

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY



LAST TIME

- Teleological Argument
- Fine Tuning

NATURAL THEOLOGY

- The evidence of God through observable, natural processes and understanding.

MORAL ARGUMENT

- Objective moral values and duties.
- Where do they come from?

DEFINITIONS

- Objective vs subjective
 - Objective means they are the same for all, independent of people's opinions.
 - Subjective depends on one's own opinion.
- Values vs duties
 - Values is whether something is good or bad. Moral worth.
 - Duties is whether something is right or wrong. What you ought to do or not.

AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

- “No God, No Problem”
- "Be Good for Goodness Sake"
 - Be good, for goodness sake!" - Santa
 - “Be good for goodness’ sake”

THE REAL QUESTION

- Is not...
 - “Can we be good without the belief in God?”
- Is...
 - “Can we be good without God?”
- Without God, is there any objective difference between good and evil?

OBJECTIVE MORALS AND DUTIES

➤ The existence of these makes a compelling argument for the existence of God.

1. If God does not exist, then objective moral values and duties do not exist.
2. Objective moral values and duties do exist.
3. Therefore, God exists.

NATURALISM/EUTHYPHRO DILEMMA

- Defense of Premise 1:
 - Traditionally, moral values have been thought to be anchored in God. Other goods are based on how they relate to God as the anchor or the yardstick.

OBJECTIVE HUMAN VALUE/NATURALISM

- Naturalism- atheist philosophy
 - The view that science and science alone determines what exists.
 - The problem is that moral value is not required nor can be seen through science.
 - Morality has to be subjective in this view.

RICHARD DAWKINS

“There is at bottom no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pointless indifference... We are machines for propagating DNA... It is every living object’s sole reason for being.”

MORAL DUTIES

- Once rooted in commandments by God, i.e. the Ten Commandments.
- If naturalism, we are animals and why subject to different moralities.
 - Shark forcibly copulates- why not rape?
 - Lion kills a zebra- why not murder?

MORAL VALUES

- Actions that look like rape or murder happen all the time in the animal kingdom.
- With this in mind, then the naturalist must say that a pedophile or rapist who tortures a child hasn't done anything morally wrong... it is something that is just socially unacceptable.

IS BELIEF NECESSARY TO SEE OBJECTIVE MORALITY?

- No
- The Bible teaches we all have God's moral law written on our hearts.
 - Romans 2:14-15
- We are not claiming that belief is necessary for morality, simply the existence of God is.

EUTHYPHRO DILEMMA

- Plato
- Is something good just because God wills it or does God will it because it is good?
- Either is unacceptable

EUTHYPHRO

- If something is good just because God wills it, then that makes morality arbitrary.
- If God wills it because it is good, then the good is something that is independent of God.
- There is a third option: God wills something because He is good!

ATHEISTIC MORAL PLATONISM

- This theory says that moral values like justice, mercy, love, etc just exist on their own as abstract moral objects.

OBJECTIONS

- Unintelligible
 - What does it even mean? How can something like justice just exist?
 - Without a person or an action, it is meaningless.

OBJECTIONS

- No basis for objective moral duties
 - Why would we have to have any obligation to act on these?

OBJECTIONS

- Improbability
 - Extremely improbable that a blind evolutionary process would create creatures that could align and interact with its realm of abstract values.

STUBBORN HUMANISM OBJECTION

- Whatever contributes to human flourishing is good, whatever detracts from human flourishing is bad.

PROBLEMS

- Arbitrary- what is good for who or what?
- Implausible- natural processes in place, moral properties appear.
- A “shopping list approach”- take what you want and leave what you don’t.
- No explanation or justification of why?

CHANCE

- Simply an accident and we lucked out.
- The odds are astronomical.
- Think of 100 trained marksman all ready to execute you and they all miss? They have to have missed on purpose

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 2

- Objective moral values and duties do exist.
- Almost no one denies this premise.
- We recognize rape, pedophilia, torture or incest are wrong.
- We recognize love, self-sacrifice, generosity are good.

SOCIO-BIOLOGICAL EVOLUTION

- Essentially says that the only reason you believe something is that is what your society has taught you.
- What we belief has nothing to do with the truth of the belief.
- Evolutions does not care about truth, just survivability.
- Also self defeating, if true then it defeats its own objection.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- The Moral Argument bolsters the Cosmological Argument and Teleological Argument by showing the creator and designer to be the center of goodness and morality.
- It gives us a personal, necessarily existing being, who is not only perfectly good, but whose very nature is the Good and whose commands constitute our moral duties.

NEXT TIME

➤ Read:

➤ Excursus- Natural Theology- Ontological Argument
pp. 166-186

QUESTIONS?