The Highest Good and the Relation between Virtue and Happiness: A Kantian Approach

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Abstract: The paper develops a Kantian view of the highest good and the relation between virtue and happiness. Several Kantian theses are defended, among them the thesis that the highest good is realized only if every virtuous individual is happy, the view that virtue is neither necessary nor sufficient for happiness, and the proposition that virtue is both necessary and sufficient for the *worthiness* of being happy. The author argues that the highest good ought to be realized and that it ought to be that everyone who is virtuous is happy. To prove these claims, the author will use techniques developed by modern deontic logicians. According to Kant, we do not have an immediate duty to promote our own happiness, the aim of morality being not personal satisfaction but rather virtue and the good will. The important question is not "How do I become happy?" but "How do I become good?". The arguments in this paper support this view.

Keywords: happiness, Immanuel Kant, Kantian ethics, the good will, the highest good, virtue.

Introduction

In his *Critique of Practical Reason* (KpV), Immanuel Kant discusses the ancient concept of the highest good. According to the Prussian philosopher, the notion of the *highest* contains an ambiguity. It can mean either the supreme or the complete (KpV 5:110). Virtue is the supreme, unconditional good, but it is not the whole and complete good. The possession of the complete good in a person is virtue and happiness together, and happiness distributed in exact proportion to morality constitutes the highest good of a possible world. Happiness is not absolutely and in all respects good, according to Kant, but it is good if it is combined with virtue.

According to the philosopher from Königsberg, we ought to strive to promote the highest good (KpV 5:125): "The production of the highest good in the world is the necessary object of a will determinable by the moral law." (KpV 5:122) Since practical reason commands us to contribute everything we can to the production of the highest good, we must necessarily represent it as possible (KpV 5:119). Kant uses these basic theses in his argument for the immortality of the soul and his moral argument for the existence of, or belief in, God. The fundamental ideas of his doctrine are summarized in the following quote:

> ... the *supreme* good (as the first condition of the highest good) is morality, whereas happiness constitutes its second element but in such a way that it is only the morally conditioned yet necessary result of the former. Only with this subordination is the *highest good* the whole object of pure practical reason,

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> which must necessarily represent it as possible since it commands us to contribute everything possible to its production. (KpV 5:119)

Kant's doctrine of the highest good raises many questions. Is it an important part of his philosophy or not? Is it superfluous or not? Is the notion of the highest good a secular or a religious notion? Is it immanent or transcendent? Is it important for his *moral* philosophy or not? Can the highest good be realized in this world or only in some other world? Can it be realized in this life or only in some future life? Can the highest good be realized only if God exists and our souls are immortal? Does the duty to promote the highest good go 'beyond' obedience to the moral law, does it introduce any new obligations, or is it subsumed under our other duties? If it goes beyond our other duties, what is its unique contribution? Is the duty to promote the highest good compatible with other parts of Kant's philosophy? Is the doctrine of the highest good consistent with Kant's theory of the autonomy of morality and the ought-can principle? If we ought to make the highest good our end – and this, in some sense, presupposes certain religious beliefs – how can morality be 'pure?'; and if the highest good cannot be realized by us alone, how can we have a duty to promote it?

I will not enter into these debates in the present paper. I will address neither the issue of Kant's view of the relationship between morality and religion, nor issues regarding Kant's postulates of God and immortality. However, it seems obvious to me that the concept of the highest good is a very important one for Kant both in his ethics and in his philosophy as a whole; it might even be the most important concept of them all.

The aim of the present paper is not primarily to discuss Kant's own view of the highest good; it is to develop a theory of the highest good and the relation between virtue and happiness that is inspired by Kant. In this sense, it is an exercise in Kantian ethics and not an investigation of Kant's own ethics. Regardless of what Kant himself thought about these issues, the question of what the highest good is and how morality and happiness are related to each other is of independent philosophical interest. Still, I also hope that the paper is of some historical interest, and I will try to show that Kant's basic ideas can be explicated and developed into a doctrine of the highest good that is very attractive.[1]

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[1] For more on the highest good in Kant's philosophy, see, for example, Aufderheide and Bader (2015), Auxter (1979), Bader (2015), Basaglia (2016), Beck (1960), Beiser (2006), Caswell (2006), Denis (2006), Engstrom (1992, 2016), Friedman (1984), Höwing (2016), Insole (2020), Kleingeld (2016), Lin (2019), Mariña (2000), Marwede (2016), O'Connell (2012), Pasternack (2017), Reath (1988), Recki (2016), Silber (1959, 1963), Showler and Wike (2010), Simmons (1993) and Watkins (2010). For general introductions to Kant's moral philosophy and Kantian ethics, see, for example, Allison (2011), Baron (1995), Denis (2010), Guyer (2000, 2006), Herman (1993), Hill (2002), Korsgaard (1996, 2008), O'Neill (1989), Paton (1948), Timmermann (2009), Wood (2008), Timmons (2017). See, also, Baxley (2010), Betzler (2008) and Trampota et.al. (2013).

