

UNIT III-CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Lesson 1: Definition and Significance of Christian Ethics Colossians 3:1-6:

"Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your heart on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming." (NIV)

A. What is Christian ethics?

1. **Christian ethics is a method of determining right and wrong based on the understanding and interpretation of the Christian message.** The life and teachings of Jesus Christ are the heart of the Christian message. Right and wrong in this aspect are determined by the life and teachings of Christ. To understand what we should do or avoid in life, as well as to know what we should believe, we must consult the life and teachings of Christ (Rudnick, 1979).
2. **Christian ethics is a set of principles derived from the Christian faith by which we act.** The Bible gives us detailed instructions on how we should live. While God's word may not cover every situation in our lives, its principles give us the standards by which we must conduct ourselves. For example, the Bible does not explicitly say anything about the use of illegal drugs, yet based on the principles we learn in the Bible, we can know that it is wrong. For one, the Bible tells us that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that we should honor God with it. (1 Cor. 6:19-20). So, by using the principles in the Scripture, Christians can already determine what is proper for them to do in a given situation (Geisler, 2010).
3. **Christian ethics is a systematic study of the way of life exemplified and taught by Jesus, applied to problems and decisions of human existence.** The way of life is expressed in what we say, live, and practice. It is also synonymous with our lifestyle or day-to-day living. The Gospels reflect Jesus' way of life. It tells not only what He does and says but also what early Christians believed about Him. The way of life exemplified by Jesus is an adequate, dependable, and indispensable guide for Christians in their actions as well as in their decisions in life (Harkness, 1957).

B. Significance of Christian Ethics

Why do we need to study Christian ethics? The following are the significance of Christian ethics:

1. **Christian ethics guides Christians in making the right decision.** Normally, people make moral and ethical decisions in their life. They need light to guide them in their problems and decisions. According to Giles, there are three elements involved in making right decisions. These are: 1) one's sense of values; 2) one's belief in the dignity and worth of persons; and 3) one's responsibility towards neighbor. In circumstances in which we cannot determine what is right or wrong, we need to consult Christian ethics (Giles, 1974).
2. **Christian ethics helps us differentiate between what is vital and peripheral in life.** Vital signifies an essential element in life, while peripheral is of minor significance. It also expresses priorities in life, what seems to be important

and not so important. For example, health care and family concerns are vital in life. Moreover, there are also issues like ecological bearings, human rights, and global warming that are equally important. These issues affect even community life. Christian ethics, in this aspect, helps people decide or weigh which concerns should be attended to first and which ones should be taken later (RE 2 Manual, 2005).

3. **Christian ethics assists people in determining their goals in life and helps them realize these goals.** Normally, people make goals for their lives. They work hard in order to realize these goals. Christian ethics does not agree that the end justifies the means. The efforts toward realizing the end should be coupled with the efforts towards developing good principles, right attitude, and an acceptable way of life (Giles, 1974).

Lesson 2: Biblical Basis of Christian Ethics

1. Lecture-Discussions

Christian ethics deals with what is morally right and wrong. This lesson will give us the biblical basis of Christian ethics, which will help us determine good actions.

1. **Christian ethics is based on the Scripture.** God's communication has been accomplished principally through the Scriptures. He has done this by making the Scripture a unity with what He has done in creating the universe. In Scripture, God has communicated His mind, and character, and will to mankind. We must recognize the authority of His word because through it we know what is right and wrong for us (Craton, 2005).
2. **Christian ethics is based on God's will.** Christian ethics is a form of God's command in accordance with His will and with His unchangeable moral character. Christians are to obey this command. God wills what is right in accordance with His moral attributes. God commanded the Israelites to be holy because He himself is holy (Lev. 11:45). Jesus Christ likewise told his disciples to be perfect as His Heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48). It is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18). Therefore, we should not lie. God is love (1 Jn. 4:16). And Jesus tells us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:39) (Geisler, 2010).
3. **Christian ethics is based on a strong foundation of the absolute.** Christian ethics rests ultimately upon God Himself and upon His divine character. God's character does not change (Mal. 3:6; James 1:17), therefore it follows that man's obligations based on His nature are absolute. There is no other system that could give us a solid base on which to operate except to go back to the absolute, who is God. Leander Keyser says, "Christian ethics goes back to God as the ultimate ground and source of morality." God is the source of all that is good, and that includes our standards for ethical behavior. Since Christians believe in God, from whom all goodness comes, Christians should conform to God's likeness (Craton, 2005).
4. **Christian ethics is based on God's revelation.** God has revealed Himself both in nature (Ps. 19:1-6), and in Scripture (Ps. 19:7-14). God's revelation is expressed both in general (Rom. 1:19-20; 2:12-15), and special means (Rom. 2:18; 3:2). In general revelation, God expresses his commands for all people; while in special revelation, God declares His will for the believers. But in both cases, the basis of our ethical duty always lies on God's revelation. Failure to acknowledge God as the source of ethical duty does not clear anyone from their moral duty (Rom 2:14-15).

