Ethics of the Middle Ages

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Christian ethics

Birth of Christianity - I century A.D.

- Jesus Christ
- written in the works of St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, etc.
- "among other religions only Christianity state perfectness of God together with human beings"
- Blessing the main moral principle of Christian morality
- Christianity:
 - Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy

Medieval period

- Theo centrism
- Creationism
- Instead of dialectics dualism;
- God infinite, independent and eternal
- How can we know the truth? Belief and religion
- Struggle of good and evil

Medieval period

- Absolute person is God
- Anthropomorphism
- A future life;
- Present life is transitional
- Christians belong to the future life;
- Body and pleasures are he chains for soul
- Not apathy, grief, pessimism but peace

Medieval period

- Divine sadness: death for pleasures and hope for Heavens;
- Sufferings;
- * "poverty of souls"

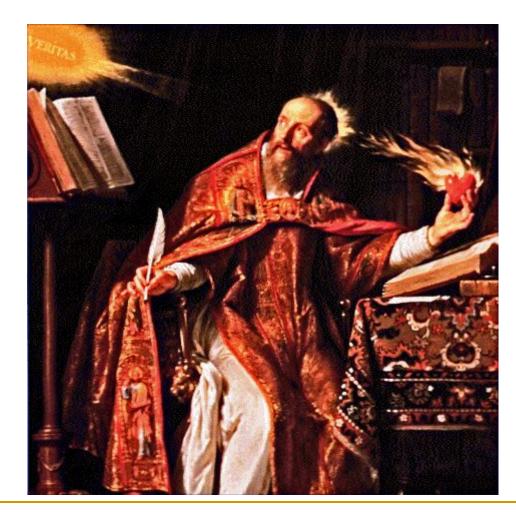
Christian ethics:

Makes emphasis on:

- Moral problems and human values
 - Accuse lies, theft, infidelity and other human sins.
- Praying to God and following the words of God

 "Pursuit of God is at the same time pursuit of yourself, your humanity."

Saint Augustine: 354 – 430 A. C.



Saint Augustine

- Born in North Africa 354 A.C.
- Converted: he became a Christian when he was 33
- He was a bishop
- Major writings: "The Confessions" and "The City of God"

Moral experience of the Middle Age

The major question of ethics:

 The question of criteria for Good and Evil, about appearance of difference and valuation of these terms

• St. Augustine:

- Treaty: "City of God"
- Soul and Body
 - soul controls body
- Human being has to follow God's word

Saint Augustine

- A new authority: Revelation
- The relationship between faith and reason
- From "Credo quia absurdum" I believe because it is absurd (human logic cannot understand the Divine reason)
- To "Credo ut intelligam" I believe because I want to understand

Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274)



Moral experience of the Middle Age

Thomas Aquinas:

- "the highest human blessing that can ever exist is union with God."
- Human virtues are separated on the following categories:
 - Spiritual
 - Moral
 - Theological

Moral experience of the Middle Age

Meister Eckhart:

- Famous German theologist
- Main idea:
 - Human being must give up himself for the love to God
 - Suffering
- Two types of poverty:
 - Outside
 - Inside