Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers

Volume 3 | Issue 4

Article 5

10-1-1986

Christian Virtues and the Doctrine of the Mean

Robert B. Kruschwitz

Follow this and additional works at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy>

Recommended Citation

Kruschwitz, Robert B. (1986) "Christian Virtues and the Doctrine of the Mean," *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 4 , Article 5.

DOI: 10.5840/faithphil19863438

Available at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy/vol3/iss4/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers by an authorized editor of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange.

CHRISTIAN VIRTUES AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN

Robert B. Kruschwitz

Perhaps the most positive evaluation of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean in recent years is this one by J. O. Urmson: "... provided that we realize that [Aristotle] is discussing the excellence of character that is manifested in the practical life of the *eudaimon*, not Christian virtues, I cannot see that the mistakes we have noted [in Aristotle's doctrine] are major, or render his account seriously inadequate in principle." What interests me is the suggestion (for which Urmson does not argue) that the doctrine of the mean does not apply to Christian virtues.

For many philosophers that Aristotle's doctrine of the mean fails to apply to the Christian virtues is no surprise, since they think it fails to apply, period. They say: "Opposed to each virtue are many bad character traits, and they cannot be helpfully characterized as excesses or deficiencies. Aristotle's doctrine is out of touch with the facts of moral failure."

Against the majority of philosophers I will argue that the doctrine of the mean correctly describes a significant range of virtues. I say "range of virtues" because even Aristotle does not think it applies to all virtues. Against philosophers like Urmson I will argue that the doctrine of the mean does apply to many Christian virtues, but, for an interesting reason, does not apply to the Christian virtue of hope.

Before proceeding to the main arguments, I will introduce and clarify some key terms.

I.

What is a "Christian virtue"? Moral philosophers in the virtue tradition distinguish the way a person happens to be and what she would be were she to become all that she could be. The latter, the goal, and not the former, the starting place, is called "human nature" in this tradition, and it is conceivable that no one fully attains human nature in her lifetime. A virtue is a character trait which is necessary for moving from what we are to full attainment of what we can be. Vices are traits which prevent the move.

Christians disagree with other traditions on what men and women can and should be. Corresponding to this is disagreement about the list of virtues. Christian

faith, hope, and love, for example, are *Christian* virtues in two senses: (1) they are on the Christian list of virtues, and (2) they are not on most non-Christian lists because they presuppose acceptance of Christian doctrines about human nature. In this paper I use "Christian virtue" in the second, stronger sense.

Different types of character traits count as virtues. Aristotle distinguished intellectual and moral virtues. These are not exhaustive categories, but they do pick out significant groups of virtues. Aristotle discusses the doctrine of the mean only in relation to moral virtues, character traits which involve ways of feeling emotion as well as ways of thinking and acting.²

Some moral virtues involve acting in accord with various emotions. Other moral virtues involve controlling various emotions that typically impede virtuous judgment and behavior. Robert C. Roberts marks this difference between "substantive and motivational virtues" (e.g., compassion, justice, generosity, promise-keeping, and kindness) and "virtues of will power" (e.g., patience, courage, and self-control).³ The former are "substantive" because "they are the psychological embodiment of ethical rules—the substance of ethical patterns of behavior and judgment and emotion." They are "motivational" because they provide moral motives: one can do the right thing "out of" compassion, etc. The virtues of will power, on the other hand, are not substantive in that they do not characteristically lead to any ethical behavior, judgment, or emotion: "Racists, cheats, sadists, and thieves may well be persevering, resolute, and self-controlled; . . ." The virtues of will power are not motivational either: one does not act "out of" courage, self-control, etc., though one may do the right (or wrong) thing "in virtue" of one's courage or self-control if the situation demands the exercise of these virtues.⁴

With these distinctions we can begin to clarify the structures of three Christian moral virtues: faith, hope, and love.

