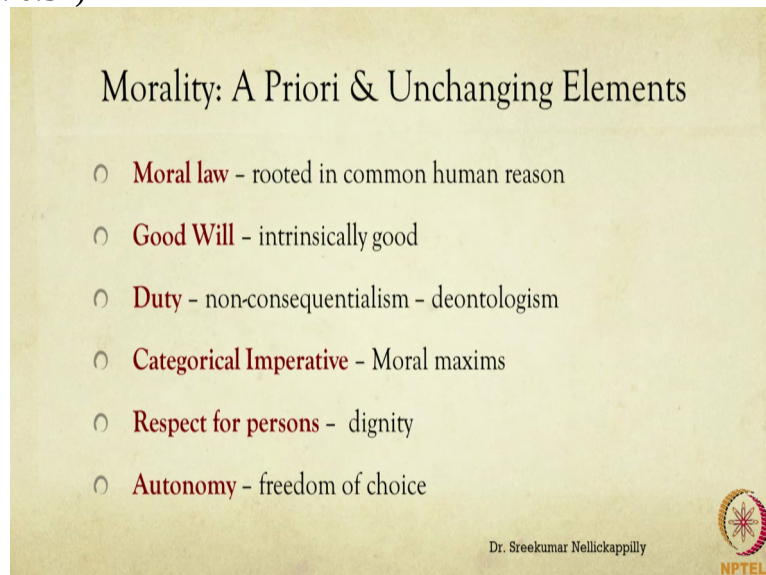


Ethics
Professor Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappily
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology Madras
Module No 3
Lecture 13
Deontological Ethics

Welcome to this lecture series on ethics. This lecture is on deontological ethics and this is in continuation with what we have done in the previous lecture. So in this lecture, we are going to focus more on Kant's contribution, Emmanuel Kant.

(Refer Slide Time: 0:34)



And here before we really start analysing and understanding some of the important concepts in Kantian ethics, we will just see some of the basic concepts, an elaboration of which we are going to carry out in this lecture. There is this concept of moral law which is rooted in common human reason which Kant actually begins with. So this entire Kantian Deontologism, concept of Deontologism, is based on this concept of moral law which he believes is universal, objective and is rooted in human rationality.

Then, another very important concept is the Good Will which is intrinsically good according to Kant which according to him is the most important concept in morality because Good Will is the only thing which is intrinsically good and unconditionally good. The goodness of everything

else actually follows from the goodwill. And other things are good only if they accompany a goodwill.

This is the Kantian position. Another one is duty because the very term deontology itself indicates duty and the kind of importance he has given to duty in his framework. And in that way, his framework is a non-consequentialist framework and we have explained this in the previous lecture. The concept of categorical imperative because Kant begins with a concept of moral maxim or certain principles which we follow when we do act, when we make decisions or choices.

And here, he comes up with the concept of categorical imperative which he contrasts or which is different from other kinds of imperatives like assertorial or hypothetical. This also we will see a little bit. Then respect for persons-dignity. The dignity of human beings and it is from this concept of dignity, you derive certain other concepts like autonomy and freedom of choice and other things.

This is one of the most important aspects of Kantian ethics and a very important thing in today's world because the whole notion of human rights is based on the concept of human dignity and autonomy. So we will now start elaborating some of these things with the help of Kant's understanding of morality.

(Refer Slide Time: 2:51)

The slide is titled "The Critical Philosophy" in a large, black, serif font. Below the title, there are two columns of text, each headed by a red, all-caps title: "PURE REASON" and "PRACTICAL REASON". Each column contains two bullet points, marked with a small circle. The background of the slide is a light beige color with a subtle texture. In the bottom right corner, there is a small circular logo with a red and yellow design, and the text "NPTEL" below it. In the bottom center, the name "Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly" is written in a small, black, sans-serif font.

| PURE REASON | PRACTICAL REASON |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Takes for granted the possibility of mathematical and natural sciences and inquires how are they possible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Takes for granted the existence of an ordinary moral consciousness (of ordinary human nature) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Examines the character of our concepts that make science possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Examines the character of our moral concepts and precepts that make morality possible. |

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly

NPTEL

So now, before we get into the details, let us see the critical philosophy project advocated by Kant. Here, we have to explain a little bit, the whole project of critical philosophy which is elaborated through 3 critics, critic of pure reason, critic of practical reason and critic of judgement. So I will be focusing on critic of pure reason, practical reason very briefly to point out the important aspects of the project of critical philosophy.

In critic of pure reason, what he does is that, he takes for granted, the possibility of mathematical and natural sciences and inquires how are they possible. So there is no doubt about the fact that they are possible. Their legitimacy is also taken for granted but now his question is how are they possible? And he says that he examines the character of our concepts that makes science possible.

Certain concepts which come from us, which are our contributions, according to Kant that make natural sciences possible. These concepts are a priori present in us. They constitute the very structure of our mind, the human mind and they are responsible for the very possibility of natural and mathematical sciences. Similar to that, in ethics he talks about something called practical reason which where he takes for granted the existence of an ordinary moral consciousness of ordinary human nature.

Common man, all of us possess this kind of a moral consciousness by means of which we pass judgements in morality. So, he takes for granted this possibility and then starts his analysis. He says that he examines the character of our moral concepts and precepts that make morality possible. So, in that sense we can see that you know the critical philosophy Kant is an examination of the preconditions of the possibility of these things.


