

Divine Command Theory And Moral Obligations Tyler Journeaux

This dissertation presents an alternative response to the Euthyphro dilemma that will be referred to as the Non-Voluntarist Theory. It offers a critical evaluation of contemporary evangelical divine command theories to demonstrate the inherent ambiguity as they relate to Divine Command Theory, and their lack of apologetic force for answering the Euthyphro dilemma. To accomplish this task, it is important to understand how the Euthyphro Dilemma relates to theology and apologetics in general, and the contemporary attempts to ground objective moral values and duties in particular. The topic relates to theology, since one's response to the Euthyphro Dilemma can implicitly or explicitly speak to God's moral sovereignty. The topic relates to apologetics in two primary ways. First, the Euthyphro Dilemma is still offered by contemporary non-theists as a critique of the Christian faith. Therefore, the response one gives, and the method used, is vital to the apologetic enterprise. Second, the Euthyphro Dilemma is meant to challenge the belief that God is the explanatory ultimate for objective moral values and duties. In addition, an examination of the philosophical landscape that

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surrounds the relationship between the Euthyphro Dilemma and Divine Command Theory is needed. Contemporary formulations of divine command theories of ethics make a distinction between moral values and moral obligations and duties. While this is not an illicit distinction, it is a distinction that weakens the apologetic force of the argument. Therefore, it is imperative that a proposed solution to the Euthyphro Dilemma is able to explain sufficiently moral ontology, moral epistemology, and moral obligation. Contemporary evangelical formulations of Divine Command Theory are not evangelical, per se. Rather, these formulations are moral theories that happen to be ones that evangelicals tend to support. In order to critically evaluate contemporary evangelical divine command theories, one should be aware of the historical development of the Standard Divine Command Theory. In the field of research, special attention is given to one of the most notable representatives of the Standard Divine Command Theory, William of Ockham. Thus, one must be familiar with Ockham's work. Also, one must be aware of the modifications that have been made to Divine Command Theory that depart from the Ockhamist version and frame the modern perspective. Non-theists tend to understand the Divine Command Theory in Ockhamist terms. Consequently, attempts by contemporary evangelical modified divine command theorists use divine command terminology

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in a non-standard way, which creates a more cumbersome apologetic. This dissertation will advance a position that moves towards the first horn, or non-voluntarist horn, of the Euthyphro Dilemma. It is thought that those who embrace this horn commit to the existence of a moral standard “outside, or distinct, from God” that guides the divine will. For example, William Lane Craig argues that to embrace the non-voluntarist horn of the Euthyphro Dilemma is to embrace atheistic moral Platonism. Traditionally, those who affirm this horn argue for the existence of objective moral values and duties that exist independent of God’s existence and are accessible independent of divine revelation or command. This position at times has been referred to as the Guided Will Theory, since God would be guided by these independent moral values and duties. This dissertation advances a Non-Voluntarist Theory of moral values, obligations, and duties by affirming that God’s divine nature is the basis for morality as a whole. It will be argued that a Non-Voluntarist Theory does not commit the theist to a standard of moral values, obligations, and duties that exist independently from God. Furthermore, if a clear methodology is employed a Non-Voluntarist Theory provides common ground with the non-theist, and provides a practical theistic framework for ethics.

Overview: What makes an action right or wrong? Why is something good or bad?

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How does one make moral decision about what is right and good? These are among the main questions in ethics that are the subject of moral theory. This book explores some of the most historically important and currently debated moral theories about the nature of the right and good. After introducing students in the first chapter to some of the main aims and methods of evaluating a moral theory, the remaining chapters in this book are devoted to an examination of various moral theories including the divine command theory, moral relativism, natural law theory, Kant's moral theory, moral pluralism, virtue ethics and moral particularism. Providing an introduction to moral theory that explains and critically examines the theories of such classical moral philosophers as Aristotle, Aquinas, Kant, Bentham, Mill and Ross, this book acquaints students with the work of contemporary moral philosophers.

