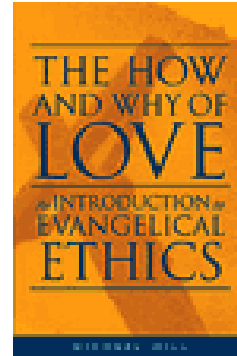


The How and Why of Love Study Guide

This study guide can be used by reading groups or individuals. It is designed to take you through a chapter a week, so that you can cover the book in 14 weeks.



Feel free to distribute this study guide free of charge, courtesy of Matthias Media.

The How and Why of Love

An Introduction to Evangelical Ethics, by Michael Hill.

Available online from Matthias Media. www.matthiasmedia.com.au

.....
.....

Chapter 1: What's ethics all about?

1. What is the difference between morality and ethics?
2. What are the three kinds of ethics? How do they differ from each other?
3. What are synthetic and analytic knowledge?

For debate: Does a Christian need to study ethics, or can they just do what the Bible says?

Chapter 2: The Various Accounts of Morality

1. What is an 'ethics of duty'?
2. Explain the three major sub-types of ethics of duty:
Deontological
Teleological
Consequentialist
3. How does an ethics of virtue differ from an ethics of duty?

For debate: Do you think Christian ethics is primarily concerned with a person's actions, or with their motives, or with their character?

Chapter 3: Using the Bible in Ethics

1. What is a hermeneutic and why do Bible readers come up with different ones?
2. Describe the evangelical hermeneutic. What are its three stages and its two underlying assumptions?
3. What is 'the hermeneutical spiral'?

For debate: What factors are involved in how a person determines their hermeneutic? How can these factors be examined and critiqued?

Chapter 4: The Schema of Biblical Theology

1. What is meant by 'progressive revelation'?
2. Using material in this chapter, write two one-paragraph outlines of the Bible's structure along the following two lines:
 - i. promises and fulfilment.
 - ii. the kingdom.
3. What criteria can we use to 'weigh' the Bible's teachings on morality and ethics?

For debate: "The gospel is the key to understanding all the Scriptures". Is this an exaggeration?

Chapter 5: Creation Order

1. In what ways can the creation be described as 'orderly'?
2. How is the Law fulfilled in the gospel of Jesus?
3. what will happen to the created order upon Jesus' return?

For debate: "We can have a perfect orderly creation now, because of the victory of Jesus". Is this true?

Chapter 6: The Ethics of Personal Relationships

1. How do the persons of the Trinity relate to one another?
2. What have been the consequences of the Fall for:
 - i. human relations with God?
 - ii. human relations with each other?
3. What are the consequences of the gospel for:
 - i. human relations with God?
 - ii. human relations with each other?

For debate: 'The goal of personal action is mutual love relationships.' How might this idea redirect what

you intend to do today, and how you do it?

Chapter 7: The Ethics of Community

1. Explain the differences between 'methodological individualism' and 'methodological collectivism'.
2. What is Jesus' 'third option'? What are its advantages over the other approaches?
3. Why is 'inaugurated eschatology' the best description of God's rule now?

For debate: Look at the table on pages 119-120 of the book. Take one or more categories (A-L) and discuss which approach (Individualism/Interrelationism/Coll ectivism) seems most in tune with Scripture.

...eschatological
...trinitarian
...interrelational
...covenantal
...inclusive
...complex

2. What is Michael Hill's 'mutual love ethic'?
3. Why is a 'retrieval ethic' necessary? How does it differ from a "lesser of two evils" approach? How does it differ from a "consummated Kingdom" approach?

For debate: How might a retrieval ethic operate in a situation where adultery has occurred?

Chapter 8: Sketching a Biblically based Theory of Christian Ethics

1. Summarise in one or two sentences each what it means to say that Christian ethics is...
...theological
...creation based
...teleological
...christological

Chapter 9: Sex and Marriage

1. List at least five features of the pattern of marriage established in Eden.
 - i.
 - ii.
 - iii.
 - iv.
 - v.

2. How does the Gospel message that "the kingdom is at hand" affect our understanding of marriage (seen especially in 1 Corinthians 7)?
 3. Summarize the covenantal and 'inner being' ideals of marriage.
-

Chapter 10: Divorce and Remarriage

1. What differences might there be between a marriage based on a mutual love relationship and one based on epistemological individualism?
2. For what reasons is a widow or widower free to remarry?
3. Does the faith of the two parties in a marriage make any difference to the nature of the marriage?

For debate: Should Christians attempt to shape society's view of marriage? Why/why not?

Chapter 11: Homosexuality

1. What is the Old Testament attitude towards homosexuality?
2. How consistent with the Old Testament is the New Testament attitude towards homosexuality?

For debate: What views of marriage are held today? How does a view based on biblical theology challenge today's thinking?

3. What difficulties exist for gays wishing to change their sexual orientation?

For debate: "Not all gays are able to change, so there must be a compromise ethic for them". Discuss.

Chapter 12: Abortion

1. What theological ideas underpin a biblical approach to abortion?
2. Why is marriage the appropriate starting point for thinking about abortion?
3. Explain the differences between the properties and essence views of personhood.

For debate: Is there ever an ethically defensible case for abortion? Why/why not?

Chapter 13: Euthanasia

1. Try to define euthanasia carefully, clarifying the different types.
2. What aspects of biblical theology help us address this issue?
3. Explain the conflict here between individual interests and communal interests.

For debate: "Doctors ought to be given the power to relieve suffering by euthanasia, if all other avenues of relief have been explored." What is a Christian response to this statement?

Chapter 14: How to Live a Moral Life

1. What is the place for 'rules' in the Christian life?
2. What is the significance of 'virtues' in the Christian life?
3. How is a person's conscience educated?

For debate: "The most ethical Christian is the one who has no contact with others." What is wrong with this statement?