It is an examination of the very preconditions that ensures the possibility of this kind of inquiries in pure reason and practical reason. So here when he talks about realm of morals, McIntyre makes a very interesting observation.

(Refer Slide Time: 5:14)

Realm of Morals

Nature is entirely impersonal and nonmoral; it may be viewed as if it were the product of a great and benevolent designer, but we cannot affirm that it is such. We have, therefore, to look for the realm of morals outside the realm of nature. Morals must be independent of how the world goes, for how the world goes is nonmoral. (McIntyre)

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly




I quote, “Nature is entirely impersonal and non-moral; it may be viewed as if it were the product of a great and benevolent designer, but we cannot affirm that it is such. We have, therefore, to look for the realm of morals outside the realm of nature. Morals must be dependent of how the world goes, for how the world goes is nonmoral.” Unquote.

(Refer Slide Time: 5:39)

What Makes Moral Precepts Moral?

- Different moral schemes in different places and times.
- What makes these schemes moral ?
- Looks for the a priori, unchanging elements in morality.
- What form must a precept have if it is to be recognized as a moral precept?
- What motives and intentions make the good will good?

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly



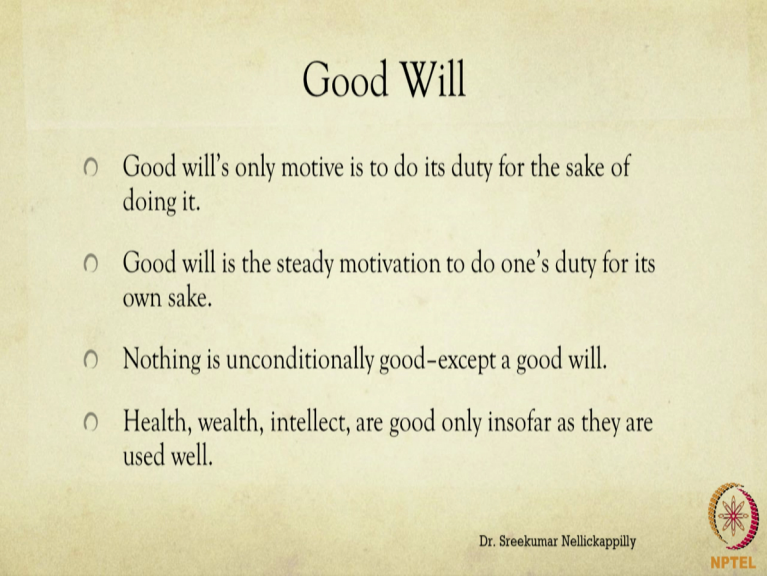
Now what makes moral precepts moral? The very preconditions of them being moral. And Kant here accepts that it is possible for different societies and different places and different times to have different moral schemes. He accepts that such differences do exist. And but his inquiry is

what makes these different moral schemes moral. How can we call all of them, in spite of regardless of their differences, they are all moral schemes.

What makes them moral? Looks for an a priori, unchanging elements in morality. So this is what he tries to address, the most important problem in Kant's critic of practical reason, the a priori unchanging elements in morality what are they? Where do we find them? What form must a precept have if it is to be recognised as a moral precept?

And what motives and intentions make the good will good? So when we will something, goodwill, something which is presupposed by morality, when we do an action which is the right kind of an action or when we make a judgement about the moral value of an action, whether it is right or wrong, this concept of goodwill comes into picture. So when we are at morally, there is goodwill that precedes that action. So what motives and intentions make the goodwill good? That is the question.


(Refer Slide Time: 7:11)



Good Will

- Good will's only motive is to do its duty for the sake of doing it.
- Good will is the steady motivation to do one's duty for its own sake.
- Nothing is unconditionally good—except a good will.
- Health, wealth, intellect, are good only insofar as they are used well.

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly



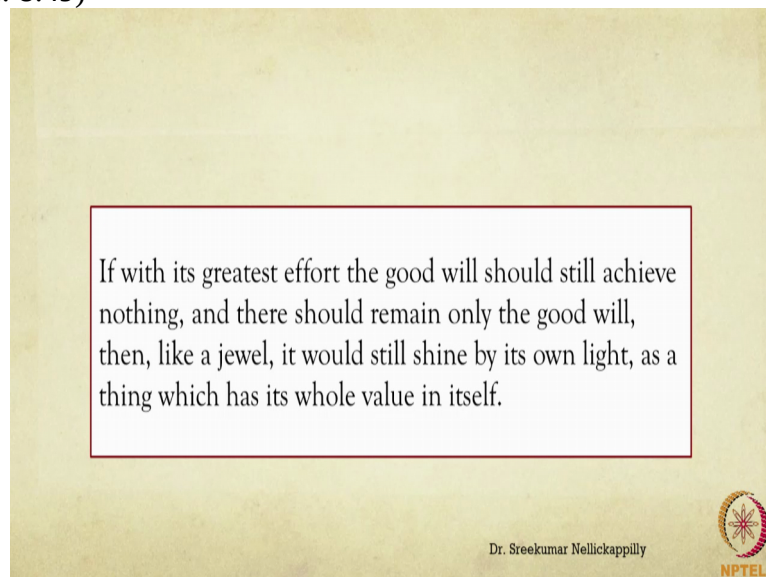
And Kant here comes to the conclusion that goodwill is only motives to do its duty for the sake of doing it. Duty for the sake of doing duty, nothing else. So in that sense, I have already mentioned this, consequences are unimportant. They are completely immaterial for Kantian ethics. Goodwill is the steady motivation to do one's duty for its own sake.