Does God's existence make a difference to how we explain morality? Mark C. Murphy critiques the two dominant theistic accounts of morality—natural law theory and divine command theory—and presents a novel third view. He argues that we can value natural facts about humans and their good, while keeping God at the centre of our moral explanations. The characteristic methodology of theistic ethics is to proceed by asking whether there are features of moral norms that can be adequately explained only if we hold that such norms have some sort of

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theistic foundation. But this methodology, fruitful as it has been, is one-sided. God and Moral Law proceeds not from the side of the moral norms, so to speak, but from the God side of things: what sort of explanatory relationship should we expect between God and moral norms given the existence of the God of orthodox theism? Mark C. Murphy asks whether the conception of God in orthodox theism as an absolutely perfect being militates in favour of a particular view of the explanation of morality by appeal to theistic facts. He puts this methodology to work and shows that, surprisingly, natural law theory and divine command theory fail to offer the sort of explanation of morality that we would expect given the existence of the God of orthodox theism. Drawing on the discussion of a structurally similar problem—that of the relationship between God and the laws of nature—Murphy articulates his new account of the relationship between God and morality, one in which facts about God and facts about nature cooperate in the explanation of moral law.

This book develops strong versions of divine command theory and natural law and defends the importance of God to morality.

This thesis defend John Danaher's version of the Epistemological Objection to Divine Command Theory (DCT). This objection asserts that DCT fails as a metaethical theory of moral obligation due to the fact that there is a group of

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persons, reasonable nonbelievers, who have knowledge of moral obligations while lacking the knowledge of divine commands required in DCT. The first part of this thesis focuses on this objection and explains how it applies to DCT. An underlying assumption of Danaher's defense is the existence of reasonable nonbelievers, persons who do not violate epistemic duties in their nonbelief. The latter portion of this thesis defends the existence of such persons by considering and responding to the challenge that all nonbelievers violate at least one epistemic duty since their nonbelief is the product of the culture in which they are immersed, as opposed to rationally informed inquiry. In response to this challenge, it is shown that the existence of reasonable nonbelievers is the default position and that the burden of proof is on those claiming all nonbelief is unreasonable.

"Ethics and Experience" presents a wide-ranging and thought-provoking introduction to the question famously posed by Socrates: How is life to be lived? 'An excellent primer for any student taking a course on moral philosophy, the book introduces ethics as a single and broadly unified field of inquiry in which we apply reason to try and solve Socrates' question. "Ethics and Experience" examines the major forms of ethical subjectivism and objectivism - including expressivism, error theory', naturalism, and intuitionism. The book lays out the

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detail of the most significant contemporary moral theories - including utilitarianism, virtue ethics, Kantianism, and contractarianism - and reconsiders these theories in the light of two questions that should perhaps be asked more often: Is moral theory, with its tendency to regiment ethical thought and experience, really the best way for us to apply reason to deciding how to live? And, might it not be more truly reasonable to look for less system and more insight?

The central aim of this book is to attempt to determine the response of the classic texts of Jewish traditions to the famous dilemma posed in Plato's Euthyphro: Does God freely determine morality, or is morality independent of God? The author argues that the picture that emerges from Jewish texts is significantly more complex and nuanced than most of the contemporary Jewish philosophical literature is prepared to concede. While providing an extensive discussion of the perspective of Jewish tradition on divine command ethics, this book develops a position that is distinct from and critical of other views that have recently been advanced in Jewish scholarship. At the same time, the book provides a substantial analysis of some Christian perspectives on divine command ethics. Relevant biblical, rabbinic and later Jewish texts are discussed, as well as some of the relevant views that have been taken in philosophical literature and in

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Christian and Jewish thought.

A compelling account of Kierkegaard's ethical views, seeing him against the backdrop of nineteenth-century European society but showing the relevance of his thought for the twenty-first century. Kierkegaard's view of morality as grounded in God's command to love our neighbours as ourselves has clear advantages over contemporary secular rivals.

