



An Introduction to Christian Ethics (5th Edition)

By Roger H. Crook Ph.D.

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Helping readers look at moral issues seriously, intelligently, and from a Christian perspective, this comprehensive and thought-provoking introduction to the study of Christian ethics emphasizes the use of scripture, tradition, and the Christian community as resources to help formulate a personal approach in ethical living as it describes a variety of contemporary approaches to the consideration of ethical issues; discusses the author's own methods for making ethical decisions; and explores some of the critical issues of our day. Acquaints readers with both the field of ethics in general and varieties of Christian ethical systems in particular, and assists them in the formulation of an approach that they will find valid for themselves. Combines theological, philosophical, historical, and sociological perspectives in examining moral issues. Considers sources of guidance, biblical ethics, faith working through love, Christian ethics and such contemporary issues as human sexuality, marriage relationships, issues in biomedical ethics, and the status of women. Discusses citizenship in a democracy, punishment for crime, war and the quest for peace, ecology and our moral responsibility, and much more. Offers new discussions on the ethics of Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, and the moral implications of cloning. For readers interested in ethics, religion and/or philosophy.

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Editorial Review

From the Publisher

Comprehensive and thought-provoking, this introduction to the study of Christian ethics introduces the field of ethics in general, surveys the variety of Christian approaches to the study of ethics, describes the author's own methods for making ethical decisions, and explores some of the ethical issues -- both personal and social --with which modern men and women must deal.

From the Back Cover

This introductory text presents a Christian method for making decisions and applies it to some of the major ethical issues of today. Author Roger H. Crook effectively integrates both historical and sociological material throughout the book.

Focusing on value rather than duty in moral decision-making, **An Introduction to Christian Ethics, Fourth Edition**, emphasizes a continuing respect for scripture, tradition, and the Christian community as resources in the consideration of contemporary moral issues.

Topics include:

- An Overview of Ethics
- Alternatives to Christian Ethics
- Alternatives within Christian Ethics
- Sources of Guidance
- Biblical Ethics
- Faith Working through Love
- Human Sexuality and the Marriage Relationship
- Life and Death: Issues in Biomedical Ethics
- Christian Ethics and Ethnicity
- The Status of Women
- Citizenship in a Democracy
- Punishment for Crime
- War and the Quest for Peace
- Work, Property, and Community
- Ecology and Moral Responsibility

New material in the Fourth Edition includes:

- Updated statistics and illustrative materials
- New approaches to Alternatives to Christian Ethics; Human Sexuality; Biomedical Ethics; and Ethnicity
- Updated Bibliography

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This book is a college-level introductory textbook in Christian ethics. This statement indicates three important facts. First, the book is based on the Christian faith and is written for people who stand within that faith. The text recognizes as viable options a number of other systems and indeed, because of their

significance, describes some of them briefly without attempting to assess their strengths and weaknesses. Yet this book is an effort to state a Christian ethic—a Christian method of making moral decisions. It makes certain assumptions, which are proper subjects of debate in Christian theological discussion, that reflect the theology of Protestant Christianity. Although in the field of ethics there is a significant mutual influence between Protestant and Catholic thinkers, there are also significant differences. At many points, therefore, my own Protestantism is clearly revealed.

Second, this is an introductory textbook. It is intended to acquaint beginning students with both the field of ethics in general and varieties of Christian ethical systems in particular and to assist them in formulating an approach that they will find valid for themselves. It is further intended to help them consider from a Christian perspective a wide variety of ethical issues, both personal and social, with which modern men and women must deal.

Third, this text is written for college students and is designed to help them develop a method of dealing with the thorny moral issues that they face not only as students but also as people involved in the life of the broader community. It does not, therefore, assume either the experience or the preparation of students at the graduate level.

The plan of the book is clearly indicated in the part and chapter titles. Part I (Chapters 1 through 3) introduces the field of ethics and a variety of approaches to its study. Part II (Chapters 4 through 6) describes my own method for making ethical decisions. Part III (Chapters 7 through 15) deals with some of the issues that demand attention today. No attempt is made to draw a line between "personal" and "social" issues because most issues have both personal and social implications, and the two aspects are therefore considered together.

To assist the students, I have prepared a glossary of unusual terms and common terms that are given a distinct meaning in the study of Christian ethics. The first time those words are used in the text they appear in boldface. All quotations of scripture are taken from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

I am grateful to Meredith College for the sabbatical that enabled me to complete the major portion of the actual writing of the first edition of this book. I am deeply indebted to three long-time colleagues at Meredith College, B. H. Cochran, Allen Page, and Bob Vance, for continuing discussion and debate, the fruits of which are reflected in much of what I have written. I am further indebted to the students who have taken my course in Christian ethics and have criticized this work in both oral and written form. Hugh T. McElwain at Rosary College, Dean M. Martin at Campbell University, and Emmanuel K. Twesigye at Ohio Wesleyan University made valuable suggestions that were incorporated in the second edition. In making revisions for the third edition I benefited greatly from suggestions made by Rev. Mark A. Duntley, Jr., at Lewis and Clark College; Charles L. Kammer at the College of Wooster; Ronald A. Smith at Hardin-Simmons University; and Edward R. Sunshine at Barry University. In this fourth edition I have taken into account the suggestions of these additional reviewers: Akin Akinade at High Point University, NC; Pamela K. Brubaker at California Lutheran University, CA; and James B. Martin-Schramm at Luther College, IA. While I have updated material throughout the book, the most significant revisions are found in Chapters 2, 7, 8, and 9.

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