Anything is unconditionally good except a goodwill. So it is unconditional, it is objective and it is universal. So we will see what makes it objective and universal slightly later. But it is unconditional. This unconditionality factor needs to be emphasised here. And all other things, all other aspects of good, what we normally understand as good like health, wealth, intellect, are all good only insofar as they are used well.

So if you are using your wealth for the wrong purpose, then it is not good. Now it is quite normal to believe that to have wealth is always good and to have intellect is always good. No doubt, they are all good but they are all good conditionally. They are not unconditionally good. If they are not used by a goodwill but instead of that, are used by an evil will, then what would be the consequences?

What would happen to them? So a goodwill is extremely important in order to make everything else good. And that is the only thing which is unconditionally good according to Kant.

(Refer Slide Time: 8:49)




So he says if with this contest effort, the goodwill should still achieve nothing, and there should remain only the goodwill, then like a jewel, it would still shine by its own light, as a thing which has its whole value in itself. So it is like a jewel which will shine by its own light and as a thing which has its whole value in itself. So its value is not gained or gathered from an outside source. It has within itself. It is intrinsically valuable.

(Refer Slide Time: 9:22)

Intrinsic Goodness of Good Will

- There is nothing in this world or even outside of it that can be called good without qualification except a **good will**.
- Other things (talents, wisdom etc.) are good only on the condition that they are used by a good will.
- They are not good when they exist alone.
- Things which are **intrinsically good** contain good will as one component in their makeup.
- Happiness is good only when it is the consequence of virtue.

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly

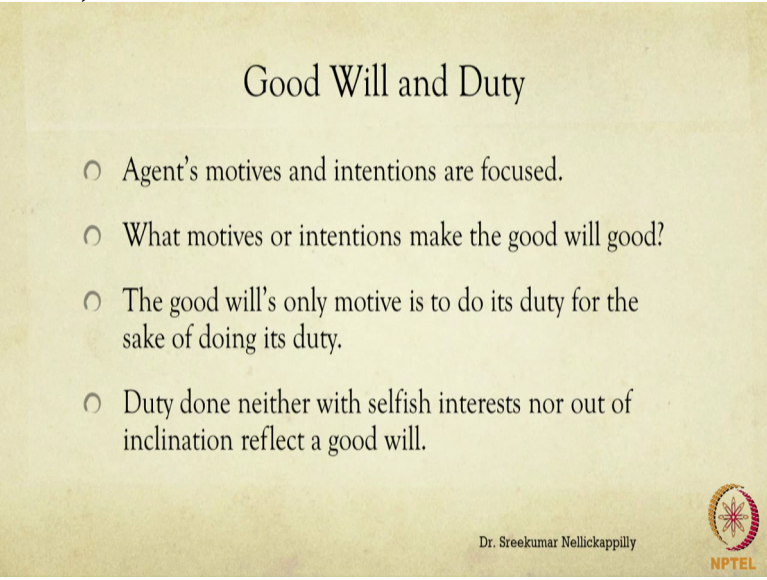


And that is why, the intrinsic goodness of goodwill has to be colonised in advance. There is nothing in this world or even outside of it that can be called good without qualification except a goodwill. So, this aspect is reiterated. Something which is good in this world or an outside world, there is nothing but except the goodwill. Other things like talents, wisdom, I have already mentioned, health, wealth, et cetera are good only on the condition that they are used by a goodwill.

They are not good when they exist alone. Things which are intrinsically good contain good will as one component in their make-up. So in one sense, we can say that goodwill is the only thing which is intrinsically good. Everything is goodwill or a condition that they are accompanied by a goodwill. Happiness is good only when it is a consequence of virtue. People can be happy for different reasons.

There are some people who are happy for wrong reasons. But in that sense, happiness is not always good. It becomes good only when it is a consequence of virtue, only when it appears as a consequence of a goodwill or an action which is emanated from goodwill. Now, for Kant, the concept of duty which I said which is at the centre of his deontological ethics, goodwill and duty are intrinsically related.


(Refer Slide Time: 10:53)



Good Will and Duty

- Agent's motives and intentions are focused.
- What motives or intentions make the good will good?
- The good will's only motive is to do its duty for the sake of doing its duty.
- Duty done neither with selfish interests nor out of inclination reflect a good will.

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly



Agent's motives and intentions are focused by Kant in his ethical theory. So it is in this sense Kant's philosophy is characteristically different from all other frameworks. Like virtue ethics for example, which focuses on character of people, the virtuous character of people are emphasised by virtue ethicists and in the consequentialists, in utilitarians for example, they would focus on happiness or utility of an action which is actually the consequence of an action.

But here, what is focused is the inner motive and the intention of the agent who performs the action. Whether the agent has willed it good, whether the agent performs his actions for the sake of his duty and with a clear awareness of the fact that it is his duty, only then it becomes a good action. What motives or intentions make the goodwill good, the goodwills only motive is to do its duty for the sake of doing duty which we have already seen.