Ethics in Ancient Israel is a study of ethical thinking in ancient Israel from around the eighth to the second century BC. The evidence for this consists primarily of the Old Testament/ Hebrew Bible and Apocrypha, but also other ancient Jewish writings such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and various anonymous and pseudonymous texts from shortly before the New Testament period. Professor John Barton argues that there were several models for thinking about ethics, including a 'divine command' theory, something approximating to natural law, a virtue ethic, and a belief in human custom and convention. Moreover, he examines ideas of reward and punishment, purity and impurity, the status of moral agents and patients, imitation of God, and the image of God in humanity. Barton maintains that ethical thinking can be found not only in laws but also in the wisdom literature, in the Psalms, and in narrative texts. There is much interaction with recent scholarship in both English and German. The book features discussion of comparative material from other ancient Near Eastern cultures and a chapter on short summaries of moral teaching, such as the Ten Commandments. This

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innovative work should be of interest to those concerned with the interpretation of the Old Testament but also to students of ethics.

This work is a philosophical defence of the tenability of divine command theory as an acceptable Christian account of morality. The theory states that morality is founded upon God's commands. It has been associated particularly with Duns Scotus and William of Ockham. What God commands, man has a moral duty to do; what He forbids, man ought to avoid; and man's duties arise only because God commands or forbids certain things. There are various ways of understanding what constitutes a divine command and this work focuses on the claim that revealed, scriptural commands are the foundation of morality.

This book explores philosophical ethics in Arabo-Islamic thought. Examining the meaning, origin and development of "Divine Command Theory", it underscores the philosophical bases of religious fundamentalism that hinder social development and hamper dialogue between different cultures and nations. Challenging traditional stereotypes of Islam, the book refutes contemporary claims that Islam is a defining case of ethical voluntarism, and that the prominent theory in Islamic ethical thought is Divine Command Theory. The author argues that, in fact, early Arab-Islamic scholars articulated moral theories: theories of value and theories of obligation. She traces the development of Arabo-Islamic ethics from the early Islamic theological and political debates between the Kharijites and the Murji'ites, shedding new light on the moral

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theory of Abd al-Jabbar al-Mu'tazili and the effects of this moral theory on post-Mu'tazilite ethical thought. Highlighting important aspects in the development of Islamic thought, this book will appeal to students and scholars of Islamic moral thought and ethics, Islamic law, and religious fundamentalism.

"An exceptionally clear, compact, and affordable introduction to a broad range of ethical theories"--

In this book Richard J. Mouw, one of the foremost thinkers in the field of Christian ethics, develops a constructive theological ethic, employing primarily Calvinist themes. Exploring issues that are at the intersection of philosophical and theological discussions, he sets forth an ethical perspective in which obedience to divine commands occupies a central place. After responding to some secularist objections to divine command theory, Mouw looks at the ways in which treatments of divine authority relate to contemporary philosophical discussions of moral justification. He then discusses the divine command perspective, turning to a specific examination of the Reformation emphasis on "naked selfhood." He defends Reformational selfhood against critiques of Protestantism and explores the differences and similarities between the conceptions of moral selfhood portrayed in classical Calvinism and recent existentialism. Examining Protestant, and especially Calvinist, emphases on divine command, Mouw argues that a divine command perspective need not be viewed as antithetical to the claims made by recent defenders of "narrativist" ethics. He explores

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the ways in which differing intratrinitarian emphases influence Christian moral experience, and he argues that a strong God-the-Father emphasis needs to be supplemented by perspectives that attend more to divine "nearness," as in contemporary feminism and Pentecostalism. He concludes with some reflections on the way in which a divine command ethical perspective speaks in positive ways to the contemporary moral quest.

This work focuses on divine command, and in particular the theory that what makes something obligatory is that God commands it, and what makes something wrong is that God commands us not to do it. Focusing on the Abrahamic faiths, eminent scholar John E. Hare explains that two experiences have had to be integrated. The first is that God tells us to do something, or not to do something. The second is that we have to work out ourselves what to do and what not to do. The difficulty has come in establishing the proper relation between them. In Christian reflection on this, two main traditions have emerged, divine command theory and natural law theory. Hare successfully defends a version of divine command theory, but also shows that there is considerable overlap with some versions of natural law theory. He engages with a number of Christian theologians, particularly Karl Barth, and extends into a discussion of divine command within Judaism and Islam. The work concludes by examining recent work in evolutionary psychology, and argues that thinking of our moral obligations as produced by divine command offers us some help in seeing how a moral conscience

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could develop in a way that is evolutionarily stable.

