

## Healing the Culture: Rights

- REVIEW
  - Culture
    - Main theme this year: healing the culture
    - What is culture? What is it exactly that needs healing? What are some of the specific elements of culture?
      - Culture is a complex whole
      - Culture is acquired by man as a member of society
      - Culture is comprised of: knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, customs, etc.
    - What is *central* to *every* culture? People!
  - Person
    - Definition of person (three parts)
      - A being possessing an intrinsic guiding force...
        - a being: an individual object that actually exists
        - possessing: *actual* or *potential* (that is, the *capacity* to act)
        - intrinsic guiding force: there is *something* within us that compels us to move forward; this *something* is either genetic or spiritual or both
      - that compels it toward fulfillment/perfection...
      - through perfect, infinite, unconditional Beauty, Goodness, and Truth
    - This definition holds true for each and every single being of human origin, so we can just as well call the Holy Spirit a person as a human embryo a person
    - This definition distinguishes persons from every other individual object that exists in the entire universe; this definition describes perfectly why humans are different than animals, plants, chairs, colors, sounds, and every other individual object in reality
  - The Critical Assumption (in order to be on guard against any abuses against the God-given dignity of any person):
    - Because of the countless abuses against human personhood all throughout history, to keep history from repeating itself, we must assume that *every being of human origin must be considered a person*
    - In other words: when in doubt, lay out → when in doubt about whether or not something of human *origin* (such as a zygote or a fetus) is a human *person*, we must err on the side of life
  - Happiness
    - Definition: fulfillment of desire
    - Four levels
      - One: Immediate Gratification
        - Objective: maximize pleasure and minimize pain
        - Characteristics
          - Obligation to self alone
          - No desire for common, intrinsic, or ultimate good
          - Lack of self-worth; fear of tangible loss/harm; boredom
        - Gratification: immediate (immediately had; immediately gone again)
      - Two: Personal Achievement/Ego
        - Objective: Ego centeredness; be better than; gain advantage
        - Characteristics
          - Promotion of self is primary

- Personal power and control are crucial
  - Jealousy, contempt, and cynicism
  - Isolation and loneliness
  - Fear of failure
  - Gratification: short term (soon to be had; soon to be gone again)
- Three: Good Beyond the Self
  - Objective: do good beyond self
  - Characteristics
    - Principles include justice, love, and community
    - Intrinsic goodness is an end in and of itself
    - Decisions are focused on the greater good
  - Gratification: long term
- Four: The Ultimate Good
  - Objectives
    - Participation in giving and receiving is ultimate meaning
    - Goodness, ideals, and love
  - Characteristics
    - Good is ultimized
    - Principles include perfect Beauty, Goodness, and Truth (the Transcendentals)
  - Gratification: eternal
- Success (definition: the moral achievement of a worthwhile goal)
- Quality of Life
  - Distinction between *quality* of life and *value* of life
  - Role of success in QoL
  - Role of suffering in QoL
- Suffering (and suffering *well*)
- Freedom (freedom *from* vs. freedom *for*)
- Rights
  - DISCUSSION
    - What are rights?
    - What are examples of rights?
    - Are rights extrinsic or intrinsic?
    - What is the role of society in declaring/defining/establishing rights?
    - And so...what is the definition of rights?
  - Definition of rights (according to Spitzer → *after* the discussion)
    - Legal conditions that are either necessary or desirable for the fulfillment of human personhood within a society or state
    - Obligations of the state or other individuals toward the individual person
    - Rights must be acknowledged in order to mediate between the common good and the individual good
- Next week: inalienable rights (Life, Liberty, Property)