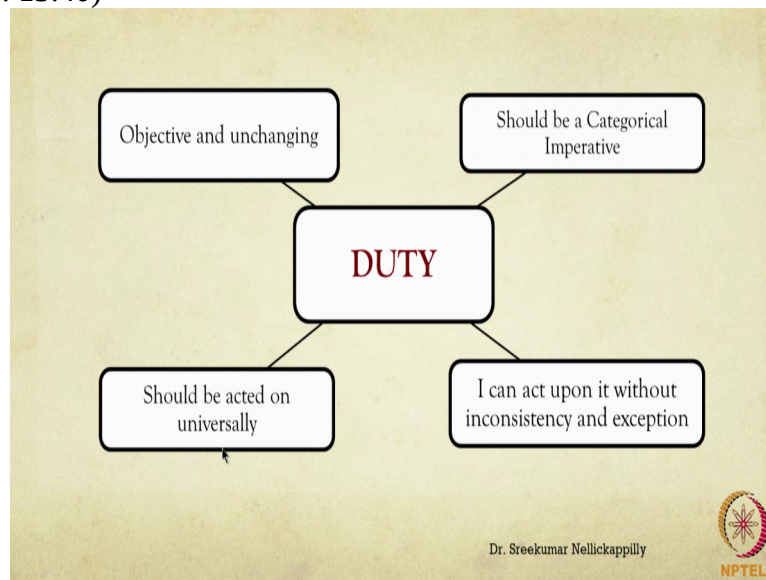
Duty done neither with selfish interests nor out of inclination reflect a goodwill. This aspect needs to be elaborated a little bit. So the 1st part is very clear. Duty done neither with selfish interests. Selfish interest. Sometimes you know people do their duty out of selfish interests because they have something to gain out of it. And performed in that manner with such intentions the action cannot be treated as morally good because it emanates from a bad attention, a bad motive.

But again, there are another set of people who are by nature, by inclination, they are good. You do not have to tell them to do good things but they are inclinationally good, they are by nature good and we all respect such people because they are very good people, their pious individuals. There are many such people among us. But those people according to Kant who are inclinationally good, by nature good, they are not clearly aware of the fact that they are performing their duty.

They just perform their duty out of inclination. It is not with the clear awareness of the fact that they have to perform their duty, they are doing it. So even such actions are also not treated by Kant as morally good actions because for him, that is a very interesting aspect of Kantian ethics. For him, what is more important is the agent should have performed it with the clear awareness of the fact that it is for the sake of duty he is performing it.

So that intention is very important. And the awareness of the agent is also very important for Emmanuel Kant. So here we can see some of the very important aspects of duty.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:40)

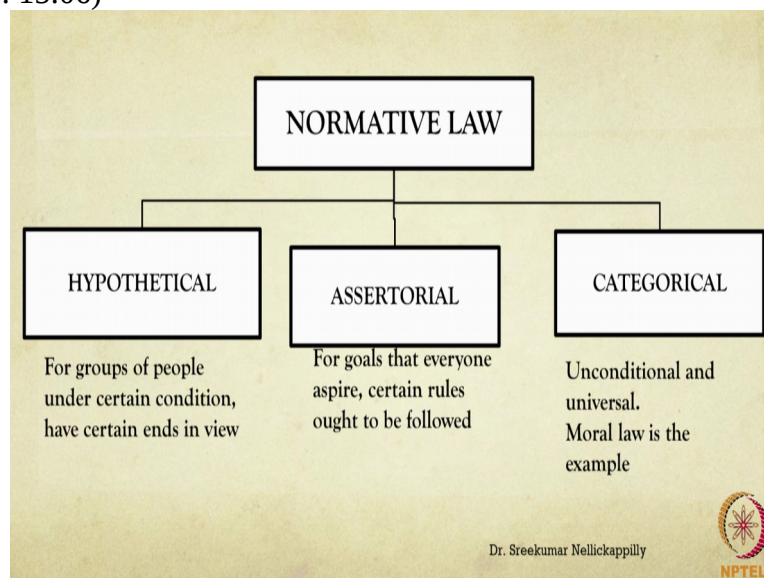


See the 1st one is duties should be acted on universally. So, only then it becomes duty. There cannot be a duty for one particular individual. A duty is determined by several factors which can be universally determined. And only then it becomes a duty, only then can we consider it as a duty. Then again, it is objective and unchanging.

People in all circumstances, who find themselves in such a context would be performing it. So in that sense, it is objective and unchanging. 3rd one is, it should be categorical imperative and this is one term we have to keep in mind, the categorical imperative which is very important in understanding Kantian ethics. Kantian ethics relies a lot on this concept of categorical imperative. It is a normative philosophy but then it is categorical, it is unconditional.

It is unconditionally binding on individuals by virtue of the very fact that they are rational human beings. We will come to that slightly later. And now, the 4th one, I can act upon it without inconsistency and exception. So this emphasises the rationality aspect of performing one's duty. One has to be consistent, one has to be rational, one has to do justice to one's own rational nature.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:06)



Now, when we talk about the moral law, what we have to understand is the fact that moral law is different from other kinds of laws. Say for example, political laws, there are social laws, there are various other kinds of laws which we follow in our social life. But a moral law is very different. It is a kind of norm. There is a kind of standard which is described a priori.


So in that sense, there are 3 types of normative laws, hypothetical, assertorial and categorical. Out of these 3, hypothetical and assertorial are conditional and categorical is the unconditional

law which is the moral law. A hypothetical law is applicable to for groups of people understood certain conditions, have certain ends in view.

Say for example, if you want to pass the exam, you have to study well. So there is an if then. So it is hypothetical. Only if you study well, you will pass the exam. Only if you perform well, you will get the good results. So in that sense, they are conditional. And when you come to assertorial, they are therefore goals which are desired by everyone.