An anthology that provides new translations and makes available much of the relevant historical literature needed for an exploration of the view that morality is very literally created by God. Contains 41 selections representing discussions of divine command morality in Ancient philosophy, scholastic philosophical theology, the Reformation tradition, the British modern period, and contemporary analytic philosophy. This book includes a bibliography of Latin, French, English, German, and Italian sources on divine command morality.

This introductory textbook presents Christian philosophical and theological approaches to ethics. Combining their expertise in philosophy and theology, the authors explain the beliefs, values, and practices of various Christian ethical viewpoints, addressing biblical teachings as well as traditional ethical theories that contribute to informed moral decision-making. Each chapter begins with Words to Watch and includes a relevant case study on a vexing ethical issue, such as caring for the environment, human sexuality, abortion, capital punishment, war, and euthanasia. End-of-chapter reflection questions, illustrations, and additional information tables are also included.

God and Moral Obligation defends the claim that moral obligations are best understood as divine commands or requirements; hence an important part of morality depends on God. C. Stephen Evans argues that God's requirements are communicated to humans in a variety of ways, including conscience, and seeks to show that some other approaches to ethics (natural

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law ethics and virtue ethics) are not rivals to a divine command view but provide complementary perspectives. Evans raises and responds to popular objections to a divine command view of morality, and contends that this perspective has marked advantages over secular rival theories.

Does God, in His infinite wisdom, convince people to get rid of their car insurance? Does He encourage cannibalism? Does the God of more than six billion people actually have time to root for the Minnesota Vikings? According to some, yes. How do they know? God told them. Luckily, God also told Marc Hartzman to write this book, a collection of the most shocking, absurd, and hilarious things people have ever claimed God asked them to do, and to present them for your pure reading enjoyment. Including: The man that God told to perform surgery on himself God's generous offer to miraculously fill his believer's gas tank The fateful day God (assumedly feeling nostalgic for his teen years) asked a man to TP a police station The woman God instructed to direct traffic—topless And, sadly, many more

There has been a debate between modern ethicists who see moral judgments as objectively corresponding to a moral reality independent of human opinion and those who insist that moral judgments are essentially expressions of our will. In this excellent philosophical work John Hare outlines a theory that combines the merits of both views, arguing that what makes something right is that God calls us to it. In the first chapter Hare gives a selective history of the sustained debate within Anglo-American philosophy over the last century between moral realists and moral expressivists. Best understood as a disagreement about how objectivity and subjectivity are related in value judgment, this debate is of particular interest to Christians, who necessarily feel pulled in both directions. Christians want to say that value is created by God

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and exists whether we recognize it or not, but they also want to say that when we value something, our hearts' fundamental commitments are also involved. Hare suggests prescriptive realism as a way to bring both perspectives together. The second chapter examines the divine command theory of John Duns Scotus, looking particularly at the relationship that Scotus established between God's commands, human nature, and human will. Hare shows that a Calvinist version of the divine command theory of obligation can be defended via Scotus against natural law theory as well as against contemporary challenges. A significant theme treated here is the view that the Fall disordered our natural inclinations, rendering them useless as an authoritative source of guidance for right living. In the last chapter Hare moves to the key philosophical juncture between the medieval period and our own time -- the moral theory of Immanuel Kant in the late eighteenth century. Modern moral philosophy has largely taken Kant's work as a refutation of divine command theory and a refocusing of the discussion on human autonomy. Hare shows that Kant was in fact not arguing against the kind of divine command theory that Hare supports. He discusses what Kant meant by saying that we should recognize our duties as God's commands, and he defends a notion of human autonomy as appropriation. Featuring original moral theory and fresh interpretations of the thought of Duns Scotus and Kant, *God's Call* is valuable both for its overview of the history of moral debate and for its construction of a sound Christian ethic for today.