So, even if unbelievers do not recognize the moral law in their minds, they are still inclined to do it.

5. **Christian ethics is based on the character of God.** God exists, he has a character, but not all things are the same with Him. Some things conform to His character, and some are opposed. The task of Christian ethics then is to determine what conforms to God's character and what does not. Christians believe that moral norms come from God's nature. God's ethical order is the only true source of morality. For the Christian, the moral order is more real than the physical order. Paul says that the physical order is temporary, but the order not seen is eternal (**2 Cor. 4:18**). This eternal order is a reflection of the character of God Himself (**CE- Wikipedia**).
6. **Christian ethics is based on the atonement.** James Denny says: The new life springs out of a sense of debt to Christ. The regenerating power of forgiveness depends upon its cause. It means that the death of Christ is the basis upon which Christian ethics is built. Our choice of an ethical life is based upon the regenerative power of the cross. We live ethically and righteously as a result of the atonement, and this is the basis of Christian ethics (**Craton, 2005**).
7. **Christian ethics is prescriptive.** By its very nature, Christian ethics is prescriptive, not descriptive. Doing what is right is prescribed by a moral God. He is both a lawgiver and a legislator. As a lawgiver, God prescribed laws, and as a legislator, he imposed legislation. Christian ethics emphasizes what we should do, not what is. Christians should behave not based on the standard of others but on the standard of God (Geisler, 2010).

Lesson 3: Christian Ethics in Relationship with the Old and New Testaments Lecture-Discussions

A. Old Testament Ethics

Christian ethics is grounded in the Old Testament. The principles of the Old Testament consist of the **laws** and the **character and nature of God**. The laws gave Israel a standard of what was right and wrong. The governing principle, which is the nature and character of God, is summed up by the statement that the Lord was holy (**Lev. 19:2**). The holy character of God cannot tolerate evil or sin. Therefore, if we wish to please God and guard our lives from sin, we must live in accordance with His nature and character.

The major contributions of the Old Testament to the study of ethics include: 1) accountability to a monotheistic God; 2) humility, righteousness, and wisdom. It emphasizes social responsibilities without diminishing an individual's accountability.

B. New Testament Ethics

The most significant contribution of the New Testament is Jesus Christ. His life, teaching and ministry form the structure of the New Testament ethics. The common ground of the New Testament with the Old Testament is the revelation of God and His Word. The revelation of God in the New Testament assumes His lordship over His creation. Therefore, all aspects of life, attitudes, and actions are subject to God. The revelation of God's Word means that the New Testament ethics has a saving outlook on life. The Word of God reveals that mankind fell into sin, but God offers reconciliation through Christ.

The principles governing the New Testament ethics are what Jesus said: **1) "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and 2) "Love your neighbor as yourself (Matt 22:37-39) (Corbet, 2012).**

With the common ground between the two testaments, the following are the basic ethical understanding or concepts of God, man, and the world.