Say for example, happiness. They are aspired by everyone and attaining those goals, people have to follow certain rules. They have to, they ought to follow certain rules. So in that sense also, they are conditional. But in the case of categorical, they are unconditional and universal. Moral law is the only example for a categorical imperative.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:44)



The slide is titled "Categorical Imperative" in a large, black, serif font. Below the title, there are four bullet points, each preceded by a small circle. The second bullet point has the word "Imperative" in red. The text of the bullet points is as follows:

- Moral principles and laws are categorical imperatives.
- **Imperative:** emphasizes the aspect of obligatoriness in the moral law.
- The unconditional authority of the moral law.
- Not an external authority - not even God.

At the bottom right of the slide, there is a small circular logo with a stylized sun or flower design, and the text "NPTEL" below it. To the left of the logo, the name "Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly" is written in a small, black, sans-serif font.

So now we have to discuss what a categorical imperative is. Moral principles, they are all moral precepts and moral principles which we follow when we take a decision, when we make a choice and when we act according to our decisions and choices. An imperative means you know it emphasises the aspect of obligatoriness in the moral law. So all, even assertorial and hypothetical are also imperatives.

They are also obligatory, they also highlight the obligatory aspect but there, the obligation is conditional. They are not unconditional. But here, in the case of a moral law, it is unconditional.

Do not ask why should I do that. You cannot point out any consequences. In the case of hypothetical, there is a consequence. If you do this, you will get this.

But here what you get is not important at all. That is immaterial. What is important is you have to perform it because that is your duty. By virtue of being a rational creature, you have to perform it. So in that sense, it is your duty. Again, the unconditional authority of moral law is underlined. It is not an external authority and not even God has a role to play here because as far as the moral law is concerned, the law is not given even by a divine authority of God.

So in that sense, the deontological ethics of Emmanuel Kant is significantly different from the divine command theory which is also a kind of a deontological approach to ethics. There also, there is a duty, the duty to follow the divine law. But here, there is no concept of God, there is no concept of external authority at all because the very notion of external authority takes away the freedom which people have, which individuals have.

And according to Kant, freedom is extremely important for morality. Freedom of choice is rather the most important thing in morality because without freedom, there is no scope for ethics at all. Ethics becomes important only because there is freedom. So Kant very famously made it very clear that you know an oath implies a camp.


One has to be free 1st, only then we can say that one ought to do certain things. There should be an element of choice present. So now, the authority of the moral law as I mentioned, there is no external authority. The requirements of reason that apply to all individuals is what the only authority we can talk about.

So the authority comes from universal rationality and in an interesting sense, we can find that this universal rationality which we find which we are talking about are found in us, they are within us. So we derive their authority of the moral law from within us, from the very fact that we are all moral creatures.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:35)

Authority of the Moral Law

- Requirements of reason that apply to all individuals.
- Rationally compelling.
- Those who violate them do so at the cost of their own irrationality.
- As a rational being man utters the commands of morality to himself: he obeys only himself.

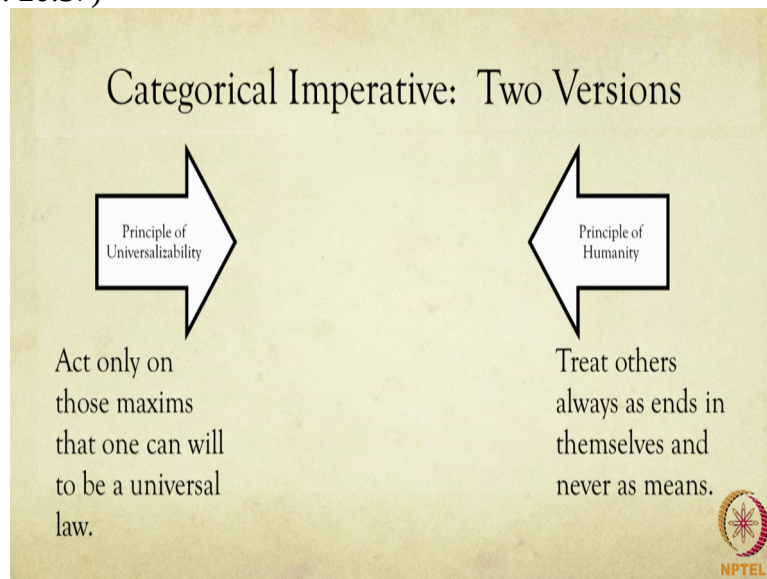

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly

They are the authority, the moral law becomes compelling because they are rationally compelling and because we are rational creatures. By virtue of being rational creatures, we find that they are compelling. Those who violate them, do so at the cost of their own irrationality. Social what happens. So there is no consequence as such you know we have to point out.

The only thing is that you are doing injustice to your own very nature, that nature which distinguishes you from other creatures, your rationality aspect. So as a rational being, man utters the commands of morality to himself. He swing consistency means obeys only himself. He has no external masters but only himself, his own voice of reason is his master.

