

Freedom and Morality

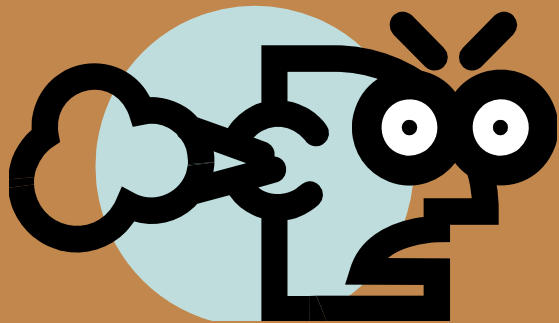
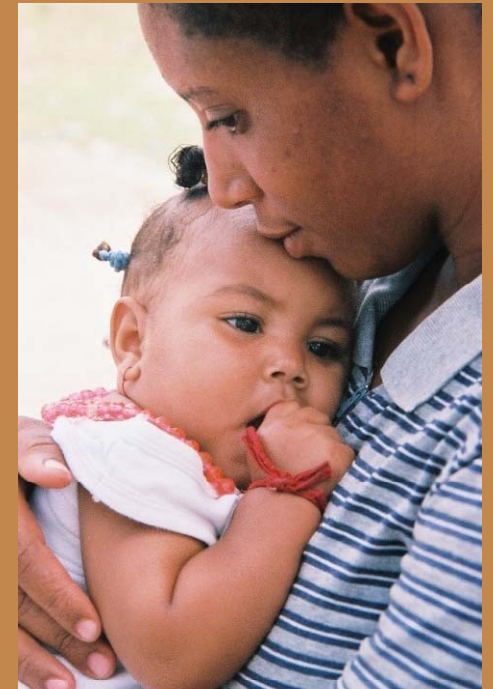
Chapter 3

Principles of the Moral Life which apply to everyone

- **Freedom**-makes a person a moral agent
- **Conscience**-helps us discern God's will
- **Law**-allows freedom to function properly; does not limit our freedom (remember Aquinas' characteristics of laws)

Why is this important?

- Right moral conduct perfects the human being
- Wrong moral conduct degrades a human being



Concupiscence

Definition-The rebellion of the passions against reason.

- It is the tendency of the human person towards evil.
- St. Paul: “I cannot understand even my own actions. I do not do what I want to do but what I hate”. Rom 7:15

Human Acts, Moral Acts



- The two properties of the human soul are the Intellect and Will
- For an act to be moral or immoral it must be done with knowledge and Free Will

Truly human acts presume:

- **Knowledge**

- **Head knowledge** - conceptual

- **Heart knowledge** – evaluative-what do you value?
(Aquinas said this is most important)

- **Freedom**

- Involves full consent of the will

Full vs. Partial Knowledge

FULL



Partial

- You know what you are doing.
- You are aware of the morality of the act

Your intellect is clouded by something that interferes with correct judgment

Obstacles which **limit** freedom

- **Ignorance** – a lack of knowledge in a person capable of knowing.
 - *Vincible* – can be overcome (ex. Recovering alcoholic)
 - *Invincible* – cannot expect an individual to overcome (ex. Mental illness)
- **Error**-obstacle to knowledge
- **Inattention**

Obstacles to freedom

- **Emotions or passions**-distort reason at stages of discerning facts- Evil actions performed in the heat of passion are different from those that are planned and calculated. If passions are deliberately aroused culpability is increased.
 - In hearing another's advice
 - In deciding what should be done
 - In understanding situations
- **Fear**- an agitation or disturbance of mind resulting from some present or imminent danger

Obstacles to freedom (2)

- **Violence** – is an external force applied by one person on another in order to compel him to perform some action against his will.
- **Habit** – an inclination to perform a particular action
- **Mental disorders** – can completely take away free will.