C. Concepts of God

1. **God is Ethical.** The ethics of God stresses the sacredness of human life. God does not want human sacrifices. When Abraham was about to kill his son Isaac, to be sacrificed as a burnt offering, God stopped his hands (**Gen. 22:12**). God's ethics is to preserve human life. God was not also happy when Manasseh sacrificed his own son in the fire (**2 Kings 21:6**).
2. **God is Creator.** Behind the interpretation of evil as the corrupted good is faith in God as the Creator. Human beings and everything else in the world have been made by God. However, as Creator, he is not responsible for what is wrong with us. He is not the source of evil that threatens us. He is the only source of what is right with and about us (**Rudnick, 1979**).
3. **God is Righteous.** God is portrayed as righteous in the Old Testament. Because God is righteous, he demands righteousness from all people. Righteousness is a moral and ethical obligation of people in society. It should be centered in the **attitudes of the heart**. **Psalm 11:7** says **"The Lord is righteous, he loves justice, upright men will see his face."**
4. **God is Provider.** **Jehovah Jireh** is the name of God that stresses his capacity to supply human needs. When the Israelites were hungry and thirsty, God provided them with food and water. In one of the mountains of Galilee, Jesus also fed the hungry multitudes with loaves of bread and pieces of fish (**RE 2 Manual, 2005**).
5. **God is Justice.** Justice is the property of law or is measured by the standard of law. Since justice is rooted in law, it easily develops ethical conduct in accordance with what is lawful. God emphasizes justice and upright living. He wants people to repent from their sins and to live with what is just. **"If a wicked man turns away from his sins he has committed and keep God's decrees, he will surely live, not die" (Ezekiel 18:21), (Landroer, 2002).**
6. **God is Merciful.** Mercy is used in the Old Testament to express the unique quality of God. Mercy is reciprocal by nature. It is to the merciful that God will show mercy. **"God will not show mercy when he judges the person who has not been merciful" (James 2:13).** The principle of reciprocity is seen also in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us, as we forgive..." (**Matt.6:12**).
7. **God is Savior.** In the Old Testament, God delivered the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. He saved the Hebrew patriarchs like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; he saved Moses and the slaves at the Red Sea. He saved the thief who had a penitent heart at the cross of Calvary. The ethics of God is salvation for mankind. He sent His only Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins.
8. **God is love.** The concrete love of God was seen in a manger. He concretized Himself in the form of human flesh, and this human flesh is none other than His son, Jesus. His ethical action was a transcendental one. He came down to identify with his loved ones. Since God is love, he

challenged his people to love one another (**I John 4:6-8**), (**RE 2 Manual, 2005**).

Lesson 4: Criteria, Standards, and Methods of Christian Ethics

1. Teacher-Student Input

A. Criteria of Christian Ethics

The word criterion (*criteria* plural) means **basis** or **norm** (Webster, 2006). The following criteria, such as right, good, and fit, are bases or norms for ethical conduct.

1. **Criterion of right** - emphasizes the **duty** of man. The following are the prescribed duties of man:
 - a. It is the duty of man to practice what is true and noble (**Phil. 4:8-9**).
 - b. It is the duty of man to be productive (**Col. 1:10-12**).
 - c. It is the duty of man to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (**Micah 6:8b**).
2. **Criterion of good** - emphasizes the **purpose** of man. The primary purpose of man is to:
 - a. love God above everything else; and
 - b. love his/her neighbor (**Matt. 22:37-40**)

What is the highest good?

- a. To seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (**Matt. 6:33**)
 - b. To do the will of God from the heart
3. **Criterion of fit** - emphasizes the situation of man. Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27) (RE 2 Syllabus, p. 4).

B. Standards or the Final Authorities for what is Right or Wrong.

What are the standards or the final authorities for what is right and wrong? There are only two standards:

1. **Jesus Christ**. His life and his teachings are the standards of Christian behavior. Jesus said, "***I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me***" (John 14:6).
2. **Word of God**. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for **teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness**, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**), (Tardo, 2012).

C. Methods of Christian Ethics

The methods of Christian ethics will guide Christians to practice the prescribed criteria and standards:

1. **Intuition**. Intuition means insight, instinct or moral sense. It could also mean perception or conscience. The blind man who could not totally see can still walk across the street with his rod because he has this insight or perception. Man by nature has a moral sense because he was created in the image of God. It is this moral sense or conscience that dictates him to do good. When he commits mistakes he feels guilty because he has this conscience.
2. **Faith in God**. We know that an experience is good, right, or fit according to the will of God. The will of God is concretely expressed in the form of a human flesh, none other than His very Son Jesus Christ. We can only discern God's will if we have to relate our own life to Jesus Christ through the workings of the Holy Spirit. The will of God is a matter of experiencing God in life through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

3. . When God created man in his own image it is coupled not only with conscience or moral sense but also with reason. Man is a rational being. He thinks and analyzes certain situations, implications of experiences before making moral decisions (RE 2 Syllabus, 2002).

Lesson 5: Most Important Principle of Christian Life

1. Teacher-Student's Input

Jesus' ultimate purpose is to establish the kingdom of heaven in the human heart. The following are the principles to live by so that the kingdom of heaven is present in everyone's heart.