The Highest Good and the Relation between Virtue and Happiness

The paper addresses three questions: "What does 'virtue' mean?", "What does 'happiness' mean?" and "What is the relation between virtue and happiness?". Several Kantian theses are defended, among them the thesis that the highest good is realized only if every virtuous individual is happy, the view that virtue is neither necessary nor sufficient for happiness, and the proposition that virtue is both necessary and sufficient for the *worthiness* of being happy. I will argue that the highest good ought to be realized and that it ought to be that everyone who is virtuous is happy. To prove these claims I will use techniques developed by modern deontic logicians. By using these techniques, we can show with certainty that the proofs are valid. Thus, we *must* accept the conclusions or else reject some of the premises. This approach is clearly Kantian in spirit, since the great philosopher from Königsberg wanted to give morality a certain foundation and searched for necessary, universal principles that are knowable a priori. According to Kant, we do not have an immediate duty to promote our own happiness, the aim of morality being not personal satisfaction, but rather virtue and the good will. The important question is not "How do I become happy?" but "How do I become good?" or "How do I become worthy of being happy?". The arguments in this paper support this view.

The essay is divided into four sections. In Section 1, I discuss the concepts of the highest good, virtue, and happiness, and prove that it ought to be that everyone who is virtuous is happy. Section 2 deals with the relationship between virtue and happiness. I argue that virtue is neither sufficient nor necessary for happiness. In Section 3, I consider the relationship between virtue and the worthiness of being happy. I prove that virtue is both a necessary and sufficient condition for the worthiness of being happy. Section 4 includes a summary of the paper and some conclusions.

1. The Highest Good, Virtue, and Happiness

The highest good contains two elements, according to Kant: virtue and happiness. In this Section, I will define what I mean by these concepts in the present paper and I will begin to prove some theorems about the highest good.

1.1 Virtue

The first element in the highest good is virtue, morality, or the good will. In his first two critiques and *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (G), Kant appears to treat these concepts as synonyms. In his *Critique of Practical Reason*, for example, Kant talks about virtue and morality as the unconditional good. He says that "*virtue*... is the *supreme condition*... the *supreme* good" (KpV 5:110) and that "virtue... is... the supreme good, since it has no further condition above it," (KpV 5:111) but also that "the *supreme* good (as the first condition of the highest good) is morality, whereas happiness constitutes its second element but in such a way that it is only the morally conditioned yet necessary result of the former." (KpV

5:119) This suggests that Kant believes virtue and morality to be the same thing and that being virtuous is the same thing as being a morally good individual, human being, or person. Be that as it may, in this paper I will treat these words as synonymous. Accordingly, I will assume that the following proposition is true:

> **P1.** It is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) virtuous if and only if (iff) x is a (perfectly) morally good individual, human being, or person.

In *Groundwork*, Kant does not explicitly talk about virtue as the supreme good or supreme condition. Here, he says that it is the good will that appears to constitute the indispensable condition of everything good. According to the author of *Groundwork*, "a rational impartial spectator can never take satisfaction… in the sight of the uninterrupted welfare of a being, if it is adorned with no trait of a pure and good will; and so the good will appears to constitute the indispensable condition even of the worthiness to be happy." (G 4:393) "This will [the good will] may therefore not be the single and entire good, but it must be the highest good, and the condition for all the rest, even for every demand for happiness." (G 4:396) In his second critique, Kant advances the idea that it is virtue that is the condition of the worthiness to be happy, and in *Groundwork* that it is the good will. This suggests that virtue and the good will are the same thing for Kant. Whether or not this is a correct interpretation of Kant, I will assume that these words mean the same in this paper. Consequently, I will assume that the following proposition is true:

> **P2.** It is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) virtuous iff x has a (perfectly) good will.

From proposition 1 and proposition 2 we can immediately derive proposition 3:

> **P3.** It is necessary that an individual x is a morally good individual (human being or person) iff x has a (perfectly) good will.