So we are masters of ourselves. Our rationality is ever master. So inconsistency means one fails to follow one's own dictates of reason, then one is inconsistent to oneself.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:37)

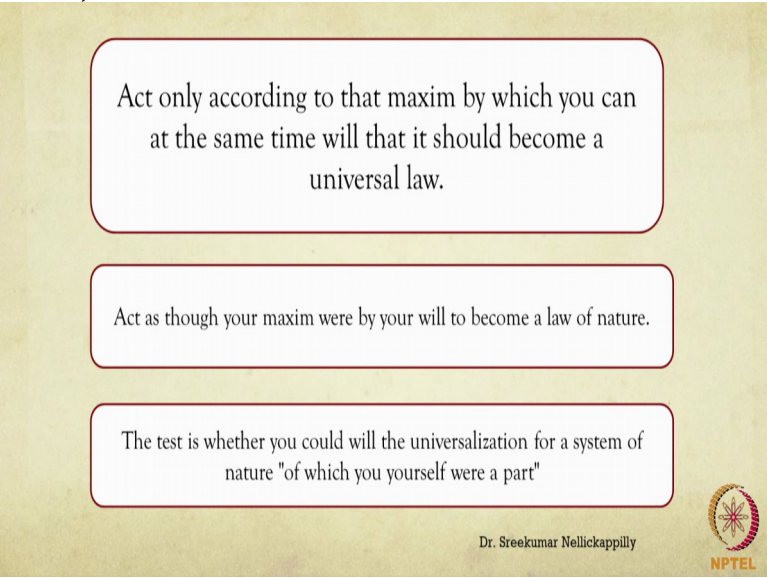


So here, there are 2 versions of categorical imperative. We can try to further explicate this concept of categorical imperative and try to understand it from 2 perspectives. So these 2 aspects are highlighted by Kant. One is, he elaborates the notion of categorical imperative in terms of a principle of universalisability, on the other hand, he highlights it with the help of a concept of a principle of humanity.

So we will see this. In a nutshell, we can see that the principle of universalisability says that act only on maxims that one can will to be a universal law. I will elaborate it a little later, soon. Now the principle of humanity says that one should treat others always as ends in themselves and never as a means.

All human beings including oneself and others need to be treated as ends in themselves not as a mere. So which means that every human being is intrinsically valuable.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:44)




Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.

Act as though your maxim were by your will to become a law of nature.

The test is whether you could will the universalization for a system of nature "of which you yourself were a part"

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly



Now, universalisability. We will try to elaborate this concept. Kant says act only according to that maxim by which you can act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law. So you have to conceive the principle or the maxim on the basis of which you take the decision and act as a universal law which means that it is applicable to everyone else.

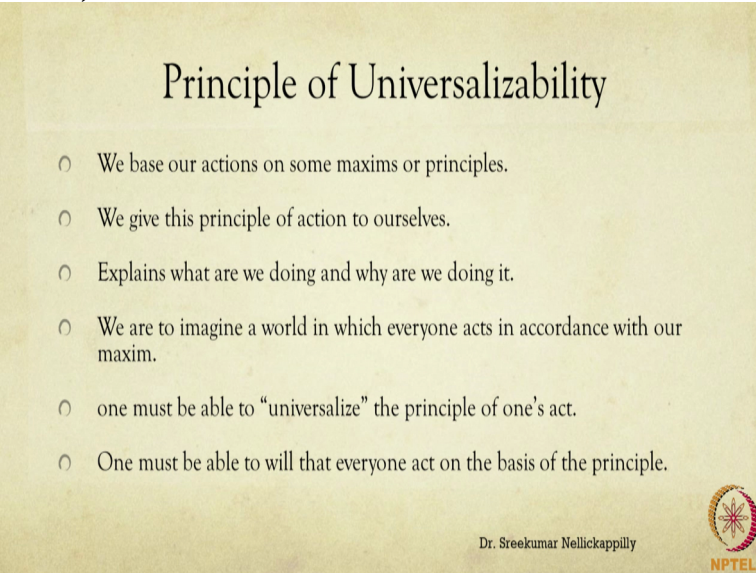
To cite a concrete example, you have borrowed money from a friend and you are not returning this money to him whether it is morally right or wrong. Of course by not returning this money, you are benefiting, you are getting that money but it is morally wrong because you cannot make this principle that borrowing money from a friend and not returning it as a universal principle in the sense in which you cannot apply this principle to your friend.

That situation where he takes money from you and not returning it which is not good for you, which you do not find it desirable. So in that sense, you fail to make that particular action universally binding or rather base that particular action on a universal law. Nor the 2nd one, at as though your maximum were by your will to become a law of nature, which is the same. I am just trying to explicate it in a different articulations.

Then again, the test is whether you could will the universalisation for a system of nature of which you yourself were a part. Everything basically tells you that the possibility of

universalisability should be there before you act and your principle or Maxim on the basis of which you take a decision and act should be based on that.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:36)



The slide is titled "Principle of Universalizability" in a large, black, serif font. Below the title is a list of six bullet points, each preceded by a small circle. The text of the bullet points is as follows:

- We base our actions on some maxims or principles.
- We give this principle of action to ourselves.
- Explains what are we doing and why are we doing it.
- We are to imagine a world in which everyone acts in accordance with our maxim.
- one must be able to "universalize" the principle of one's act.
- One must be able to will that everyone act on the basis of the principle.

