act does indeed have moral worth, and lying once does not in any way undermine your character. But why is it that our intuitions tell us that it is never acceptable to torture a child to save other lives? Lying once does not undermine character, but torturing a child one time does? Is it because that noninjury in the flesh is more culpable than noninjury in speech? It seems right when he says that experimenters who torture animals to market eye shadow will most likely undermine their character, but the utilitarian position appears to have more support when the animal experiment involves a cure for AIDS. Does overwhelming utility sometimes excuse the possible destruction of the character of AIDS researchers? Virtue theory does not seem to support all of our intuitions on these issues. But perhaps we should remind ourselves that a perfect match with intuitions is a perfectionist goal of modern ethics that virtue ethics should reject. It is no accident that the Confucian social self goes hand in hand with a focus on family and societal relations. Ivanhoe connects this insight with the Confucian idea of graded love—namely, that it is only natural that people care more for those closest to them. But I am uncommonly concerned about my own concerns, in ways that are not only not immoral but necessarily part of what I regard as a good life. I value, in fact cherish, having people who are not only special but unique for me. Without these special relationships my life would be greatly diminished. The values of loving parents and a true friend cannot be properly measured in the simple mechanics of the hedonic calculus.

### Chapter 4 : How to Be a Virtuous Woman (with Pictures) - wikiHow

*In the Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle states that "virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle".*

This is week four in our five-week worship and sermon series on Christian virtues. In ethics, virtues are traits or marks of character developed through practice and intentional choice. And, of course, to say we reflect or develop the character of Jesus means we live into the image of God breathed into us at creation. We started with the virtue of generosity that begins with seeing others. Then we looked at the virtue of faith, which God planted within us at creation, but which we express with intentional trust and choice. Last week, we explored the virtue of gratitude, which helps us see God, reflect God, and trust God. Imagine the Peanuts gang out playing football in the park on a brisk fall day after school. Lucy volunteers to hold the ball and invites Charlie to kick it. Charlie trots back and readies himself. And in every instance of this scene except one, Lucy pulls the ball away at the last moment. Charlie whiffs and ends up flat on his back. And nearly every fall, we see Lucy do it again. He questions if he can trust her. Then she does it again. But he keeps showing up and trying. Coming up year after year, this scene gains metaphoric weight. We can relate to Charlie Brown. His repeated failure to kick the ball has become a symbol of the ways the world and how the powers that be, and other people, seem to be ever against us. But to fail, always, to be duped and tricked time and time again: Life seemed out to get him, or had no meaning at all. On first glance, we have a terrible question to answer: Is this what God is like, an unjust judge? After giving us hope that God will respond quickly, unlike the unjust judge, are we not at risk of imaging God to be a little like Lucy – a schoolyard tease who consistently takes the ball out from us just before we get the bliss of a beautifully kicked ball? This is not just rhetorical. What do we believe about God and prayer? Who do we believe God is? But, before he gets to the strange stuff in his answer, he gives a quick, direct answer: Charlie Brown shows up day after day, or year after year. He expects a sort of justice and fairness. He expects to play a game with friends. He should get to kick the ball. The widow shows up in the same way. She expects justice, wholeness, life. We long for a life of meaning, fulfillment, health, and joy. We long for joy, fulfillment, meaningful work, and rich connections with others and God: What can that mean? And remember the earlier question: The widow is persistent in showing up. This is our image of prayer: The widow shows up. Charlie Brown, too, shows up: What if this is what Jesus was getting at? What if the virtue of persistent prayer is just about showing up repeatedly, day after day, and night after night? And in this showing up, we ask, essentially, for just one thing: Persistent prayer is about showing up with God, regularly, daily, repeatedly. God, fill me with your presence. Bring your kingdom on earth as in heaven, and do so in my heart. God shows up with us in Jesus, through the Spirit, so that we can show up with God. How do we keep on showing up with God? How do we connect with this God who is among us and within us?

**Chapter 5 : List of Virtues**

*VIRTUE AND CHARACTER* "Virtue" is the translation of the ancient Greek *arete*, which meant any kind of excellence. Inanimate objects could have *arete*, since they were assumed to have a *telos*, that is, a purpose.

