

Immanuel KANT

*THE FOUNDATION OF
THE METAPHYSICS OF MORALS*

Study Questions

- 1) Like Mill, Kant thinks there is only one intrinsic good. What is it, and how is it different from the sole intrinsic good that Mill claims is the ultimate end of all human action?
- 2) According to Kant, what gives our actions moral worth? In what sphere of human conduct is this property of moral conduct most manifest?
- 3) According to Kant, what is the connection between acting out of duty and acting according to a universal moral law?
- 4) What is the difference between a hypothetical and a categorical imperative? Why are imperatives that command the virtues required for human happiness only hypothetical?
- 5) Kant gives three formulations of the Categorical Imperative. According to the first one, we are to treat moral maxims or norms as universal and necessary laws of nature. What sorts of duty, according to Kant, follow from this formulation of the Categorical Imperative?
- 6) The second formulation of the Categorical Imperative, to consider all persons as ends in themselves, is based upon the difference between the value and the worth of something? What is this difference, and what sorts of thing have value and what sorts of thing have worth?
- 7) The third formulation of the Categorical Imperative is based upon human autonomy and sees human beings as members of what Kant calls the Kingdom of Ends. On what basis are human beings included in this kingdom?
- 8) Why is it, according to Kant, that human beings have dignity?

Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals. 1. Foundations of the metaphysics of morals (selection). Immanuel Kant. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was born, raised, lived, and died in Königsberg (East Prussia, later named Kaliningrad as part of the former USSR). The following reading is from sections one and two of Kant's Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals (published in 1785), in which Kant formulated for the first time the general outlines of his new moral theory. The numbers in brackets refer to volume four of the standard German Academy edition of Kant's works. [the good will]. Nothing in the world is indeed nothing even beyond. Word Count: 210. Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals is a preliminary sketch of the fundamental metaphysical laws governing moral experience. These laws are metaphysical in that they can be discerned a priori—that is, by the exercise of pure reason and without reference to psychology. Kant's goal is to set forth the supreme principle of morality. The attempt is organized into three sections. In the first section, he argues that only a will may be good in any unqualified sense. For Kant, a good will is one that acts not only in accordance with duty but also from a sense of duty. The standard 2005 Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, tr. Thomas Kingsmill Abbott, edited with revisions by Lara Denis. Peterborough, Ont. Also, since every rational creature is equally subject to the commands of morality, all moral imperatives must apply equally to all rational creatures. In short, morality is equally operative no matter who you are or what you're doing. It is not dependent on any circumstances: it is a categorical imperative. Moderation in emotions and passions, self-control, and calm deliberation not only are good in many respects but seem even to constitute part of Excerpts from Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals by Immanuel Kant, translated by Lewis White Beck. Copyright © 1997, Library of Liberal Arts, Prentice Hall. FOUNDATIONS OF THE METAPHYSICS OF MORALS the inner worth of the person. But however unconditionally they were esteemed by the ancients, they are far from being good without qualification, for without the principles of a good will they can become extremely bad, and the coolness of a villain ma