

**ETHICS.** Ethics is the study and application of the values of a person or group - such as right or wrong, true or false, good or bad - in conjunction with responsibility. **A**ll humans have the responsibility to live an ethical life; we must strive to be sincere and committed in our efforts to do the right thing by fellow human beings. **T**hus the adherence to ethics must become a way of life for all - where freedom, peace (non-violence), prosperity, equality, respect and justice are guaranteed to all humans. **T**hese issues must be valued above religious dogmas, customs, politics and arbitrary rules that may disadvantage those who seek to express their individual truths. **T**o live a virtuous, ethical life is a duty for everybody.

*With Virtue Ethics - described by Confucius as well as Aristotle - emphasis is on character.*

*One does what's right - not what one is expected to do by law or established traditions.*

*The bedrock of ethics is the Golden Rule: 'Do to others as you want done to yourself.'*

*see also MORAL LAW, CONFUCIANISM*

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*Importantly, we cannot rely on religions to provide us with a framework for ethics.*

*Religious dogmata often are in contrast to sincere striving for ethical thought and action.*

*Many religious dogmas are not only unethical, but evil and may lead to a breakdown of society.*

*Ethics, the moral principles governing our behavior, are secular, without need for religion.*

*Hence Christianity's & Judaism's manifesto, the Ten Commandments, can be reduced to three:*

*Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not lie ... with a fourth added: Keep your religion to yourself.\**

*Stated positively, ethical behavior encompasses understanding, forgiveness and compassion.*

*see also SCRIPTURE, RELIGION 1, 2, 3*

*\*with apologies to George Carlin*