Challenges to the Traditional View 1. Along this general line, in contemporary usage character often refers to a set of qualities or characteristics that can be used to differentiate between persons. It is used this way, for example, commonly in literature. In philosophy, however, the term character is typically used to refer to the particularly moral dimension of a person. For this reason, his discussion will be used as a beginning point. For example, it is an excellence of an ax if it is able to cut wood. An excellence, therefore, is a property whereby its possessor operates well or fulfills its function. Aristotle, for instance, sometimes speaks of a good moral character as "human excellence" or an "excellence of soul" *Nicomachean Ethics* I. The idea here is the same as with the ax "having a good moral character helps its possessor operate well and live up to her potential, thereby fulfilling her nature. The excellences of thought include epistemic or intellectual virtues such as technical expertise accomplishment and practical wisdom. The last of these, practical wisdom, is particularly important and will be discussed in greater detail below because of its relationship with the excellences of character. Given their connection with the intellect, it is not surprising that he thought these excellences are fostered through instruction and teaching. Aristotle famously thought a moral disposition was virtuous when it was in proper proportion, which he described as a mean between two extremes: Excellence [of character], then, is a disposition issuing in decisions, depending on intermediacy of the kind relative to us, this being determined by rational prescription and in the way in which the wise person would determine it. And it is intermediacy between two bad states, one involving excess, the other involving deficiency; and also because one set of bad states is deficient, the other excessive in relation to what is required both in affections and actions, whereas excellence both finds and chooses the intermediate. For instance, the courageous person is one who is disposed to feel neither more nor less fear than the situation calls for. Merely doing the right action is not sufficient to have the moral excellences. One must also be the right sort of individual or have the right sort of character. The subject of moral character belongs to virtue theory more generally, which is the philosophical examination of notions related to the virtues. Roger Crisp distinguishes virtue ethics and virtue theory as follows: Virtue ethics is a sub-species of virtue theory insofar as the former attempts to base ethics on evaluation of virtue. Character and Three Major Approaches to Ethics It is commonplace to differentiate three major approaches to normative ethics: At the heart of consequentialist theories is the idea that the moral action is the one that produces the best consequences. According to deontological theories, morality is primarily a function of duties or obligations, regardless of the consequences of acting in accordance with those duties. Both of these sets of theories are commonly described as ethics of rules. In contrast, virtue theories give primacy of importance not to rules, but to particular habits of character such as the virtue of courage or the vice of greed. This description of these three approaches is a vast over-simplification. For example, the ethical writings of Immanuel Kant are often taken to be the epitome of deontology, but his *Lectures on Ethics* and the second part of *The Metaphysics of Morals* focus largely on virtue. Nevertheless, even this short discussion illustrates how moral character plays a particularly central role in virtue ethics, even if it can also play a similar role in other approaches to normative ethics. Most ancient philosophers were virtue theorists of some sort or other. Virtue ethics was often criticized during the modern period, but has experienced a revival in recent years. This recent resurgence in virtue ethics, and virtue theory more generally, has many sources. Two of the most notable are G. In her article, Anscombe criticizes deontological and consequentialist approaches to ethics for wrongly focusing on legalistic notions of obligations and rules. She suggests that ethics would benefit from an adequate philosophy of psychology. According to Anscombe, only a return to a virtue approach to ethics and the notions of human flourishing and well-being will be able to provide for the future flourishing of ethics. Less directly influential is Rawls. Non-moral Character Persons have all kinds of traits: Psychologist Lawrence Pervin defines a personality trait as "a disposition to behave expressing itself in consistent patterns of functioning across a range of situations" Pervin , But even among such traits, some do

not appear to be morally relevant. We thus need a way to differentiate those traits that are morally relevant from those that are not, particularly because philosophers and psychologists tend to use the term "character trait" in slightly different ways. Yet the differences are crucial. Philosophers typically think that moral character traits, unlike other personality or psychological traits, have an irreducibly evaluative dimension; that is, they involve a normative judgment. The evaluative dimension is directly related to the idea that the agent is morally responsible for having the trait itself or for the outcome of that trait. Thus, a specifically moral character trait is a character trait for which the agent is morally responsible. Moral Responsibility According to a widespread approach to moral responsibility, to be morally responsible is to be deserving of the reactive attitudes. According to Peter Strawson, whose work on moral responsibility has had wide influence, the reactive attitudes "are essentially natural human reactions to the good or ill will or indifference of others towards us, as displayed in their attitudes and actions" P. These reactive attitudes can be either positive as in cases of moral praise, gratitude, respect, love, or negative as in cases of moral blame, resentment, indignation. In other words, a person is morally responsible for performing some action X only if that person is the apt recipient of praise or gratitude, etc. On such an account, a person could be responsible for some action even if no other person in fact actually held her responsible. A person could be deserving of resentment, for example, for performing some action even if no one does, in fact, resent her for performing that action. Such an account of moral responsibility, however, can be extended beyond actions to include character traits as well. Consider the case of Chester. Chester has a very strong desire to molest young children. If he thought he could get away with it, he would abduct and molest the children playing on the playground near his house. But Chester is very afraid of getting caught since there is a police station across the street from the playground. Despite this fact, there is still something morally wrong with Chester; he is deserving of blame for being the kind of individual that wants to molest children and would if he could get away with it. Finally, there are two related sets of questions that may be asked about responsibility. The first set of questions is about the general conditions that must be met in order for an agent to be morally responsible. What is the epistemic condition that must be met in order for an agent to be morally responsible? The second sort of question attempts to figure out what candidates are subject to the conditions for moral responsibility, in other words, whether a particular individual satisfies these conditions. In what follows, it will be assumed that only persons are morally responsible agents. However, it does not follow from the fact that a person is a morally responsible agent that she is morally responsible for all her actions and character traits. A Traditional View of Moral Character The previous section helped to differentiate moral versus non-moral character traits via their relationship with moral responsibility. In short, moral character traits are those for which the possessor is the proper recipient of the reactive attitudes. Little was said, however, about the exact nature of a moral character trait. The present section explores the nature of the most common understanding of moral character traits, which I will call "the Traditional View of Moral Character," or Traditional View for short. Different theories within the Traditional View will, of course, fill out the details in diverse ways. So it will be helpful to think of the Traditional View as a family of similar and related views, rather than a fully developed and determinate view itself. For this reason, it will be helpful to look at dispositions in general before turning toward specifically moral dispositions. This is the topic of the first sub-section below. The second sub-section looks at virtues and vices as particular kinds of dispositions. The third sub-section discusses the three central claims of the Traditional View of moral character. The present entry will not address the related issue of the development of moral character—see the entry on Moral Development. Dispositions in General Dispositions are particular kinds of properties or characteristics that objects can possess. Examples of dispositions include the solubility of a sugar-cube in water, the fragility of porcelain, the elasticity of a rubber band, and the magnetism of a lodestone. Dispositional properties are usually contrasted with non-dispositional or categorical properties. Providing a fully adequate account of this distinction is difficult, though the basic idea is fairly easy to grasp for a discussion of these issues, see Mumford, particularly Chapter 4. Compare the solubility of a sugar-cube in water with its volume. The sugar-cube need not actually be placed in water to be soluble; one simply sees that it is soluble when it is placed in water. In contrast, one need not do anything to the sugar-cube to see that it has the categorical property of volume, for the sugar-cube always manifests this property in a way that it