1. **An abiding trust and faith in God in all circumstances**. Even in the midst of great distress, we are to continue in faith with God. A steadfast faith in Jesus Christ is the first and most important principle in the Christian life. "***Let us hold fast to the profession of our faith, for He who promised is faithful***" (Heb. 10:23). Phil 4:19 says, "***But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.***"
2. **Sincerity and honesty before God and man**. Christians are to be sincere, not hypocrites who say one thing and do another. God hates dishonesty. One of the commandments given by God to Moses says, "***Do not steal***" (Ex. 20:15). ***Let us be honest not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of people*** (2 Cor. 8:21).
3. **Genuine humility**. Jesus said, "***Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.***" To be meek, in a sense, is to be humble. Humility is the acceptance to learn and to forgive. Matthew looks upon Jesus himself as the true example of humility. Col. 3:12-13 says, "***So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.***"
4. **A forgiving and merciful spirit toward all**. Forgiveness is choice, not a feeling. It is not an emotion you work on. The Scriptures tell us to love one another and love even our enemies. Love overlooks the many faults of others. Let us not concentrate on other's shortcomings but instead to pray for them (**Matt. 5:43-48**).
5. **An unqualified love for God and for your neighbor**. When Jesus was asked by a Pharisee what is the greatest commandment in the law, He said that the greatest commandment is to love God with all his heart, his soul, and his mind. Then He further said that he should love his neighbor as he loved himself (Matt. 22:36-40). Jesus gives us the two commandments on which all the others rest. It is impossible to love God and not to love others. A natural outgrowth of loving God is loving others.
6. **Absolute loyalty, faithfulness, and obedience to the Word and will of God**. As Christians, we need to be faithful to the Lord. If we call him as our Lord and Master we have to obey him (Luke 6:46). Not everyone who calls the name of the Lord shall enter the Kingdom of heaven; but those who do the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21) (Tardo, 2012).

Student's Project: Code of Ethics

What is a Code of Ethics?

- **Code of Ethics** is a statement of goals, **commitment, and responsibilities**. Code means a **system or regulations**. Before making your commitments to the pattern or system of your life, contemplate first on the

sayings of Jesus that will give you a hint in making your code of ethics.

Example of Sayings of Jesus:

1. "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you" (Matt. 6:33).

Code formulation: *I will seek the kingdom of God all the time.*

1. "Be perfect therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5:48)

Code formulation: *I will strive to be perfect all the time.*

2. "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Matt. 5:44)

Code formulation: *I will love and pray for my enemies.*

Tips in Formulating a Code of Ethics

1. Make your code of ethics simple, short and easy to follow.
2. Include realistic goals, commitments, and responsibilities.
3. Review and revise if necessary.
4. Post your code of ethics on the place where you can read daily.
5. Pray and put into practice your code of ethics (Bunda, 2005, revised).

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

1. **Suggested Project:** Students will be asked to make 10 statements of goals or commitments for their Code of Ethics. They will use their own creativity. They may write their code of ethics on a special paper or in a book mark form, or print on a T-shirt. The Code of Ethics will serve as a guide in student's life.
2. **Summing Up:** In this unit, we have defined the meaning of Christian ethics as *a method of determining what is right and wrong, a set of principles based on Christian message and faith, and a way of life exemplified by Jesus. We study ethics to guide us in making right decisions, help us differentiate what is vital and peripheral, and assist us in determining and realizing goals in life.*

We have studied that Christian ethics is based on *Scripture, based on God's will, absolute, based on God's revelation, based on his character, based on the atonement, and prescriptive.*

Christian ethics is grounded in the Old Testament. The contributions of the Old Testament to the study of ethics include the *accountability to a single God, and emphasis on humility, righteousness, and wisdom* while the **New Testament focuses** on Jesus Christ, **his life and teachings**. The **common ground of the New Testament with the Old Testament** is the **Revelation of God and His Word**. The governing principles of the New Testament are what Jesus said: **Love God above everything else, and love your neighbor as yourself.**

In the study of Christian ethics, the following concepts have been formulated: the concepts about God as **ethical, creator, righteous, provider, justice, merciful, Savior, and love**. Added are also the concepts of a man: man is a **created being, created in the image of God, affected by sin, can be redeemed, a personal, valuable, social being, and ethical**. The concepts of the world are taken from the prescribed biblical passages. of man: man

The criteria of ethics are **good, right, and fit**, with two basic standards: **Jesus and His words. Intuition, faith in God, and**

reason are methods of Christian ethics useful in the practice of these criteria and standards.

The most important principles in the Christian life are: **abiding trust and faith in God; sincerity and honesty, forgiving and merciful spirit towards others, unqualified love for God and neighbor; and absolute loyalty, faithfulness and obedience to the Word of God.**

This unit ends with the formulation of the student's code of ethics based on the ethical principles of Jesus.