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contemporary claims that Islam is a defining case of ethical voluntarism, and that the prominent theory in Islamic ethical thought is Divine Command Theory. The author argues that, in fact, early Arab-Islamic scholars articulated moral theories: theories of value and theories of obligation. She traces the development of Arabo-Islamic ethics from the early Islamic theological and political debates between the Kharijites and the Murji'ites, shedding new light on the moral theory of Abd al-Jabbar al-Mu'tazili and the effects of this moral theory on post-Mu'tazilite ethical thought. Highlighting important aspects in the development of Islamic thought, this book will appeal to students and scholars of Islamic moral thought and ethics, Islamic law, and religious fundamentalism.

Christian Ethics: Four Views Brad J. Kallenberg: Virtue Ethics John Hare: Divine Command Ethics Claire Peterson: Natural Law Ethics Peter Heltzel: Prophetic Ethics Christian Ethics: Four Views

This valuable reference work synthesizes and elucidates traditional themes and issues in Islamic philosophy as well as prominent topics emerging from the last twenty years of scholarship. Written for a wide readership of students and scholars, *The Routledge Companion to Islamic Philosophy* is unique in including coverage of both perennial philosophical issues in an Islamic context and also distinct concerns that emerge from Islamic religious thought. This work constitutes a substantial affirmation that Islamic philosophy is an integral part of the Western philosophical tradition. Featuring 33 chapters, divided into seven thematic sections, this volume explores the major areas of philosophy: Logic, Metaphysics, Philosophy in the Sciences, Philosophy of Mind/Epistemology, and Ethics/Politics as well as philosophical issues salient in Islamic revelation, theology, prophecy, and mysticism. Other features include: •A

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focus on both the classical and post-classical periods •A contributing body that includes both widely respected scholars from around the world and a handful of the very best younger scholars •"Reference" and "Further Reading" sections for each chapter and a comprehensive index for the whole volume The result is a work that captures Islamic philosophy as philosophy. In this way it serves students and scholars of philosophy and religious studies and at the same time provides valuable essays relevant to the study of Islamic thought and theology.

In the Meno, Anytus had parted from Socrates with the significant words: 'That in any city, and particularly in the city of Athens, it is easier to do men harm than to do them good;' and Socrates was anticipating another opportunity of talking with him. In the Euthyphro, Socrates is awaiting his trial for impiety. But before the trial begins, Plato would like to put the world on their trial, and convince them of ignorance in that very matter touching which Socrates is accused. An incident which may perhaps really have occurred in the family of Euthyphro, a learned Athenian diviner and soothsayer, furnishes the occasion of the discussion.

Erik J. Wielenberg draws on recent work in analytic philosophy and empirical moral psychology to defend non-theistic robust normative realism, according to which there are objective ethical features of the universe that do not depend on God for their existence. He goes on to develop an empirically-grounded account of human moral knowledge.

Where did the universe come from? Is life a result of chance, or design? If God is loving and all-powerful, why does evil still exist? Is religious belief just a byproduct of undirected evolutionary processes? Or did God make sure humans would evolve in such a way as to believe? Are philosophers closed-minded about religion? And why is so much of philosophy of religion about God-but not about gods? Introduction to Philosophy: Philosophy of Religion introduces

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students to some of the major traditional arguments for and against the existence of God. It also includes discussions of some less well-known, but thought-provoking arguments for the existence of God, and one of the most important new challenges to religious belief from the Cognitive Science of Religion. An introductory chapter traces the deep interconnections between philosophy and religion throughout Western history, and a final chapter considers what place there is for non-Western and non-monotheistic religions within contemporary philosophy of religion. Whatever your religious beliefs-or lack of beliefs-we think you will find many of the arguments in this book fascinating to think about, and useful starting points for deeper philosophical discussions.

Religion and Morality addresses central issues arising from religion's relation to morality. Part I offers a sympathetic but critical appraisal of the claim that features of morality provide evidence for the truth of religious belief. Part II examines divine command theories, objections to them, and positive arguments in their support. Part III explores tensions between human morality, as ordinarily understood, and religious requirements by discussing such issues as the conflict between Buddhist and Christian pacifism and requirements of justice, whether 'virtue' without a love of God is really a vice, whether the God of the Abrahamic religions could require us to do something that seems clearly immoral, and the ambiguous relations between religious mysticism and moral behavior. Covering a broad range of topics, this book draws on both historical and contemporary literature, and explores afresh central issues of morality and religion offering new insights for students, academics and the general reader interested in philosophy and religion.