does not always manifest solubility in water. For dispositional properties, there is a difference between an object having such a property and manifesting its disposition this same point will be true of the virtues discussed below. This contrast suggests that dispositional properties fundamentally involve conditionality in a way that categorical properties do not. What objects are soluble in water at standard temperature and pressure? Just those that would dissolve if placed in water at standard temperature and pressure. There are a number of metaphysical questions about dispositions. Is the conditionality involved in dispositions to be understood counter-factually, or some other way? Are colors dispositional or categorical properties? Can dispositional properties be reduced to categorical properties, or vice versa? Such questions, however, need not concern us here. There would be significantly fewer college students, for example, with avidity for beer were it not disposed to cause intoxication in those who drink it. Dispositions can help explain not only why past events happened, but also provide the grounds for future events. Certain kinds of objects are dispositional in nature; thermostats, for example. Persons have some dispositions in virtue of their physical bodies such as solubility in certain solvents and other dispositions in virtue of their mental lives such as a disposition to play the piano when one is present, or to give to Oxfam if asked. In fact, Gilbert Ryle has famously suggested that the mind, rather than being another substance in addition to the body, is just a set of dispositions for the body to behave in certain ways. It is on this basis that Ryle argues that substance dualism is a category mistake; see Ryle, Chapter 1. It is to these moral character traits that we now turn. Virtues and Vices as Dispositions. Moral character traits are those dispositions of character for which it is appropriate to hold agents morally responsible. A trait for which the agent is deserving of a positive reactive attitude, such as praise or gratitude, is a virtue, and a vice is a trait for which the agent is deserving of a negative reactive attitude, such as resentment or blame. Moral character traits are relatively stable, fixed and reliable dispositions of action and affect that ought to be rationally informed.

### Chapter 6 : Aristotle: Ethics | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

*Character Strengths and Virtues (CSV)* is a book by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman () that attempts to present a measure of humanist ideals of virtue in an empirical, rigorously scientific manner.

Use the back button on your browser when you wish to return to the previous page. We will not necessarily do story plots on all the virtues listed in this list of virtues and there may be other virtues that you may wish to suggest. At this point we just need you to select a virtue that you will work on writing a story plot for. When someone has selected a virtue I will try to mark it with an asterisk so that no one else will select it. At this moment all are available. List of Virtues Acceptance: Embracing life on its own terms. Acceptance allows us to bend without breaking in the face of tests. To consider circumstances, especially those that can not be changed, as satisfactory. The willingness to take full responsibility for our choices. Seeing the good in life. Telling the truth about what is just, setting clear boundaries. Reverence and wonder, deep respect for the source of life. A sense of wonder and reverence for the harmony, colour, and loveliness of the world. Calling on our creativity to add to the beauty in the world. A quality of spirit that enables you to face danger of pain without showing fear. Giving tender attention to the people and things that matter to us. Listening with compassion, helping with kindness. Avoidance of rashness, attention to safety. A giving heart, a generous way of viewing others and caring for their needs. Seeing the bright side, looking for the good in whatever happens. Keeping our bodies, our thoughts and our spaces clean. An environment of order and beauty brings peace to our souls. Caring deeply about a person, a goal or a belief. Willingness to give our all and keep our promises. Deep empathy for the suffering of others. Compassion flows freely from the heart when we let go of judgments and seek to understand. A sense of assurance that comes from having faith in ourselves and in life. Confidence allows us to trust that we have the strength to cope with whatever happens. Giving careful thought to the needs of others. Holding a decision in a contemplative and thoughtful way. The awareness of sufficiency, a sense that we have enough and we are enough. Appreciating the simple gifts of life. Working together for a common goal, calling on the different gifts each of us has to offer. Transforms fear into determination. Embracing life fully, without holding back, doing what must be done even when it is difficult or risky. Treating others with kindness, tact and graciousness. The power of imagination. Being open to inspiration, which ignites our originality. A desire to find out and know things. Firmness of mind in taking a stand, reaching a conclusion, making a decision. It requires both courage and discernment. Experiencing our feelings without allowing them to control us. Stepping back and thoughtfully choosing how we will act rather than just reacting. Commitment to something we care about deeply. A great love or loyalty, enthusiastic zeal. Honoring the worth of all people, including ourselves and treating everyone with respect. Doing what needs to be done with care, concentration and single-pointed attention, giving our absolute best. Applying the wisdom of our intuition to discover what is essential and true, with contemplative vigilance. Clarity of the soul. Being discrete in ones speech, keeping secrets. Practicing perseverance and patience when obstacles arise hones our character and educates our souls. We welcome all that we are here to learn. Being filled with spirit. Excitement about life and openness to the wonders each day holds. Acting wholeheartedly, with zeal and eagerness, holding nothing back. Giving our best to any task we do and any relationship we have. A relationship of trust. Belief in the reality of Grace. Loyalty to our beliefs, regardless of what happens. Being true to the people we love. Abiding by an agreement, treating it as a sacred covenant. Complete faithfulness in our relationships. The ability to adapt and change amid the fluctuating circumstances of life. Going with the flow. Adaptable, able to be changed to suit circumstances. Concentrated awareness and effort. Tolerating hardship with good grace. Not allowing the trials of life to steal our joy. Overlooking mistakes, and being willing to move forward with a clean slate. Forgiving others frees us from resentment. Forgiving ourselves is part of positive change. To cease to feel angry or bitter towards a person or about an offence. The will to endure no matter what happens, with courage and patience. Reaching out to others with warmth and caring. The willingness to be an intimate companion. Giving fully, sharing freely. Trust that there is plenty for everyone. Giving or ready to give freely, free from meanness or prejudice. Moving wisely, touching softly,