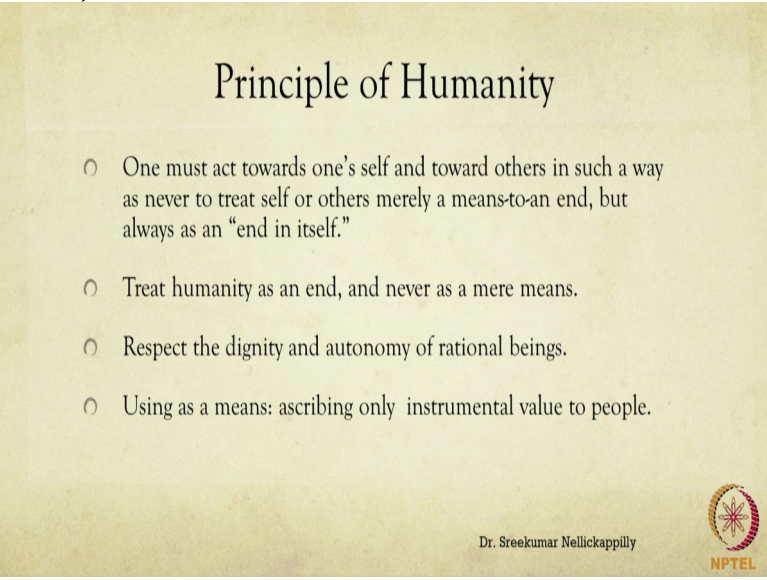
In the bottom right corner of the slide, there is a small circular logo with a red and yellow design, and the text "NPTEL" below it. To the left of the logo, the name "Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly" is written in a small, black, sans-serif font.

Now, principle of universalizability. We base our actions on some maxims or principles. What are those maxims or principles on the basis of which we make our actions? We give this principle as principle of action to ourselves. So as I mentioned earlier, we are the lawgivers. So now, you know the principle or the maxim on the basis of which we make this decision and act, we now consider it as a universal principle and apply to ourselves.

Explains what are we doing and why are we doing it. So this principle would satisfactorily explain us, what are we doing without any inconsistency and we can always convince ourselves and others with this, why we do this and why are we doing it. Again, we have to imagine a world in which everyone acts in accordance with our maxim.

That is precisely the principle of universalizability that we should be able to conceive our maxim as a universal maxim so that others can also follow it and act on the basis of it. Again, one must be able to universalize the principle of one's act, one must be able to will that everyone act on the basis of that principle. So this is what the principle of universalizability means.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:59)



The slide has a light beige background with a subtle texture. The title 'Principle of Humanity' is centered at the top in a black serif font. Below it, four bullet points are listed, each preceded by a small circle. The text is in a black serif font. At the bottom right, there is a circular logo with a red and orange design, and the text 'NPTEL' below it. At the bottom center, the name 'Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly' is written in a small black font.

Principle of Humanity

- One must act towards one's self and toward others in such a way as never to treat self or others merely a means-to-an end, but always as an "end in itself."
- Treat humanity as an end, and never as a mere means.
- Respect the dignity and autonomy of rational beings.
- Using as a means: ascribing only instrumental value to people.

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly

NPTEL

And now we will see the principle of humanity which is where human dignity is highlighted. Person of the individual is focused here. One must act towards oneself and towards others in such a way as never to treat self or others merely a means to an end but always as an end in itself. So never treat a human self whether it is oneself or another person, as a mere means to achieve certain selfish goals but always treat a human self whether it is oneself or others, as goal in itself, as an end in itself.

Treat humanity as an end and never as a means. The whole of humanity is the end. So the kind of importance Kant gift to humanity and human beings is quite visible here. Respect the dignity and autonomy of rational being. So by virtue of being rational, all human beings deserve to be respected. They have the right to be respected by other human beings. Using as a means is ascribing only instrumental value to people.

If you consider other person as a mere means to attain your personal goals or your selfish goals, then you do not consider, then you do not realise the real value of that person. That person is only a means to you. He or she has only an instrumental value for you. But actually you have to realise and recognise and respect the intrinsic value of each individual.


And individuals have intrinsic value because they are rational creatures. Humans have intrinsic value.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:52)

Human Dignity and Moral Demands

- Intrinsic value of human beings: Value is based on dignity.
- Human dignity is related to special capacities of man: rationality and autonomy.
- By virtue of being rational, human beings are intrinsically valuable.
- Rationality and autonomy generate the moral demand of respectful treatment.
- Autonomy implies freedom.

Dr. Sreekumar Nellickappilly



And it is from this whole notion, the concept of human dignity and the moral demands based on this concept is derived in contemporary world. Intrinsic value of human beings is based on the value of human dignity. And human dignity is related to certain special capacities of man which I have already mentioned, rationality and autonomy.

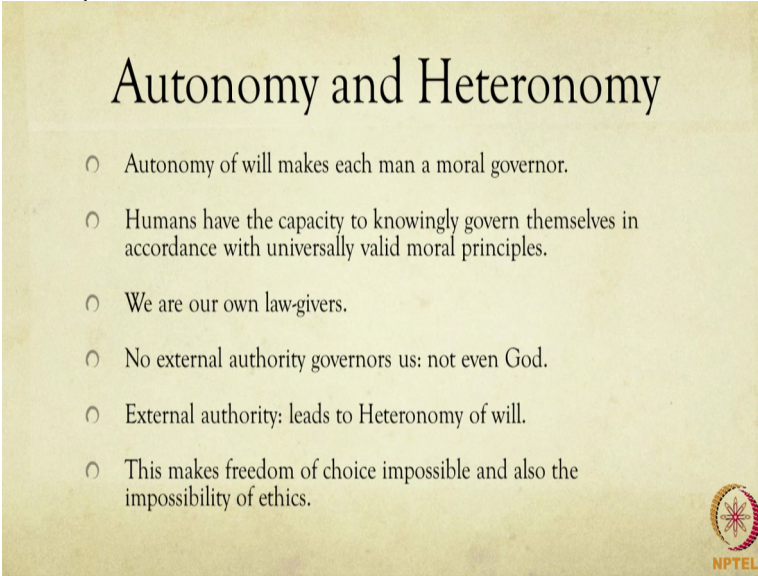
All human beings are rational and all human beings have the ability to take decisions for their own life. They know what is good for them and they do not need to follow someone else's command and they know what is good for them and take decisions on the basis of their ideas of good which they could arrive at on the basis of employing reason, universal rationality which is present in them.