UNIT IV- TOWARD VALUE FORMATION

Lesson 1: Values, Beliefs and Actions

Lecture-Discussions

A. Definition

Etymologically, the word **value** comes from the Latin word **valere** which means to **measure the worth of something**. Alex Tiempo quoting Jocano (1993) mentions three interpretations associated with Filipino understanding of value. **First**, it can be associated with **objects; second, ideas, and third, actions**. Values associated with objects may mean **price, cost, charge, amount, and worth**. When it is attached to ideas, value could mean **dignity, importance, weight, and consequence**. And if it is applied to **actions**, the term meant **extent, merit, significance, and usefulness** (Tiempo, 2005). Values are also defined as "that which one shows by his actions, or that which one cherishes the most" (RE 2 Syllabus, 2002).

The Nature of Values

"Values always have a positive function," according to Land Jocano, He states that the values we consider **"negative"** are actually **"actions violating the standard behavior but are rationalized in the context of existing values."** He further claims that these so-called **negative value** are actually labeled because they were used in the wrong way. **Pakikisama** is a Filipino value. It can become a negative value when someone take drugs due to peer pressure and later would resort to stealing (Jocano, 1997). The person then might justify such acts as taking drugs and stealing by saying, **"nadala lang ako sa ila or naumid lang ako sa ila."** Committing crimes is labeled as misuse of values or violation of the principles of values.

Values are influential that they affect the totality of the person's life. They control one's actions and choices. They also determine a group's feelings of likes and dislikes as well as feelings related to what is acceptable and unacceptable. Values serve as a guide to one's plan, decision making and response to change.

Values are related to one's search for meaning in life. "For we say that life is meaningful when a man has formed something capable of arousing his commitment to it; something deserving of his best efforts, something worth living for" (Andres, 1980). Knowing one's purpose in life also aids in determining what one values most.

Determining the Relationship between Values, Actions and Beliefs

We commonly hear people verbally express their beliefs or convictions concerning things, issues, events or experiences. We are sometimes easily drawn to think that they are stating what they value in life, but it may not always be that way.

For example, people who claim they believe in the value of honesty may compromise their belief and become dishonest if

placed in an uncomfortable situation. They may be ashamed of it when challenged by colleagues at work, or they may have doubts about the goodness of their conviction. Their assertion of the value of honesty is only a belief. It would only become a value, "if it was a cherished belief, a freely chosen belief, and a belief that pervades life..." (RE 2 Syllabus, 2002).

How then is belief distinguished from value? What people believe is expressed through their statements or verbal assertions about what is true, important or what ought to be, while values are seen in one's actions. People act according to what they think is important, appropriate or meaningful in life. Before anything becomes a value, it has to pass through what is called the "seven sub-processes of valuing." This will be discussed in the latter section of the unit.

Learning from the Scripture

Jesus shows us the importance of the relationship between words and actions. In **Matthew 7:15-27**, he described certain people based on what they do and say. (The students will read the Biblical passage)

1. A false prophet in this passage is understood as "**one who said one thing and did another.**"
2. The truths about "**false prophets**" that we can draw from the passage are:
 - a. There is only one way a person's sincerity can be proved, and that is by his practice,
 - b. Fine words (*stated beliefs*) can never substitute for fine deeds. Jesus' teachings as found in this Scripture speak of values and valuing
3. What is wrong with being a false prophet?
 - a. False prophets harm other people by lying to them and manipulating them to act in ways they would not normally act,
 - b. False prophets hurt themselves since they are always on "shaky ground", afraid to be discovered for what they really are
4. Identify and list examples of modern-day "false prophets" based on the definition given. (RE2 Syllabus, 2002)

Lesson 2: Determining My Values

Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning

A. Introduction

There is a great need for people today to identify and clarify their personal values. It includes awareness of what is considered important and vital in life. Unless such is done, the future of the individual, the family and the country will be at stake. The present situation of the Philippines is a wake up call for all Filipinos to really focus on what they want to happen to themselves personally, to their families and the whole nation. The lack of focus on what is important leads to waste of time, resources and opportunities.

Some authorities see this inability to attain clearly defined values as one of the prime reasons for the growing number of young people who are unable to learn. They are not clear about what their lives are for, and what is worth working for (RE2 Syllabus, 2002).

People may be grouped in to three in relation to their values. The first group is composed of those who appear to **have no apparent values**, second are those **who have strongly defined values**, and third, those who have values that are **poorly defined**.

How should people identify what is important to them? That which help people know what they truly consider important in life is called **value indicators**. Some of these come in the form of people's "goals, purposes, aspirations, beliefs, convictions, activities, worries, problems, daydreams, use of time, use of money, use of energy" (Bauzon, 1994).