speaking quietly and thinking kindly. Moderate; mild, quite; not rough or severe. Reflecting gentleness and beauty in the way we act, speak and move. Freely expressing thankfulness and appreciation to others and for the gifts of life. Doing useful things that make a difference to others. Taking time for thoughtfulness. Being truthful, sincere, open, and genuine. The confidence to be ourselves. Living with a sense of respect for what we know is right. Living up to the virtues of our character. Keeping our agreements with integrity. Looking to the future with trust and faith. Optimism in the face of adversity. Having an attitude of caring and mercy to all people. Modest; not arrogant or boastful. Being open to every lesson life brings, trusting that our mistakes are often our best teachers. Being thankful for our gifts instead of boastful. The ability to perceive, enjoy, or express what is amusing, comical, incongruous, or absurd. Caring about what is right and meaningful in life. Daring to have big dreams and then acting as if they are possible.

**Chapter 7 : VIRTUE ETHICS AND CHARACTER CONSEQUENTIALISM**

*On this view, moral character is a state closer to what the Greeks considered self-mastery or continence than it is to what they considered virtue. Even though the natural law theorists tended to assimilate virtue to continence, they still admitted that there was an area of moral life in which motive and character mattered.*

At the beginning of Book II of the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle tells us that there are two different kinds of human excellences, excellences of thought and excellences of character. When we speak of a moral virtue or an excellence of character, the emphasis is not on mere distinctiveness or individuality, but on the combination of qualities that make an individual the sort of ethically admirable person he is. If someone lacks virtue, she may have any of several moral vices, or she may be characterized by a condition somewhere in between virtue and vice, such as continence or incontinence. Although these ancient moralists differed on some issues about virtue, it makes sense to begin with some points of similarity. These points of similarity will show why the Greek moralists thought it was important to discuss character. They often begin by having Socrates ask his interlocutors to explain what a particular virtue is. In reply, the interlocutors usually offer behavioral accounts of the virtues. In the Charmides, Charmides suggests that temperance consists in acting quietly. In the Republic, Cephalus suggests that justice consists in giving back what one has borrowed. In each of these cases, Plato has Socrates reply in the same way. In the Republic Socrates explains that giving back what one has borrowed cannot be what justice is, for there are cases where giving back what one has borrowed would be foolish, and the just person recognizes that it is foolish. If the person from whom you have borrowed a sword goes mad, it would be foolish for you to return the sword, for you are then putting yourself and others in danger. The implication is that the just person can recognize when it is reasonable to return what he has borrowed. Similarly, as Socrates explains in the Laches, standing firm in battle cannot be courage, for sometimes standing firm in battle is simply a foolish endurance that puts oneself and others at needless risk. The trouble one encounters in trying to give a purely behavioral account of virtue explains why the Greek moralists turn to character to explain what virtue is. It may be true that most of us can recognize that it would be foolish to risk our lives and the lives of others to secure a trivial benefit, and that most of us can see that it is unjust to harm others to secure power and wealth for our own comfort. But the Greek moralists think it takes someone of good moral character to determine with regularity and reliability what actions are appropriate and reasonable in fearful situations and that it takes someone of good moral character to determine with regularity and reliability how and when to secure goods and resources for himself and others. Living well or happiness is our ultimate end in that a conception of happiness serves to organize our various subordinate ends, by indicating the relative importance of our ends and by indicating how they should fit together into some rational overall scheme. When we are living well, our life is worthy of imitation and admiration. For, according to the Greek moralists, that we are happy says something about us and about what we have achieved, not simply about the fortunate circumstances in which we find ourselves. Whatever happiness is, it must take account of the fact that a happy life is one lived by rational agents who act and who are not simply victims of their circumstances. The Greek moralists conclude that a happy life must give a prominent place to the exercise of virtue, for virtuous traits of character are stable and enduring and are not products of fortune, but of learning or cultivation. Moreover, virtuous traits of character are excellences of the human being in that they are the best exercise of reason, which is the activity characteristic of human beings. In this way, the Greek philosophers claim, virtuous activity completes or perfects human life. As explained in Section 2. Bravery requires more than standing up against threats to oneself and others. This led the Greek moralists to conclude that virtuous traits of character have two aspects: The Greek philosophers disagree mostly about what it involves. In particular, they differ about the role played in virtuous traits of character by cognitive states. Socrates and the Stoics argued that only cognitive states were necessary for virtue, whereas Plato and Aristotle argued that both cognitive and affective states were necessary. On this view later revived by Epicurus, 341–270 BCE, having a virtuous character is purely a matter of being knowledgeable of what brings us more pleasure rather than less. In the Protagoras, Socrates recognizes that most people object to this view.

