

**Morality:** A system of ideas of right and wrong conduct (dictionary.com)

**Immanuel Kant:**

“Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them, the starry heavens above and the moral law within.”

**DQ # 1:** *How do you feel when you think of the idea of morality?*

**What Makes Us Moral** By JEFFREY KLUGER (Time Magazine)

---

We're a species that is capable of almost dumbfounding kindness. We nurse one another, romance one another, weep for one another. ... And at the same time, we slaughter one another. The past 15 years of human history ..., we've visited untold horrors on ourselves—in Mogadishu, Rwanda, Chechnya, Darfur, Beslan, Baghdad, Pakistan, London, Madrid, Lebanon, Israel, New York City, Abu Ghraib, Oklahoma City, an Amish schoolhouse in Pennsylvania—all of the crimes committed by the highest, wisest, most principled species the planet has produced. That we're also the lowest, cruelest, most blood-drenched species is our shame—and our paradox.

The deeper that science drills into the substrata of behavior, the harder it becomes to preserve the vanity that we are unique among Earth's creatures. We're the only species with language, we told ourselves—until gorillas and chimps mastered sign language. We're the only one that uses tools then—but that's if you don't count otters smashing mollusks with rocks or apes stripping leaves from twigs and using them to fish for termites.

What does, or ought to, separate us then is our highly developed sense of morality, a primal understanding of good and bad, of right and wrong, of what it means to suffer not only our own pain...but also the pain of others. That quality is the distilled essence of what it means to be human. Why it's an essence that so often spoils, no one can say.

Morality may be a hard concept to grasp, but we acquire it fast. .... "Moral judgment is pretty consistent from person to person," says Marc Hauser, professor of psychology at Harvard University and author of *Moral Minds*. "Moral behavior, however, is scattered all over the chart." The rules we know, even the ones we intuitively feel, are by no means the rules we always follow.

Where do those intuitions come from? And why are we so inconsistent about following where they lead us? Scientists can't yet answer those questions, but that hasn't stopped them from looking. ... None of this research may make us behave better, not right away at least. But all of it can help us understand ourselves—a small step up from savagery perhaps, but an important one.

**DQ # 2:** *Why do you think humans have a sense of morality?*

**DQ # 3:** *Do you think each culture can decide their morality or do you think there is an absolute morality?*

**DQ # 4:** *Why do you think people have difficult time living according to their morality?*

**Michael Ruse:**

Morality is a biological adaptation no less than are hands and feet and teeth. I appreciate that when somebody says 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' they think they are referring above and beyond themselves. Nevertheless, such reference is truly without foundation. Morality is just an aid to survival and reproduction . . . and any deeper meaning is illusory.

**DQ # 5:** *What do you think Michael Ruse is saying in the above quote? Do you agree or disagree?*

**DQ # 6:** *Why do you think morality would be included as a Christian theme?*