Proposition 3 appears to be defended by a number of Kant scholars; see, for example, Hill (2002). In footnote 1 to Chapter 6 in his work, Hill says that: "Having a good will (roughly, a will to do what is right) is… a moral good, for maintaining a good will is necessary and sufficient for being a morally good person. It is an unconditional good, a fundamental requirement of morality." Most Kant scholars, however, seem to agree that virtue is *not* the same thing as the good will according to Kant. Denis (2006), for example, claims that virtue implies a good will but that a good will does not entail virtue. Hill (2008) defends a similar interpretation: virtue is "a kind of strength of the will to do what is right" and is more than a good will. According to Wood (2008, chap. 8), virtue presupposes good will because the good will is simply volition according to good principles, but there can be good will accompanied not by virtue but by moral weakness. Still, there are scholars who suggest that Kant, at least at some points in his thinking, equates a good will with a virtuous one, perhaps in *Groundwork* and the second critique (see, for example, Allison 2011, 78). Baxley (2010) agrees that Kant sometimes seems to

equate virtue and the good will, but she thinks that he does not treat these concepts as synonyms in his later works. Baxley seems to agree with Denis that virtue implies a good will, but not vice versa. Suppose that this interpretation of Kant is correct; then, we can weaken propositions 1 and 2 and claim that it is necessary that an individual is (perfectly) virtuous or morally good only if she has a (perfectly) good will, even though it is possible to have a good will without being perfectly virtuous or morally good. Furthermore, in this interpretation we ought to replace all talk of virtue, virtuousness, etc. in this paper with talk about the good will. However, since Kant at least sometimes appears to use 'virtue,' 'the good will,' and 'morality' as synonyms, I will do the same in the present paper.

What then does it mean to be virtuous? What is it to be a morally good individual and to have a good will? In the second critique, Kant says that virtue is "a disposition conformed with law *from respect* for law," (KpV 5:128) and, in *Groundwork*, that "That *will* is *absolutely good*… whose maxim, if it is made into a universal law, can never conflict with itself." (G 4:437) In *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (RGV 6:23n), Kant identifies virtue with "the firmly grounded disposition to fulfil one's duty" and in *The Metaphysics of Morals* he says: "*Virtue* is the strength of a human being's maxims in fulfilling his duty… virtue is… a self-constraint in accordance with a principle of inner freedom, and so through the mere representation of one's duty in accordance with its formal law." (MM 6:394) He also talks about virtue as the will's conformity with every duty (MM 6:395) and describes virtue as "the moral strength of a *human being's* will in fulfilling his *duty*, a moral *constraint* through his own lawgiving reason, insofar as this constitutes itself an authority *executing* the law." (MM 6:405) Perhaps we can think of virtuousness as a disposition to do the right thing for the right reason, or as a disposition to do one's duty for duty's sake. In this paper, however, I will use the concept of virtue or the good will in a slightly different meaning. I shall use the following definition:

> **Def 1.** It is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) virtuous iff everything x wants ought to be (is morally all-things-considered good or is entailed by the moral law).[2]

This is a definition of *perfect* virtue; it is possible to be virtuous without being perfectly virtuous, but perfect virtue requires that absolutely everything x wants ought to be. So, when I speak about 'virtue,' I usually mean 'perfect virtue.'

From this definition, we can immediately derive the following corollaries:

> **C1.** It is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) virtuous only if everything x wants is permitted.

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[2] In this paper, I assume that the following propositions are true: it is necessary that it is morally all-things-considered good that A iff it is necessary that the moral law is fulfilled only if A is the case; it is necessary that it ought to be the case that A iff it is morally all-things-considered good that A; and it is necessary that it ought to be the case that A iff it is necessary that the moral law is fulfilled only if A is the case.

> **C2.** It is necessary that a perfectly virtuous individual wants nothing that is forbidden.
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> *Proof.* (**C1**). **C1** follows immediately from **Def 1** and the proposition that it is necessary that everything that ought to be the case is permitted, which can be proved in many deontic systems, such as, for example, so-called *Standard Deontic Logic* (see, for example, Gabbay et al. 2013 for an introduction to this system).
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> (**C2**). **C2** follows immediately from **C1** and the proposition that it is necessary that something is forbidden iff it is not permitted, which can be proved in almost any deontic system. Q.E.D.