Someone may be overcome by anger, fear, lust, and other desires, and act against what he believes will bring him more pleasure rather than less. He can, in other words, be incontinent or weak-willed. Socrates replies that such cases should be understood differently. When, for example, a cowardly person flees from battle rather than endanger his life, even though he may seem to be pursuing the more pleasant action, he is really just ignorant of the greater pleasure to be achieved by entering battle and acting bravely. In other words, incontinence is not possible, according to Socrates. Both Plato and Aristotle argue that virtuous character requires a distinctive combination of cognitive and affective elements. In the Republic, Plato divides the soul into three parts and gives to each a different kind of desire: rational, appetitive, or spirited. As types of non-rational desire, appetitive and spirited desires can conflict with our rational desires about what contributes to our overall good, and they will sometimes move us to act in ways we recognize to be against our greater good. When that happens, we are incontinent. To be virtuous, then, we must both understand what contributes to our overall good and have our spirited and appetitive desires educated properly, so that they agree with the guidance provided by the rational part of the soul. A potentially virtuous person learns when young to love and take pleasure in virtuous actions, but must wait until late in life to develop the understanding that explains why what he loves is good. Once he has learned what the good is, his informed love of the good explains why he acts as he does and why his actions are virtuous. Of all the Greek moralists, Aristotle provides the most psychologically insightful account of virtuous character. Excellence [of character], then, is a state concerned with choice, lying in a mean relative to us, this being determined by reason and in the way in which the man of practical wisdom would determine it. Now it is a mean between two vices, that which depends on excess and that which depends on defect. Rather it is the settled condition we are in when we are well off in relation to feelings and actions. We are well off in relation to our feelings and actions when we are in a mean or intermediate state in regard to them. If, on the other hand, we have a vicious character, we are badly off in relation to feelings and actions, and we fail to hit the mean in regard to them. Virtue as a mean state Aristotle emphasizes that the mean state is not an arithmetic mean, but one relative to the situation. The different particular virtues provide illustrations of what Aristotle means. Each virtue is set over or concerned with specific feelings or actions. The virtue of mildness or good temper, for example, is concerned with anger. Aristotle thinks that a mild person ought to be angry about some things. It would also be inappropriate to take offense and get angry if there is nothing worth getting angry about. That response would indicate the morally excessive character of the irascible person. Sometimes intense anger is appropriate; at other times calm detachment is. Aristotle seems to think that, at bottom, any non-virtuous person is plagued by inner doubt or conflict, even if on the surface she appears to be as psychologically unified as virtuous people. Aristotle seems to have this point in mind when he says of vicious people in Nicomachean Ethics IX. Virtuous persons, on the other hand, enjoy who they are and take pleasure in acting virtuously. Like the morally vicious person, the continent and incontinent persons are internally conflicted, but they are more aware of their inner turmoil than the morally vicious person. Continence is essentially a kind of self-mastery: The incontinent person also in some way knows what she should do, but she fails to do it because of recalcitrant feelings. Recall that Socrates had explained apparently incontinent behavior as the result of ignorance of what leads to the good. Since, he thought, everyone desires the good and aims at it in his actions, no one would intentionally choose a course of action believed to yield less good overall. Moral education and the human function Because Aristotle thinks that virtue is a unified, unconflicted state where emotional responses and rational assessments speak with the same voice, he, like Plato, thinks that the education of our emotional responses is crucial for the development of virtuous character. If our emotional responses are educated properly, we will learn to take pleasure or pain in the right things. Virtue is the state that makes a human being good and makes him perform his function well. His function his *ergon* or characteristic activity, Aristotle says in Nicomachean Ethics I. According to Aristotle, human beings can reason in ways that non-human animals cannot. They can deliberate about what to do, about what kind of lives to live, about what sort of persons to be. They can look for reasons to act or live one way rather than another. In other words, they can engage in practical reasoning. They can also think about the nature of the world and why it seems to behave as it does. They can consider scientific and metaphysical truths about the universe. There is no agreement among scholars as to whether,

and how, these types of reasoning can be distinguished. How do one realize these powers fully? Not by becoming adept at every kind of activity in which deliberating and judging on the basis of reason is called for. For then one would have to master every kind of cultural, scientific, and philosophical activity. When that happens, his exercise of these abilities is a continuing source of self-esteem and enjoyment. He comes to like his life and himself and is now a genuine self-lover. In *Nicomachean Ethics IX*. Morally defective types love themselves in the sense that they love material goods and advantages. They desire to secure these things even at the expense of other people, and so they act in ways that are morally vicious. Genuine self-lovers, on the other hand, love most the exercise of their developed human activity, which is rational activity. When they enjoy and recognize the value of developing their rational powers, they can use this recognition to guide their decisions and to determine which actions are appropriate in which circumstances. Moreover, because they now take pleasure in the right things they enjoy most figuring things out rather than the accumulation of wealth or power, they will avoid many of the actions, and will be unattracted to many of the pleasures, associated with the common vices. In other words, they will act as a virtuous person would. The need for relationships and community According to Aristotle, the full realization of our rational powers is not something we can achieve or maintain on our own. It is hard, he says in *Nicomachean Ethics IX*. To realize our powers fully we need at least a group of companions who share our interests and with whom we can cooperate to achieve our mutually recognized goals. In this kind of cooperative activity, we are parts of a larger enterprise, so that when others act, it is as though we are acting, too. Examples listed by Aristotle include sailors on a ship, soldiers on an expedition, members of families, business relationships, religious associations, citizens of a political community, and colleagues engaged in contemplative activity. As Aristotle explains in *Rhetoric II*. Although we may have initiated activity for self-interested reasons, the psychological result is that we come to like our cooperative partners and to develop a concern for their good for their own sakes. This change, Aristotle indicates, is caused to occur in us. It is not chosen. Once bonds of friendship are formed, it is natural for us to exhibit the social virtues Aristotle describes in *Nicomachean Ethics IV*.