So each individual is an instance of universal rationality. And for that reason, each individual is autonomous and also deserves and demands dignity. By virtue of being rational, human beings are intrinsically valuable. And rationality and autonomy generates the moral demands of respectful treatment. So every human being need to be treated with respect by other human beings.

We have no right to coerce, we have no right to violates the rights of other people, we have no rights to command other people and make them do things which they do not want to do. They have the right to take decisions in their own life. And autonomy implies freedom.


So the concept of autonomy which has become a very important concept in moral discourses ever since 18th-century, has been highlighted by Emmanuel Kant and his Deontologism. We could see that even in contemporary debates on morality, the concept of autonomy is at the centre.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:41)



Autonomy and Heteronomy

- Autonomy of will makes each man a moral governor.
- Humans have the capacity to knowingly govern themselves in accordance with universally valid moral principles.
- We are our own law-givers.
- No external authority governs us: not even God.
- External authority: leads to Heteronomy of will.
- This makes freedom of choice impossible and also the impossibility of ethics.



Before we conclude let us try to understand the concept of autonomy a little closely by contrasting it with another concept, the notion of heteronomy. Autonomy means autonomous, self-rule. Every individual has the ability, has the capacity to rule himself because he or she possesses rationality and heteronomy is where you know the control comes from outside or several sources..

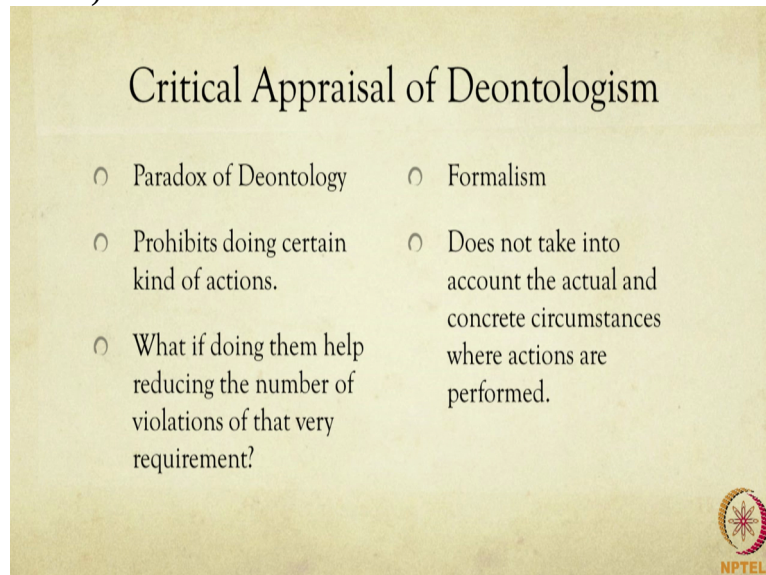
Not just from inside, not just from the individual himself but there are several sources. Autonomy of will makes each man a moral governor. It is because every individual is autonomous, he or she can be treated as a moral governor of himself. Humans have the capacity to knowingly govern themselves in accordance with the universally valid moral principles.

So he or she, every individual has the capacity to employ this rationality and know what is right, what is good and distribution between right and wrong, good and evil and also know what is his duty and act accordingly. We are our lawgivers. Each individual is his own lawgiver. And there is

no external authority governs us, not even God is an external authority who holds absolute control over human beings.

External authority leads to heteronomy of will which takes away the very possibility of freedom and also the possibility of ethics. So this is the Kantian contribution to deontological ethics in its nutshell.

(Refer Slide Time: 30:17)



So we will wind up our discussion on Kantian ethics and just before that we will see 2 critical aspects, 2 major criticism raised against Kantian framework. The 1st one is called the paradox of deontology. Let us imagine a situation where you know, Kant would say that we should not kill another person because of the very fact that he is an individual and you should never treat another person as a mere means, always consider the other person as an end and we should respect autonomy, should respect human dignity and human rights, no doubt about it.

But at the same time, assume a situation where if you kill another person, you can avoid lot of other atrocities because you know that this person is likely to kill several other human beings. So by killing this person, you could avoid him going around and killing several other innocent human beings. So you are actually by killing him, you are doing a service to society and to humanity.

So this is called Paradox of deontology. The prohibits doing certain kinds of action and what if doing them help reducing the number of violations of that very requirement? So here the problem is that Kantian framework would not accept this. He would say that killing at any cost is wrong and Kant is never bothered about consequences.

Here we can only cite the consequences. If this person is going to be alive, he would go around and kill several other innocent creatures but Kant would say that that is only the consequence, one should not think about the consequence. One should act only on the basis of the universal maxims. Now, another criticism is formalism where we know that Kant's framework is highly formal, highly logical.

He talks about the logical possibilities, the preconditions of the moral precept being moral. So his approach to morality is extremely formalistic and this may not help in practical day-to-day situations. Does not take into account the actual and concrete circumstances where actions are performed.

There are several other criticisms, we do not have time to discuss all that because the purpose of this lecture is to give a very brief introduction to Kantian ethics and Deontologism advocated by Emmanuel Kant. So we will now wind up this lecture and the next lecture we will discuss another very important ethical framework. For the time being, thank you.