Looking at the Scripture

Read the account in **Mark 10: 17-22**.

- a. Dramatize the story of the rich young ruler.
- b. Discuss the story by considering the following questions

The man's values became clear. If his life had continued as it had, then he shall have died a very rich man who had always obeyed the law. Even though he heard Jesus, he was not willing to give up his riches, thus, he showed that life hereafter was not his highest value. We should carefully note that Jesus passed no judgment on this man during their conversation. He answered only what the man asked, and in such a way, the man was forced to see what he actually valued.

Why should we be concerned about the process of determining values? Unless we exist in a state of vegetation we do have values. Even though we may not be aware of our values, they are with us always determining what we do with our lives. If the values we hold determined what we do with our lives, then we would be wise to make every attempt to determine what our values will be (RE 2 Syllabus, 2002).

Lesson 3: Forming Values

Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning

Teacher's Input

A. Background

Simon, Howe and Kirschenbaum in their book, *Value Clarification*, tell us that the individual's action lies not in relying on the opinions and values of others but in developing a set of personal values to use as a yard stick in making decisions.

People have experiences; they grow and learn. Out of the experiences may come certain general guides to behavior. These guides tend to give direction to life and may be called values. Our values show what we tend to do with our limited time and energy.

Values grow from a person's experiences and that a person's values modify as his experiences accumulate and change. A person in Antarctica would not be expected to have the same values as a person in Manila. A person who has an important change in pattern of experience might be expected to modify values. Values are not static if one's relationship to his world is not static. As guides to behavior, values evolve and mature as experiences evolve and mature.

Moreover, because values are part of living, they operate in very complex circumstances and usually involve more than simple extremes of right and wrong, good or bad, true or false. The conditions under which behavior is guided, in which values work, typically involve conflicting demands, weighing and balancing, and finally action that reflects a multitude of forces. Thus, values seldom function in pure and abstract form. Complicated judgments are involved and what is valued is reflected in the outcome of life as it is finally lived out.

Values are constantly being related to the experience that shape them and test them. They are not, for any one person, so much hard and vast varieties as they are the results of hammering out a lifestyle in a certain set of surroundings. After a sufficient amount of hammering, certain pattern of evaluating and and behaving tend to develop. Certain things a things are treated as right or desirable or worthy. These tend to become our values.

This lesson is less concerned with the particular value outcomes of people's experience than the process they use to obtain their values. Because people are different through time and space, we cannot be certain what values, what lifestyles would be most suitable for any person. We do, however, have ideas about what processes might be most effective for obtaining values. These ideas grow from the assumption that whatever values one obtained should work as effectively as possible to relate to the world in a satisfying and intelligent way (RE 2 Syllabus, 2002).

From this assumption comes what we call the process of valuing. A look at this process can clarify how values are formed.

The Valuing Process

Before something becomes a value it has to fulfill some criteria known as the valuing process. Unless something satisfies all seven of the criteria noted below, we do not call it value. In other words, for a value to develop, all of the following seven requirements must apply.

1. **Choosing freely.** If something was in fact to guide one's life, whether or not the authority is watching, it must be a result of free choice. If there was coercion, the result would not likely stay with one for long. Values must be freely selected if they were to be really valued by the individual.
2. **Choosing from among alternatives.** This definition of values concerns with things that are chosen by the individual and obviously there can be no choice if there were no alternatives from which to choose. It makes no sense, for example to say that one values eating. One really has no choice in the matter. What one may value is certain types of food or certain form of eating, but not eating itself. We must all obtain nourishment to exist; there is no room for decision. Only when a choice is possible from many alternatives do we say a value can result
3. **Choosing after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternatives.** For something intelligently and meaningfully to guide one's life, it must emerge from a weighing and an understanding. Only when options are understood can one make intelligent choices. There is an important cognitive factor here. A value can emerge only with thoughtful consideration of range of the alternatives and consequences.
4. **Prizing and cherishing.** When we value something, it has a positive tone. We prize it, we cherish it, we esteem it, respect it, hold it dear. We are happy with our values. A choice, even when we have made it freely and thoughtfully may be a choice we are not happy to make. We may choose to fight in war, but be sorry that circumstances make that choice necessary. In our definition, values flow from choices that we are happy to make. We prize and cherish the guide to life that we call values.
5. **Affirming.** When we have chosen something freely, after consideration of the alternatives, and we are proud of our choice, glad to be associated with it, we are likely to affirm our choice when we are asked about it. We are willing to champion them. If we are ashamed of a choice, if we would

not make our position known when appropriately asked, we would not make out dealing with values but with something else.