**Chapter 8 : Greatest Quotes on Character, Reputation and Character Education - What Will Matter**

*This is my own list of corresponding virtues to the Seven Deadly Sins. There are many virtues, but I have selected these having a more direct correlation to the list of sins in the previous episode.*

Adam Smith and the Character of Virtue Published: Reviewed by Sam Fleischacker, University of Illinois-Chicago In March, , Adam Smith told his publisher that he was preparing a new edition of his Theory of Moral Sentiments TMS , which would include significant revisions to his account of duty, and of the history of philosophy. A year later Smith wrote his publisher again, with an apology for taking so long about his revisions and an excuse: But on the whole, Part VI has been regarded as more homily than philosophy, containing little if anything that adds to the innovative accounts of sympathy, moral and aesthetic judgment, economic motivation, and the nature of the self to be found in the earlier parts of TMS. Ryan Hanley offers a powerful challenge to this scholarly consensus. If he does not fully convince skeptics that Smith meant to answer one of the most important problems he faced in the late additions to TMS, Hanley certainly makes a case for the importance of Part VI that all future Smith scholars will have to heed. A word, first, on the problem that Part VI, according to Hanley, is meant to address. It has long been argued, by thinkers as different as Daniel Bell and Leo Strauss, Michael Sandel and Alasdair MacIntyre, that our modern political and socio-economic world -- the world of capitalism "commerce", for Smith and liberal democracy -- leads to a sharp diminution in the attention people pay to virtue, that it breeds instead a shallow selfishness in which people care more about accumulating material goods than achieving either the courage and wisdom praised by Plato and Aristotle, or the transformation of the soul urged by Christianity and other religions. But all these critics agree that Smith is a prime representative of everything they oppose: Defenders of Smith have tended to concede that Smith represents these things, while arguing that he rightly sees the new world of the Enlightenment as having benefits that outweigh the harm it does to the traditional virtues. Hanley takes a very different tack. Smith, he claims, concedes nothing to those who would dismiss the virtues of Christendom, or of ancient Greece and Rome. On the contrary, in Part VI of TMS Smith celebrates these virtues, shows how they can be integrated with one another, and suggests that they remain achievable, and must remain an aspiration for us, even in modern commercial society. Hanley understands the three main sections of TMS VI as offering a layered solution to the three main ways in which commercial society degrades virtue , Capitalism fosters restless consumerism and vanity; the first section of Part VI describes a virtue -- prudence -- that can serve as a palliative to these vices. The prudent person delays gratification and seeks modest amounts of material goods, rather than endless luxury goods and high social status; the prudent person does not succumb to the vices that Mandeville and Rousseau attributed to commerce Prudence can, however, be the mark of a small-minded, selfish person, and magnanimity, the "greatness of soul" on which Smith focuses in section ii of Part VI, is meant to be a corrective for this But people who transcend small-minded selfishness by aspiring to great deeds can be cruel and condescending, so Smith adds a corrective for magnanimity to his account of virtue in section iii: The wise and virtuous person will also model him or herself after an ideal of humanity that, Hanley argues, retains a more religious coloring than previous commentators have seen in the last edition of TMS. Self-love can be used to correct for the vices of self-love; Smith holds up an ancient and powerful vision of self-transcendence, says Hanley, as something that can be achieved precisely by making proper use of the deep structure of self-love The new part VI of TMS thus recommends a way of living that incorporates classical and Christian ideals, suggesting that human beings in commercial society do not need to resign themselves to rampant consumerism, petty selfishness, or even a purely secular, mundane human goodness. Nothing in TMS explicitly suggests that the three kinds of virtue described in Part VI are supposed to build on one another, nor that they are meant as a corrective to the moral ills of modern commercial society. Nevertheless, Hanley finds an array of subtle hints that this is precisely what Smith meant to accomplish. We are given a Smith quite different from the one we usually encounter: The first is a textual one. Smith identified two main questions as central to moral philosophy -- what is virtue? A number of scholars read TMS as concerned with the second of these questions, to the virtual exclusion of the first. A theory of virtue would on

this account be a detailed description of what kind of person the impartial spectator approves of, and on this subject, previous scholars have maintained, Smith said virtually nothing in the first five editions of his book, and nothing very satisfactory in the new Part VI added to the sixth edition. Smith uses them to frame his account of the history of moral philosophy in TMS VII, and it is clear from the most casual reading of that account 1 that he is far more interested in answers to the first than to the second question he spends almost 4 times as much space on them, and describes the second question very dismissively -- VII. Smith seems to see the second question as primarily about the ground of moral judgment, rather than the nature of moral judgment -- as the meta-ethical question about whether moral judgment rests on reason or feeling -- and, as he expressly tells us VII. He seems to have regarded Hutcheson and Hume as having answered it feeling is the basis of all moral judgment, but reason figures out what we should be judging and develops general moral rules out of our particular judgments. Given this textual evidence that Smith saw himself as responding to the first, not the second, of the basic moral questions he describes in TMS VII, I think we have to read even the early editions of his book as intended to give us a theory of virtue, not just of moral judgment. It is not hard to understand the book that way. Certainly, TMS deals in great detail with how moral judgment arises out of our attempt to reach mutual sympathy with others, but virtue is supposed to be what moral judgment is of, so an account of moral judgment should yield, if indirectly, an account of virtue as well, which is exactly what Smith tells us he is doing. Once we understand how moral judgment arises out of our yearning for sympathy, he says, we will understand the difference between the amiable and the awful virtues I. So TMS provides a thorough-going account of the virtues by way of the way people come to judge of virtue. It is dedicated in its entirety to the first-order ethical questions that Smith tells us in Part VII are of real practical significance, not to meta-ethical investigations. It certainly illustrates virtue more vividly than Smith had done earlier, and perhaps that is meant, as Hanley suggests , to inspire the reader to action to a greater degree than anything else in the book had done. My other reservation is a more systematic one. Even if Hanley is correct about what Smith is trying to do, he himself admits that Smith may in the end be unsuccessful I think something stronger is in order. It is not just that he was unsuccessful in arguing for the maintenance of such ideals, in that case; he did not really try to make any such argument. Hanley himself helps keep alive in his readers a longing for that vision. That alone makes his book very much worth reading. Oxford UP, second edition, , pp.