Socrates said that moral philosophy deals with 'no small matter, but how we ought to live'.

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Beginning with a minimum conception of what morality is, the author offers discussions of the most important ethical theories. He includes treatments of such topics as cultural relativism, ethical subjectivism, psychological egoism, and ethical egoism.

Using data from the Household Component of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS-HC), this Statistical Brief presents health insurance estimates for the Hispanic population by subgroups and U.S. citizenship status. An examination of these estimates reveals dramatic disparities in insurance coverage within the Hispanic population due to differences in eligibility for public programs and access to private coverage.

This first-rate introduction to ethical theory contains sections on various forms of ethical theory, such as egoism, virtue ethics, divine command theory, and consequentialism. Each section includes two or three of the most important contributions to the field, together with brief introductions by the editors. The second edition contains an improved approach to applied ethics. Each chapter on moral theories now includes a selection that deals with a moral problem, such as human cloning, abortion, and global warming. The selection illustrates how the relevant theoretical approach is put to use. There is therefore a much tighter integration between theory and practice than before. The new edition also contains an improved section on feminist ethical theory.

Publisher Description

In this wide-ranging study, Quinn argues that human moral autonomy is compatible with unqualified obedience to divine commands. He formulates several versions of the crucial assumptions of divine command ethics, defending them against a battery of objections often expressed in the philosophical literature.

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Twentieth-century analytic philosophy ushered in a renewed interest in an ethical theory known as the Divine Command Theory of ethics (DC). Consequent to the work of G.E. Moore, philosophers have been involved in metaethics, or how we may ground ethical terms such as "good" and "right". The traditional DC response is to argue that God is the source of good, and best serves that role in that He is an "ideal observer" of all states of affairs. The question is how is God's will relevant to determining the moral status of actions? At this point one may distinguish between what God wills and what God in fact commands. However, the contemporary debate is to determine whether it is God's commands or God's will that is primary in determining moral obligation. The most vivid portrait of this distinction is found in the binding of Isaac. There we note that God commands Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, but it is not at all clear that God wills the actual death of Isaac. Thus, in this work I will present and defend a coherent DC view of ethics, whereby our moral obligations are derived from the commands of God. In chapter II I will provide a brief history of philosophers who have endorsed DC. In chapter III I will argue that the best ground for objective moral values is best defined by DC. Chapter IV will be devoted to my particular argument for DC. I will take up the task of defending the traditional command view of DC. Chapters V and VI will be devoted to developing plausible responses to major objections to DC. In chapter V I will attempt a resolution of the famous Euthyphro dilemma, and in chapter VI I will argue that endorsing a DC view of ethics in no way negates the autonomy of the moral agent.

God and Morality evaluates the ethical theories of four principle philosophers, Aristotle, Duns Scotus, Kant, and R.M. Hare. Uses their thinking as the basis for telling the story of the history and development of ethical thought more broadly Focuses specifically on their writings on

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virtue, will, duty, and consequence Concentrates on the theistic beliefs to highlight continuity of philosophical thought

Renowned scholar Robert Adams explores the relation between religion and ethics through a comprehensive philosophical account of a theistically-based framework for ethics. Adams' framework begins with the good rather than the right, and with excellence rather than usefulness. He argues that loving the excellent, of which adoring God is a clear example, is the most fundamental aspect of a life well lived. Developing his original and detailed theory, Adams contends that devotion, the sacred, grace, martyrdom, worship, vocation, faith, and other concepts drawn from religious ethics have been sorely overlooked in moral philosophy and can enrich the texture of ethical thought.

Collection of original essays by leading researchers on current approaches to moral philosophy.

Included in this volume are "Euthyphro," "Apology," "Crito," and the Death Scene from "Phaedo." Translated by F.J. Church. Revisions and Introduction by Robert D. Cumming.

Moral arguments for God's existence have undergone something of a resurgence in recent years. The authors show how strides in answering the problem of evil, the Euthyphro Dilemma, and epistemic vacuity and arbitrariness challenges to theistic ethics make possible a compelling cumulative moral argument.

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