Hope is a substantive and motivational virtue. Briefly these conditions are necessary for displaying the Christian virtue of hope:

- 1) a concern for "Heaven," that is, a longing for a joy that cannot be had in this world,"
- 2) a construal of this world's pleasures as "never meant to satisfy [the longing for Heaven], but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing,"⁵
- 3) the feeling based on this concern and construal is relatively strong and enduring; and if it is not, one is prepared to encourage this concern and construal, and
- 4) in suitable circumstances, one endorses action out of this concern and construal.

The first two conditions are also conditions for feeling the emotion hope; they distinguish this virtue from other substantive and motivational virtues. The latter

two conditions are common to all of the substantive and motivational virtues; they indicate the role of emotion in one's motivational structure and one's commitment to being motivated by the appropriate emotions.

For each of the necessary conditions of the virtue hope listed above, one can think of character traits which would block that condition; each of these would be a vice. The vices which block the last two conditions would not be specially related to hope; such vices, as *akrasia* and a lack of moral seriousness, would prevent the formation of all substantive and motivational virtues. Vices which block the first two conditions, the "special conditions of hope," would be vices associated just with the virtue of hope; thus, they could be called forms of despair.

Likewise Christian love, *agape*, is a substantive and motivational virtue. *Agape*, as a Christian virtue, is sometimes described as our love for God, and sometimes as Christian love for others. For the present, I will subscribe to the latter interpretation; I will have more to say in section IV about *agape* as love for God. Further, it will suit my purpose to discuss just one aspect of "Christian love for others," Christian compassion. I will call the emotion involved "sympathy." These conditions are necessary for displaying the Christian virtue of compassion and not just experiencing sympathy:

- 1) a construal of another person as suffering or deficient in some way,
- 2) a construal of that person, regardless of whether he be friend or foe, as a fellow sufferer—as someone suffering or deficient in a way one is or might be (this condition distinguishes compassion from pity),
- 3) a concern for one's own suffering and deficiencies,
- 4) because of (2) and (3) one has a concern for the other person's condition,
- 5) the feeling based on these concerns and construals is relatively strong and enduring; and if it is not, one is prepared to encourage these concerns and construals, and
- 6) in suitable circumstances, one endorses action out of these concerns and construals.⁶

The first four conditions are the special conditions of compassion: they are also conditions for experiencing sympathy, the emotion associated with the virtue, and they distinguish this virtue from other substantive and motivational virtues. Vices which block these special conditions would be vices associated just with the virtue of compassion.

Faith is a more complex Christian virtue. On the one hand, it is like a virtue of will power. James Muyskens has described faith as *fidelity* towards God: persevering in one's commitment to God despite the doubts and fears which accompany that commitment because it must be based on less than complete evidence.⁷ Robert Adams takes *trust* to be the essential ingredient in faith:

depending solely on God's power, justice, and goodness despite the "lust for control of one's own life."⁸ In spite of their differences, Muyskens and Adams put the emphasis on controlling one's believing and behavior in the face of various emotions, not on being motivated by an emotion or emotions. On the other hand, neither would reduce Christian faith to intellectual courage or self-control, which is morally neutral, capable of being pressed into service by both Christian and scoundrel. Perhaps, just as marital fidelity and trust involves both love and courage, Christian faith involves both love for God and something like intellectual courage. If so, then this virtue is partly a virtue of will power and partly a substantive virtue, the love of God. I will treat faith as a virtue of will power, and in section IV consider the love of God as an alternative interpretation of the Christian virtue of love.

What makes each of these virtues "Christian"? Why is each not found on non-Christian lists of virtues? The answer appears when these virtues are compared to the similar virtues which are found on non-Christian lists. Christian hope differs from various non-Christian virtues (e.g., the Marxian's hope for a classless society, a parent's hope for her child's future happiness, etc.) in both the conative and cognitive special conditions: the Christian desires heaven and believes that heaven is not just unattainable at this moment, but is unattainable in this life. Christian compassion differs from various non-Christian virtues of compassion for his child) in just the cognitive special condition: the Christian has reason to construe every sufferer, friend or foe, relation or not, as a fellow sufferer. In Christian compassion there are no limits on whom one must construe as a fellow. Christian faith differs from non-Christian faiths in the object of commitment; they are similar to the extent that faith is fidelity to one's ultimate commitment or trust in one's ultimate love.