**Chapter 9 : Moral Character | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy**

*The virtue of justice is one of the peaks of virtue, since being truly just requires having all the other virtues as well. In this sense, justice unifies and orders the virtues. Aristotle also makes a distinction between natural justice and legal justice. Natural justice is the same in all times and.*

Inanimate objects could have arete, since they were assumed to have a telos, that is, a purpose. Thus, the arete of a knife would be its sharpness. Animals could also have arete; for example, the strength of an ox was seen as its virtue. Though an animal could possess arete, the Greeks assumed natural potentialities in men and women to be virtues requiring enhancement through habits of skill. Because there are many things that "our nature" as humans inclines us to do, Aristotle argues, there can be many human virtues. How particular virtues are constituted can vary with different understandings of "human nature" and the different social roles and their correlative skills. Yet the virtues, according to Aristotle, are distinguished from the arts, since in the latter excellence lies in results. In contrast, for the virtues it matters not only that an act itself is of a certain kind, but also that the agent "has certain characteristics as he performs it; first of all, he must know what he is doing; secondly, he must choose to act the way he does, and he must choose it for its own sake; and in the third place, the act must spring from a firm and unchangeable character" Aristotle, a25â€” The word hexis, which Aristotle uses for "character," is the same word that denotes the habitual dispositions constitutive of the virtues. Character, therefore, indicates the stability that is necessary so that the various virtues are acquired in a lasting way. Character is not simply the sum of the individual virtues; rather, it names the pattern of thought and action that provides a continuity sufficient for humans to claim their lives as their own Kupperman. However, the material form associated with character may vary from one society to another. Therefore any definition of virtue, the virtues, and character can be misleading because it can conceal the differences between various accounts of the nature and kinds of virtues as well as character. The Role of Virtue in Recent Moral Philosophy Ancient philosophers as well as Christian theologians, though offering quite different accounts of the virtues, assumed that any account of the well-lived life had to take virtue into consideration. Modern moral philosophy, in contrast, treats virtuesâ€”if it treats them at allâ€”as secondary to an ethics based on principles and rules. The attempt to secure an account of morality that is not as subject to variations as an ethics of virtue certainly contributed to this displacement of virtues. The first edition of the Encyclopedia of Bioethics, for example, had no entry on virtue or character. In his widely used and influential introduction to philosophical ethics, William Frankena manifests the approach to ethics that simply assumed that considerations of virtue were secondary. According to Frankena, ethical theory should be concerned primarily with justifying moral terms and clarifying the differences between appeals to duty and consequences. The virtues, to the extent they were discussed by theorists such as Frankena, were understood as supplements to the determination of right and wrong action. The virtues in such a theory were seen more as the motivational component in more basic principles, such as benevolence and justice. As Frankena put it, We know that we should cultivate two virtues, a disposition to be beneficial i. But the point of acquiring these virtues is not further guidance or instructions; the function of the virtues in an ethics of duty is not to tell us what to do, but to insure that we will do it willingly in whatever situation we may face. Unless one knows what constitutes acts of truth-telling or lying, one has no way to specify what the virtue of truthfulness or honesty might entail. Ethical theories were assumed to be aids to help people make good decisions on the basis of well-justified principles or rules. Virtues were secondary for that endeavor. This account of ethics seemed particularly well suited to the emerging field of bioethics. It was assumed that the task of medical ethics was to help physicians and other healthcare providers make decisions about difficult cases created by the technological power of modern medicine. Whether a patient could be disconnected from a respirator was analyzed in terms of the difference between such basic rules as "do no harm" and "always act that the greatest good for the greatest number be done. Beauchamp and James F. Childress retain the structure of ethics articulated by Frankena. Their account of biomedical ethics revolves around the normative alternatives of utilitarian and deontological theories and the principles of autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, and justice. Each of these fundamental

