

Natural Law and Abortion

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| Do good and avoid evil | |
| Teleology - everything has a telos, end or <u>purpose</u> . Morality involves working out what our purpose as humans is, and acting in a way that fulfils it. | |
| Primary Precepts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship God • Ordered society • Reproduce • Learn • Don't Die - Protect & preserve the self | |
| Deontology - morality is about doing your <u>duty</u> , an obligation to follow rules or do right actions | |
| Secondary precepts e.g. Do not have an abortion Do not commit suicide | |

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| <p>Aristotle: Efficient cause and final cause - the efficient cause is what gets things done, while the final cause is the purpose of a thing. For example, why do people have sex? The efficient cause is enjoyment (“I have sex because it is pleasurable”), but the final cause is procreation (“God designed sex to result in children”).</p> | |
| <p>Real and apparent goods - everyone tries to do good. Some people follow apparent goods (such as a person who has an affair - they seek pleasure, but it diminishes human nature). Real good is reached by using reason to determine our true purpose.</p> | |
| <p>Interior and Exterior Acts - Your intention (e.g. to help someone who’s starving) might be good, but your action (stealing bread) might be wrong. Both interior and exterior are important.</p> | |
| <p>God - Aquinas said God designed us with a specific purpose which could be discovered through reason. He said that acting accordance with reason was the same thing as acting in the way a Christian would act. He did believe that humans are immortal though, and argued that natural law had to take account of this.</p> | |
| <p>Double Effect - It is wrong to do bad acts (e.g. abortion). However, you can do a good act (removing the uterus of a woman with cancer) that may have a ‘double effect’ of resulting in an abortion. The ‘good’ act has to have a good intent (to save the woman’s life) and must be a good exterior act (removing the cancer).</p> | |
| <p>Reason - morality is not based on following commands from the Bible but on following rules that can be discovered through reason. “To disparage the dictate of reason is equivalent to condemning the command of God.”</p> | |