The fact that hope and compassion are *Christian* substantive virtues for different reasons is not unimportant, for it helps to explain why hope is, but compassion is not, an exception to the doctrine of the mean. I turn now to explaining and defending that doctrine.

II.

According to Aristotle a good person, a person who is realizing human nature, exhibits the mean in her emotional reactions as well as in her actions. In contrast is the self-controlled person, the *enkrates*: she bears down and controls her behavior to the mean, but it is a great effort because her emotions are out of control. She does what is right, but her heart is not in it.

Urmson points out that the doctrine of the mean applies primarily to settled states of character, not to emotions or actions. When Aristotle calls generosity the mean "determined by reason" he means a person's characteristic way of

feeling and acting in situations of need should be the moderate, reasoned disposition of feeling the appropriate emotion (compassion, pity, civic pride, etc.) in the proper situations and toward the appropriate people, and of acting in the proper way. Though the doctrine of the mean is compatible with a doctrine of moderation (that a person should always exhibit a moderate amount of emotion), it is not identical to it.⁹ Some situations obviously require that one feel and act very generously; a moderate amount is not enough. On other occasions any generous reaction is inappropriate: even a moderate amount of generosity toward a freeloader feigning need is too much.

So the doctrine of the mean is this. Each specific moral virtue involves one or more emotions. In each case a person can be either disposed to exhibit the emotion(s) to the right amount, which is a virtue, or disposed to exhibit the emotion(s) too much or too little, which are vices. "Too much" could mean "on too many occasions" or "towards too many people" and such like as well as "too violently"; "too little" includes "on too few occasions" and "towards too few people" and such like as well as "too weakly."¹⁰

So much for explaining the doctrine of the mean; now a response to three common objections. The doctrine is based on two assumptions, (1) that displaying a moral virtue *means*, in part, experiencing one or more emotions, and (2) that having some vices *means*, in part, being disposed to experience those emotions excessively or deficiently. The second and third objections are that these two assumptions are false. The first objection is that the doctrine does not apply, for various reason, to some moral virtues Aristotle treats.

The first objection is correct. Once it is agreed that Aristotle misapplies his doctrine, the remaining force of this objection seems to be that we do not know to which virtues the doctrine applies and why. The objection loses its force if we can specify the doctrine's range of application, and in a rough way I think we can.

As an initial hypothesis, let us say that the doctrine of the mean applies only to the substantive and motivational virtues. Confidence in the hypothesis that the doctrine does apply to the substantive virtues will build as we consider the next objections. Here we can say why it does not apply to the virtues of will power. These virtues are necessary just because on some occasions one fears, doubts, etc. "too much" (e.g., faith maintains the relationship when one is too ready to give it up in the face of "the silence of God") or fears, doubts, etc. "too little" (e.g., courage tells one to give it up when one is too ready to continue the relationship recklessly). The excessive or deficient emotion does not indicate a vice; it indicates a time of testing, a time when the virtue may be exhibited. If one's fears, for example, always were felt to the mean, then one would not thereby exhibit courage; courage would not be necessary.

The second objection to the doctrine of the mean is that the connection between

displaying a moral virtue and feeling a given emotion is, at best, a contingent feature of human psychology. The best response to this objection is to clarify, with an example, the conceptual link between a substantive virtue and emotion.

My example is Christian compassion and the emotion I called sympathy. Among the necessary conditions for acting out of compassion listed above, the "special conditions," (1) through (4), are also involved in just experiencing sympathy. Feeling this emotion requires certain construals (seeing the sufferings of others and seeing it as like one's own) and a certain concern (basically a concern for one's own suffering—which leads to a concern for the other's suffering). This does not seem to be all that is involved (bodily states and psychic feelings are a part), but these are necessary conditions for the emotion of sympathy.