principles has correlative primary virtues—that is, respect for autonomy, nonmalevolence, benevolence, and justice—but these "virtues" play no central role. Beauchamp and Childress justify leaving an account of virtue to the last chapter by saying that there are no good arguments for "making judgments about persons independent of judgments about acts or making virtue primary or sufficient for the moral life" p. Both philosophers Pincoffs and theologians Hauerwas have challenged the assumption that ethics in general and biomedical ethics in particular should be focused primarily on decisions and principles. It is a mistake, they argue, to separate questions of the rightness or goodness of an action from the character of the agent. To relegate the virtues to the motivation for action mistakenly assumes that the description of an action can be abstracted from the character of the agent. Those who defended the importance of virtue for ethics argued, following Aristotle, that how one does what one does is as important as what one does. The renewed interest in the nature and significance of virtue ethics has been stimulated by the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, in particular his book *After Virtue*. MacIntyre agrees that principles and rules are important for ethics, but he rejects any attempt to justify those principles or rules that abstracts them from their rootedness in the historical particularities of concrete communities. The narratives that make such communities morally coherent focus attention on the virtues correlative to those narratives. For the Greeks, for example, the *Odyssey* acted as the central moral text for the display of the heroic virtues. To separate ethics from its dependence on such narratives is to lose the corresponding significance of the virtues. Renewed interest in the ethics of virtue has accompanied a renewed appreciation of the importance of community in ethics. Those commentators who emphasize the importance of community presume that morally worthy political societies are constituted by goods that shape the participants in those societies to want the right things rightly. Therefore ethics, particularly an ethics of virtue, cannot be separated from accounts of politics. Bioethics and the Ethics of Virtue In the past the practice of medicine was thought to be part of the tradition of the virtues. As Gary Ferngren and Darrel Amundsen observe, "If health was, for most Greeks, the greatest of the virtues, it is not surprising that they devoted a great deal of attention to preserving it. As an essential component of arete, physical culture was an important part of the life of what the Greeks called *kalos kagathos*, the cultivated gentleman, who represented in classical times the ideal of the human personality" p. It should not be surprising, therefore, that not only was health seen as an analogue of virtue but medicine was understood as an activity that by its very nature was virtuous. In medical ethics, the "ethics of virtue" approach tends to focus on the doctor-patient relationship. The trust, care, and compassion that seem so essential to a therapeutic relationship are virtues intrinsic to medical care. Not only compassion but also honesty, fidelity, courage, justice, temperance, magnanimity, prudence, and wisdom are required of the physician. Not every one of these virtues is required in every decision. What we expect of the virtuous physician is that he will exhibit them when they are required and that he will be so habitually disposed to do so that we can depend upon it. He will place the good of the patient above his own and seek that good unless its pursuit imposes an injustice upon him, or his family, or requires a violation of his own conscience. According to Veatch, there is no uncontested virtue ethic. The Greeks had one set of virtues, the Christians another, the Stoics another; and there is no rational way to resolve the differences among them. This is a particularly acute problem because modern medicine must be practiced as "stranger medicine," that is, medicine that is practiced among people who are essentially strangers. It would include medicine that is practiced on an emergency basis in emergency rooms in large cities. It would also include care delivered in a clinic setting or in an HMO that does not have physician continuity, most medicine in student health services, VA Hospitals, care from consulting specialists, and the medicine in the military as well as care that is delivered by private practice general practitioners to patients who are mobile enough not to establish long-term relationships with their physicians. The ethics of "stranger medicine" is best construed, Veatch contends, on the presumption that the relationship between doctor and patient is contractual. Such a relationship is best characterized by impersonal principles rather than in terms of virtue. The virtues make sense only within and to particular communities, and therefore only within a "sectarian" form of medicine. He thinks medicine is increasingly becoming a form of technological competence, bureaucratically institutionalized and governed by impersonal ethical norms. MacIntyre simply wishes to challenge the presumption that this is a moral advance. Put more strongly, MacIntyre challenges the

presumption that such a medicine and the morality that underlies it can be justified in the terms Veatch offers. In particular, he asks, how can one account for the trust that seems a necessary component of the doctor-patient relationship without relying on an ethic of virtue? Contrary to Veatch, James Drane and others argue that medicine does not exist within a relationship between strangers, but in fact depends on trust and confidence, if not friendship, between doctor and patient. Ethics, they hold, is not based on principles external to medical care and then applied to medicine; rather, medicine is itself one of the essential practices characteristic of good societies. Medicine thus understood does not need so much to be supplemented by ethical considerations based on a lawlike paradigm of principles and rules; on the contrary, medical care becomes one of the last examples left in liberal cultures of what the practice of virtue actually looks like. Those who work from an ethics of virtue do not come to medicine with general principles justified in other contexts, to be applied now to "medical quandaries"; rather, they see medicine itself as an exemplification of virtuous practices. Here medicine is understood in the Aristotelian sense, as an activity—that is, as a form of behavior that produces a result intrinsic to the behavior itself Aristotle. Put simply, the practice of medicine is a form of cooperative human activity that makes us more than we otherwise could be. Thus virtue is not acquired by a series of acts—even if such acts would be characterized as courageous, just, or patient—if they are done in a manner that does not render the person performing the actions just. As Aristotle says, "Acts are called just and self-controlled when they are the kinds of acts which a just and self-controlled man would perform; but the just and self-controlled man is not he who performs these acts, but he who also performs them in the way that the just and self-controlled men do" (1103a29). There is an inherently circular character to this account of the virtues that cannot be avoided. We can become just only by imitating just people, but such "imitation" cannot be simply the copying of their external actions. Becoming virtuous requires apprenticeship to a master; in this way the virtues are acquired through the kind of training necessary to ensure that they will not easily be lost. How such masters are located depends on a social order that is morally coherent, so that such people exhibit what everyone knows to be good. Medicine, because it remains a craft that requires apprenticeship, exemplifies how virtue can and should be taught. May suggests that the very meaning of a profession implies that one who practices it is the kind of person who can be held accountable for the goods, and corresponding virtues, of that profession. Medicine as a profession functions well to the extent that medical training forms the character of those who are being initiated into that practice. This does not imply that those who have gone through medical training will be virtuous in other aspects of their lives; it does imply, however, that as physicians they will exhibit the virtues necessary to practice medicine. In *Becoming a Good Doctor*: Drane, in contrast to Robert Veatch, argues that medicine must remain a virtuous practice if it is to be sustained in modern societies. According to Aristotle, ethics deals with those matters that can be other; a virtuous person not only must act rightly but also must do so "at the right time, toward the right objects, toward the right people, for the right reasons, and in the right manner" (1100a20). Similarly, physicians must know when to qualify what is usually done in light of the differences a particular patient presents. From this perspective, medicine is the training of virtuous people so they are able to make skilled but fallible judgments under conditions of uncertainty. The increasing recognition of the narrative character of medical knowledge Hunter reinforces this emphasis on virtue and character. That the disease entities used for diagnosis are implicit narratives means medicine is an intrinsically interpretative practice that must always be practiced under conditions of uncertainty. Accordingly, patient and physician alike bring virtues and vices to their interaction that are necessary for sustaining therapeutic relationships. Continuing Problems for an Ethics of Virtue To construe medicine as a virtue tradition establishes an agenda of issues for investigation in medical ethics. How are the virtues differentiated? Are there some virtues peculiar to medicine? How are different virtues related to one another? How is the difference between being a person of virtue and character, and the possession of the individual virtues, to be understood? Can a person possess virtues necessary for the practice of medicine without being virtuous? Can a person be courageous without being just?