6. **Acting upon choices.** Our values show up in our living. We may do some reading about the things we value. We are likely to form friendships or to be in organizations that nourish our values. We may spend money on the choice we value, we budget time and energy for our values. In short, for a value to be present, life itself must be affected. Nothing can be a value that does not, in fact, give direction to actual living. The person who talks about something but never does anything about it is dealing with something other than value.
7. **Repeating.** For something to reach the stage of a value, it is holds it. It shows up several times. We would not think of something that appeared once in life and never again as a value. Values tend to have a persistency, tend to make a pattern in life.

To review this definition, values are developed from three processes: choosing, prizing and acting.

Choosing:

1. freely
2. from alternatives
3. after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative

Prizing:

4. cherishing, being happy with the choice
5. willing to affirm the choice publicly

Acting:

6. doing something with the choice
7. repeatedly, in some pattern in life

Those processes collectively define valuing. Results of the valuing process are called values (Simon, Howe, Kirschenbaum, 1972).

Values Clarification

Instruction: Read the story, then rank the characters from the most offensive to the least objectionable. The students will share their reasons for the rank given to each character. This activity may be done in groups of 3-5 members each.

Alligator River:

There was a girl named Abigail who was in love with a boy named Gregory. Gregory had an unfortunate accident and broke his glasses. Abigail, being a true friend, volunteered to take them to be repaired. But the repair shop was across the river and during a flash flood the bridge was washed away. Poor Gregory could see nothing without his glasses, so Abigail was desperate to get across the river to the repair shop. While she was standing forlornly on the bank of the river, clutching the broken glasses in her hands, a boy named Sinbad passed by in a rowboat.

She asked Sinbad if he could take her across. He (Sinbad) agreed on the condition that while she (Abigail) was having the glasses repaired, she would go to a nearby store and steal a transistor radio that he had been wanting. Abigail refused to do this and went to see a friend named Ivan who had a boat.

When Abigail told Ivan her problem, he said he was too busy to help her out and didn't want to be involved. Abigail feeling that

she had no other choice, returned to Sinbad and told him she would agree to his plan.

When Abigail returned the repaired glasses to Gregory, she told him what she had to do. Gregory was appalled at what she had done and told her he never wanted to see her again.

Abigail, upset, turned to Slug with her tale of woe. Slug was sorry for Abigail that he promised her he would get even with Gregory. They went to the school playground where Gregory was playing and broke his glasses again (**Simon, Howe and Kirschembaum, 1972**).

Lesson 4: Pressures on Values

B. Pressures on Values

1. The Family, the cradle of our values

All of us are born in a family. Our parents are those who laid out our first understanding of what is good or bad, big or small, clean or dirty, and important and unimportant. Their influence established our understanding about ourselves and the people around us. Early in life they introduced us to God who is holy and the source of all goodness. They taught us how to relate to other people, especially those who are members of our family, our friends and our neighbors. They also taught us to appreciate and take care of our environment and all that is in it because these are God's gifts to man. Our family is most influential in shaping our values.

2. Peers - Second to our family are our peers who are also influential in our value formation. They are the significant persons outside our family

Consider the following questions and assess how our friends affect what we consider important in life.

- Do you have friends?
- How much time do you spend with them?
- Do you compare yourself with your friends or classmates often?
- Do you wish to buy or have what they have?
- Do you prefer to wear the kinds of clothes that they wear, eat their kind of food or go to places they want to hang out?

If your answer to these questions is "yes" then you are experiencing "peer pressure." Peer pressure is not only a problem among young people today but also among some adults. Whether we like it or not our peers greatly influence our values in either good or bad way. Young people today need to be wise in allowing their peers to influence them.

3. Technology - How much time do you spend in listening to music, watching TV, reading books/magazines, playing computer games, surfing the net in a week? Also assess the influence of media on your personal life, family, friends, studies, neighbors and other areas of your life. Choose the media types that apply to you.

Self-reflections: There are two areas we need to focus on when we are evaluating media's effects on us. First, the amount of time media takes from us, and second, the subject matter (content) discussed by the media (Rainey, 2003).

Biblical Insight

The Bible has set guidelines for us concerning the influence of media. We are reminded by Paul in Romans 12:2, "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good, and acceptable and perfect."

- The world has the power to influence us to do good or evil.
- A renewed mind is empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit to overcome the bad influences of the world
- Our minds should be guided by God's will so we will know what is good, acceptable and perfect.