That these conditions, by themselves, are not sufficient for either displaying the virtue or feeling the emotion explains why a person can have one without the other. That these conditions are necessary for both explains why sympathy is *typically* motivation for compassionate behavior, and thus is a normal part of displaying the virtue of compassion. The rationale for studying the emotion or emotions appropriate to a specific substantive virtue to delineate the associated substantive vices is clear: some of the reasons one regularly fails to experience an appropriate emotion are reasons one regularly fails to act from that specific virtue, and such regular failure is indicative of a vice associated with that virtue.

According to the third objection, even if having a substantive moral virtue *means*, in part, experiencing one or more emotions, this does not support the further assumption that having some vices *means*, in part, being disposed to experience those emotions excessively or deficiently.¹¹ Grant, for the sake of argument, that the virtue of compassion involves feeling sympathy in the right circumstances (for the right people, on the right occasions, for the proper reason, etc.) and the numerous vices associated with compassion characteristically include either failure to feel sympathy in the right circumstances or a tendency to feel sympathy in the wrong circumstances. Would it not be very odd if, further, each vice was either a vice of excess emotion (feeling sympathy "too often," in all the right circumstances and in some of the wrong ones), or a vice of deficient emotion (feeling sympathy "too seldom," never in inappropriate circumstances, but not in all the right ones)? And, this objection continues, if it happened that experiencing sympathy did run the gamut from rarely feeling it to frequently feeling it, passing fortuitously through feeling it in just the right situations, would this not be, at best, a contingent fact of human psychology? Would it not be conceivable, indeed more likely, that one might have, for example, the vice of "family absorption": feeling sympathy only sometimes when one should (as when one correctly sees that a loved one suffers, but is oblivious to "outsiders'" suffering), and sometimes when one should not (as when one mistakes a loved

one's tantrum for real suffering)?

My response to this third objection turns on the difference between construals and concerns, the two elements common to emotion and substantive virtue.

A construal is a way of "seeing-as," of taking some features of a situation as salient and others as relatively unimportant, and, perhaps, of ignoring still other features altogether. The construal signals whether any concerns are relevant in a situation and which these are. One may be very concerned for the health of one's son, for example, but until one construes a situation as a threat to his health or as an opportunity to improve or protect his health, etc., that concern idles and has no active part in one's emotional life. An occurrence of an emotion involves a construal; a substantive virtue involves a dispositional pattern of thinking and focusing which shapes construals.

Concerns are valuations, and people value many different things. To borrow a metaphor from Quine, a person has a "web of concerns" in which many are unimportant, others very important, and few most important. The web can be modified, but changing the most important strands is slow, difficult work. We criticize a web of concerns for what it contains ("No one should be interested in rehabilitating Richard Nixon's image"), for the relations between the strands of concern ("You can be interested in restoring prestige to the office of President without being interested in rehabilitating Nixon's image"), and for how important a concern is in the web ("You cannot focus your life on restoring prestige to the office of President; other political, religious, and personal concerns should be more important").

Based on this distinction there are two sources of substantive vice: (1) one might have inappropriate dispositional patterns of thinking and focusing, or (2) the relevant concern might be too unimportant or important in one's web of concerns.

The vice of "family absorption" flows from the first source: one might put an appropriate value on human suffering, but as a matter of habit focus only on family member's complaints. As we saw, this vice cannot be usefully characterized as excessive or deficient. The same may be said of the great variety of vices flowing from the first source, and this is the element of truth in the third objection. However, some vices flow only from the second source: as a rule one correctly construes situations, but one's concern is too unimportant or important. These are the substantive vices which are deficiencies or excesses—of concern.

The doctrine of the mean applies only to the substantive and motivational virtues. Does it apply to all of them? That it does seems plausible. After all, is not every concern of great importance in some circumstances, of less importance in others? In many circumstances family affection (concern for one's family) outweighs patriotism (concern for one's community); less commonly, in emergencies perhaps, patriotism is more important. Surely there is such a thing as caring

too much (and too little) for one's family or country, and it will likely show up in the less common cases.

Put another way, the doctrine of the mean reflects Aristotle's claim that a good life involves many concerns, no one of which dominates all the others in every circumstance. The good man is a good citizen, a good parent, a good friend, a good thinker, etc.

To sum up my defense: Substantive virtues and associated emotions are conceptually tied to a due concern; on this analysis, substantive virtues cannot be excessive or deficient and cannot lead to bad actions.¹² Some (but not all) vices associated with each substantive virtue are defined by excessive or deficient concerns, and it is these vices to which the doctrine of the mean points. It is tempting to go a step further and conclude that the doctrine of the mean applies to all substantive virtues: that for each virtue there are at least two associated vices, one of excessive and one of deficient concern.

III.

Does the doctrine of the mean apply to Christian substantive virtues? It applies to Christian compassion. Kant provides an example of a vice of deficient concern, of placing too little importance on one's suffering, in the case of the philanthropist of cold temperament. He sees others as fellow sufferers, but being unconcerned with his own deficiencies and suffering, he is not sufficiently concerned with the suffering of others. He is "indifferent to the sufferings of others—perhaps because, being endowed with the special gift of patience and robust endurance in his own sufferings, he assumed the like in others or even demanded it; . . ."¹³

Aristotle suggests a personality who might display a vice of excessive concern, "depressed world absorption." With this vice one cannot act out of compassion even though one construes others as fellow sufferers because one is too concerned with one's own and others' suffering and deficiencies. "Old men," Aristotle writes, "may feel pity, as well as young men, but not for the same reason. Young men feel it out of kindness; old men out of weakness, imagining that anything that befalls anyone else might easily happen to them."¹⁴ Such an "old man" might be unable to feel sympathy and act compassionately not because he does not see fellow sufferers, but because he sees them, pauses to consider that their misfortune will surely befall him and that he may not be as able as they are to deal with it, and becomes absorbed in self-pity. He is too concerned about others' suffering, and especially, his own suffering. Closer to home, perhaps, are the similar experiences of a young adult generation numbed by constant sympathizing with victims of war and disaster imaged on the television news. The self-pity which marks their excessive concern often outwardly looks like a lack of concern.

Other vices of excessive and deficient concern are associated with Christian

compassion,¹⁵ but we need not describe them here. Enough has been said to show that the doctrine of the mean, as defended above, applies to some Christian virtues.

Now consider the case with Christian hope. In relation to the second special condition, the construal of this world's pleasures as meant to arouse one's desire for heaven but not to satisfy it, one can imagine a person who misconstrues the world, believing she can be entirely, "eternally" happy in this life. That is, she desires heaven, but believes she can achieve heaven on earth. This sort of person may be more or less self-deceived in various ways about (1) the nature of her desires, (2) her belief that those desires can be satisfied in this life, and (3) the demands which (as a practical consequence) she brings to the objects of this life. That is to say, such a person may be more or less aware of her condition of despair. C. S. Lewis labels this sort of despair "foolishness." He describes a particularly self-deluded fool this way: "He goes on all his life thinking that if only he tried another woman, or went for a more expensive holiday, or whatever it is, then this time he really would catch the mysterious something which we are all after."¹⁶ Foolishness is a vice which flows from misconstruing the world, and the doctrine of the mean does not point to such vice.

In relation to the first special condition, the concern for heaven, the doctrine of the mean leads one to expect two, opposed, sorts of vices: one might be too much concerned, or too little concerned about heaven. In the Augustinian tradition, however, hope is an exception to the doctrine of the mean: there is a vice of deficient concern, but no vice of excessive concern associated with the virtue of hope.¹⁷ C. S. Lewis calls the despair which is a vice of deficient concern for heaven "disillusioned sensibleness." The "sensible man" gives up the longing for this special joy because he sees this world as never meant to satisfy it.

[He] soon decides that the whole thing was moonshine And so he settles down and learns not to expect too much and represses the part of himself which used, as he would say, 'to cry for the moon.' This is, of course, a much better way than [the way of the fool], and makes a man much happier, and less of a nuisance to society. It tends to make him a prig¹⁸

But why are there no vices of excessive concern associated with hope? Apparently Christians in the Augustinian tradition believe the concern hope involves, the concern for heaven, the deep longing for something more than what this world offers, cannot be too important in one's web of concerns. Stated another way, this deep longing should be the central passion of one's life.