Moreover, **Philippians 4.8** also reminds us what essential things we should set our minds on. Whatever we are thinking and meditating on affects our actions. "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable. Think about such things,"

Lesson 5: Model for Christian Values

1. Teacher's Input: Background of the Lesson

The word "**Beatitude**" comes from the Latin word *beatus* which means "**blessed**" or "**made happy**", otherwise called *macarism* from the Greek word *makarios*, which also means "**blessed**" (**Gaebelein, 1984**) or "**fortunate**" (**Revell, 1991, in Landero, 2002**).

Some modern cynical people refer to the Beatitudes as the "**Be-attitudes**". As they say, how can a person today cope with such attitudes as being merciful, meek, pure, or sorrowing? After all, the world is hard and competitive. Jesus' answer might well be that the world is hard and competitive, simply because there is not enough mercy, purity, meekness, Beatitudes, Jesus was advocating those values that, if accepted and sorrowing, etc. By putting forth the values that he practiced in the claimed, would have led to happiness of those around.

- The poor in spirit (Matthew 5:3)** Jesus is pronouncing a blessing upon simple, unspoiled folk. The blessing is not necessarily to those materially poor; it is to those who find themselves poverty-ridden spiritually. It is to those who recognize this poverty that the Kingdom of heaven comes because they turn to God for spiritual enrichment. These are the people who declare their full dependence upon God, confessing that apart from God they are nothing.
- The sorrowing (Matthew 5: 4)** To be sad because of pain and suffering is not necessarily a virtue in itself. However, to be able to bear suffering courageously and with faith characterizes a member of the kingdom. The implication is that the Christians sorrow as they try to understand and share their neighbor's pain.
- The meek (Matthew 5:5)** To be meek is not being afraid or frightened as people think. Jesus meant that persons should be patient, long-suffering; the opposite of rudely aggressive and proud. A meek person does not trample upon the rights of other. True meekness is not weakness. Another word for meek is gentle. A gentle person is polite, respectful, and strong, but the strength is under control.
- Hungering and thirsting for righteousness (Matthew 5:6)** The expression "**hunger and thirst for righteousness**" is a strong one. It is vital for us to ask ourselves what it is that we hunger for. What things draw us most to a particular direction? Is it fame or success?

How would one hunger for righteousness? Jesus expects his followers to desire a knowledge of what is right. Righteousness for Jesus is a total attitude of mind, a particular kind of character, and a special style of living.

5. **The merciful (Matthew 5: 7)** To be merciful is to act in a manner of loving kindness to those in less fortunate circumstances. But to be truly merciful is not only to have the right attitude, but also to perform deeds of mercy. "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" are more than nine words that are profound and true.
6. **The pure in heart (Matthew 5:8) "Heart"** in Scripture refers to the entire personality. "Pure" refers to the rightness of thought and motive. Those whose motives are pure will gain spiritual insights. One might wonder how will the pure in heart see God. Some believe that this refers to life after death. Others say that as one develops this characteristic, God becomes evident in the world around that individual. The pure in heart are aware of the actions of God in their lives, whether they are in times of joy or sorrow. People who are pure in heart do not only mean to do the right but also work with right motive.
7. **The peacemakers (Matthew 5: 9)** Being a peacemaker is another characteristic that gives joy to life. Those who work for peace are often misunderstood and persecuted. This is especially true in times of emotional crisis. Peacemakers run opposite many persons who seek to prey the fears and prejudices of people. The peacemakers are often called coward. The peacemakers bring wholeness or health to the needs of others. Peacemakers do not avoid conflict; but are able to settle differences.
8. **The persecuted (Matthew 5: 10-11)**. In the eighth beatitude, Jesus describes those who suffer persecution for doing God's will. Suffering persecution in itself does not help a person find real joy in life. The secret in finding meaning and joy lies in what it is that brings about the persecution. Although most persons who are persecuted feel that it is for righteousness cause, there are many who bring persecution on themselves by acting obnoxiously.

Now go back and take a good look at what Jesus advocated as the means by which we may become "blessed" or "made happy". What do you see unusual about this list?

Do you see wealth listed? Where is power, fame, beauty, and possessions? None of these is listed. The Beatitudes tell us that God reverses the standard by which we human beings measure people and things (wealth, power, etc.). To be held in esteem by the world is not necessarily held in esteem by God. One may be rich and powerful by worldly standards, but poor by God's standard (**RE 2 Syllabus, 2002**).