To cast some light on this last claim, consider how a Christian might respond to the objection that one can be too concerned about heaven. The objection might be pressed as follows: both "other-worldly" Christians and fanatical members of

Christian "cults" are too concerned about heaven. The other-worldly brother thinks so much about the next world that he is 'no good for this world.' Thinking about heaven seems to be a full time project; no time is left for compassion, justice, and responsibilities in this world. The cult fanatic withdraws from normal affairs and attempts to create a separate 'heaven on earth.' Preoccupied with heaven, she thinks she can find it, or make it in this world. Though they differ in construing the world properly (the other-worldly Christian) or not (the cult fanatic), do not both display an excessive concern for heaven?

Of course "other-worldliness" and "cult-fanaticism" as I have described them are not ideal forms of Christian spirituality and indicate some vice or vices, but one need not explain these as "excessive concern for heaven." Other explanations are close at hand: either other-worldly Christians and cult fanatics lack other concerns or, misunderstanding "heaven," they lack a true concern for heaven. The first sort of explanation goes like this: the other-worldly Christian is properly concerned for heaven but is not concerned, for example for his own suffering, and thus is not compassionate. He may believe that a concern for heaven limits or rules out altogether a concern for his own suffering, but this is a mistake. Longing for heaven does help one take a certain perspective on suffering—it is not the final physical and moral tragedy it might otherwise seem to be—but this is a far cry from making one less concerned about suffering. Here the primary problem is that the concern for heaven has not yet properly ordered other concerns, but some confusion about the nature of heaven is also involved. The latter confusion is prominent in the second sort of explanation, which goes like this: the other-worldly Christian misunderstands the nature of heaven. He mistakenly thinks that heaven is an eternal, blissful life, the living of which is not internally related to compassion, justice, mercy, and the other Christian virtues; that it is a reward for those who have joined the right church, given to the appropriate charities, or lived according to the correct moral rules in this life; that enjoying heaven does not require that one be developing the Christian virtues and the concerns they presuppose.¹⁹ The desire for heaven, properly understood, however, is a desire for fellowship with a holy God. The desire for heaven, then, should order and encourage those concerns central to the Christian substantive virtues. Thus, what the other-worldly Christian is too concerned about is not heaven, but a false substitute. Similar explanations could be made of cult fanaticism.

I promised that consideration of the Christian interpretation of these deviant forms of spirituality would illumine the concern for heaven as a central passion in a Christian virtue ethic. The longing for heaven, properly understood, is a central passion in the sense that it is a longing for a community which encourages all of the Christian concerns which will have a role in heaven, and gives a purpose to those Christian concerns which will not be necessary for heaven, but have a role to play in the Christian life in this world. The concern for heaven,

then, is a concern for a community essential to developing and exercising the Christian web of concern.

But this is not enough. Adequate financial resources may be essential for developing and exercising most of one's concerns, yet because it is merely part of what one requires one may be too concerned about finances. So more must be said: the concern for heaven is a concern for a community both necessary and sufficient for developing and exercising the Christian web of concerns.

IV.

The point of the doctrine of the mean is this: no single concern is absolute; other concerns sometimes are more important. This is *prima facie* correct. I have argued that the doctrine of the mean does apply to some Christian virtues, like compassion, but does not apply to hope, because hope is conceptually linked to an inclusive concern. The concern for heaven is inclusive of all other Christian concerns because heaven, properly understood, is a community which is the necessary and sufficient rationale for or, when realized, support of the development and exercise of all one's other proper concerns. The concern for heaven is unique: no other concern could be both necessary and sufficient for developing the Christian character, for two different things cannot both be necessary and sufficient for the same result.

Hope is conceptually linked to a unique, inclusive concern. Does this mean that, as a violation of the doctrine of the mean, hope is unique among the Christian substantive virtues? Not necessarily, since other virtues might be linked to the concern for heaven.

Christian love is the most likely candidate. There are three ways of interpreting the virtue of Christian love. First, I interpreted Christian love as a package of related virtues, like compassion, which involve concern for other people. However, to each of these virtues the doctrine of the mean does apply. Second, Christian love might be seen as a single virtue inclusive of all such ways of being properly concerned for other people. Viewed in this way Christian love would be absolute over substantive virtues relating the individual to other people, but it still might be in conflict with a proper love for self or God. The doctrine of the mean would apply here: one could be too much or too little concerned for other people because in some circumstances this concern can interfere with proper concern for oneself or God. Third, Christian love might be construed as the Christian's concern for God, which, properly understood, is inclusive of all the ways of being appropriately concerned for oneself and other people. With this virtue one would be concerned for everyone's full development into children of God, capable of enjoying His presence forever; that is, one would be properly concerned for heaven.

Perhaps Christian love for God is a second Christian virtue to which the doctrine of the mean does not apply. Or is Christian love for God, so described, just the virtue of hope by a different name?

Georgetown College

NOTES

1. J. O. Urmson, "Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 10 (1973), pp. 223-230; reprinted in Amelie Oskenberg Rorty, ed., *Essays On Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 157-170. Urmson's judgment is on p. 170 in the reprint. Page references below are to the reprint.
2. See L. A. Kosman, "Being Properly Affected: Virtues and Feelings in Aristotle's Ethics" in Amelie Oskenberg Rorty, ed., *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 103-116.
3. Robert C. Roberts, "Will Power and the Virtues," *The Philosophical Review* 93 (1984), pp. 227-247.
4. Roberts, pp. 229-232.
5. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, (New York: Macmillan, 1960), pp. 119-120.
6. Lawrence Blum discusses conditions (1), (2), (5), and (6) and "concern for or regard for [another person's] good" in "Compassion" in Amelie Oskenberg Rorty, ed., *Explaining Emotions* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 507-517. The conditions are on pages 509-515. Robert C. Roberts modifies Blum's last condition to (3) and (4) above in *Spirituality and Human Emotion* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), p. 109.
7. James Muyskens, "What is Virtuous About Faith?" *Faith and Philosophy* Volume II, Number 1 (January 1985), pp. 43-52.
8. Robert M. Adams, "The Virtue of Faith," *Faith and Philosophy* Volume I, Number 1 (January 1984), pp. 03-15.
9. Urmson, pp. 161-62.
10. Urmson claims that Aristotle also held that "There is no emotion that one should never exhibit." Urmson, p. 163.
11. Rosalind Hursthouse presses this objection in "A False Doctrine of the Mean," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 81 (1980-81), pp. 57-72.
12. Gary Watson, "Virtues in Excess," *Philosophical Review* 46 (1984), pp. 57-74.
13. Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, trans. by H. J. Paton (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 66 (pp. 11-12 in the Royal Prussian Academy edition).
14. *Rhetoric*, 1390a pp. 19-22.
15. For example, Stephen D. Hudson in "Character Traits and Desires," *Ethics* 90 (July 1980), pp. 539-549 distinguishes three sorts of vice of deficiency: (1) not caring enough, (2) failing to care at all, and (3) being determined not to care. N. J. H. Dent in *The Moral Psychology of the Virtues*,

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), chapter 6, distinguishes two sorts of vice of excessive concern: (1) being too concerned about the value conceptually involved in the virtue, and (2) being too concerned about the correction of situations in which that value was not respected.

16. Lewis, p. 119.

17. See Robert E. Meagher, *Augustine: An Introduction* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), pp. 192-208.

18. Lewis, p. 120.

19. Kant in *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* (1793) interprets the longing for life after death in heaven as a desire for everlasting pleasure for oneself, and properly rejects the latter desire as the central passion of one's life. Kant is surely correct about the moral bankruptcy of a life bent on personal everlasting pleasure, but that is not the longing for heaven, properly understood.