In other words, it is necessary that an individual is (perfectly) virtuous or has a good will only if she wants nothing that is contrary to or inconsistent with the moral law. Note that **C1** is not equivalent to **Def 1**; **Def 1** entails **C1**, but **C1** does not entail **Def 1**. So, **Def 1** is stronger than **C1**. **Def 1** seems to me to be a very interesting definition of what it means to be virtuous and have a good will. Nevertheless, I will now consider three possible objections to it and try to show why the definition is plausible in spite of these potential problems.

According to the first objection, **Def 1** reads the implication in the wrong direction. It is not necessarily the case that an individual is virtuous just in case everything she wants is entailed by the moral law; she is virtuous iff she wants everything that ought to be the case. This is an interesting alternative interpretation of the concept of virtue. In Section 2 (**Def 3**), I will call a person that satisfies these conditions (perfectly) 'upright' or 'conscientious.' There are, however, some problems with this definition. It is possible that an individual wants everything that ought to be the case at the same time that she wants something that is forbidden. But if someone wants something that is forbidden, how can she have a good will and be perfectly virtuous? Furthermore, if we accept this definition, we cannot prove several of the theorems about the relations between virtue and happiness that we want to prove, for example **T8** and **T9** in Section 3.

According to the second objection, **Def 1** is wrong because it is too weak. We should instead use the following definition: it is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) virtuous iff x wants A iff it ought to be the case that A. If we use this definition, all theorems **T1–T8** in Sections 1.3–3 still hold, while **T9** and **T10** in Section 3 cannot be proved. It is possible that there is an individual that deserves to be happy who is not perfectly virtuous in this sense. For it is possible that she does not want everything that ought to be, and hence that she is not virtuous, even though everything she wants ought to be, and that she therefore ought to be happy. Consequently, virtue is not a necessary condition for the worthiness of being happy according to this definition. Therefore, we shall stick with **Def 1**.

According to the third objection to **Def 1**, this definition is not a Kantian conception of a good will (or virtuousness) since it presupposes an independent notion of goodness. The good should be defined in terms of the good will rather than vice versa. Still, this is not necessarily a problem for **Def 1**; it depends on what

we consider to be good. In the second critique, Kant says that "[w]hat we are to call good must be an object of the faculty of desire in the judgment of every reasonable human being, and evil an object of aversion in the eyes of everyone." (KpV 5:61) This suggests that he thinks that something is good only if everyone who is (perfectly) rational wants it to be the case. We shall also read this implication in the other direction. So, it is (morally all-things-considered) good that A iff everyone who is perfectly rational wants it to be the case that A. Furthermore, it is (morally all-things-considered) good that A iff it ought to be the case that A, or iff A is entailed by the moral law. In this reading, **Def 1** is equivalent to the proposition that it is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) virtuous iff everything x wants is such that everyone who is perfectly rational wants it. In other words, having a good will (being virtuous) is wanting only things that it is rational to want. And this view is clearly Kantian.[3]

1.2 Happiness

The second element in the highest good is happiness. But what is happiness and what does it mean to be happy?

Most Kant scholars seem to agree that one can find several concepts of happiness in Kant's works. According to Watson (1983), for example, two characterizations are especially recurrent in Kant's writings: happiness as success and happiness as contentment. According to the first, happiness is said to be satisfying one's inclinations; and, according to the second, happiness is contentment with one's life on the whole or with one's current state along with the assurance that it will last. Elizondo (2016) counts at least three different views of happiness in Kant's writings: the satisfaction of inclinations (*Critique of Pure Reason* – KrV – A800/B828, A806/B834; G 4:399, 405), pleasure (KpV 5:22, *Critique of the Power of Judgment* – KU – 5:208), and well-being (G 4:393, 418). Wike (1994) distinguishes between several different meanings of 'happiness' in Kant's works. According to Wike, there are two fundamentally different ways in which Kant considers happiness: he treats happiness as a sensible state that involves the satisfaction of inclinations, brings pleasure, and is characterized as well-being; and he describes happiness as an intelligible state that involves moral contentment. In this paper, I will focus on happiness as fulfillment.[4]

The view that happiness consists in an individual's satisfaction of inclinations, or one's wish and will, is expressed in both *Groundwork* and the

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[3] For more on Kant's view of the good will, see, for example, Allison (2011, part II, chap. 3, 71-94), Ameriks (2003, chap. 7), Korsgaard (1996, chap. 2), Paton (1948, esp. chap. II and III) and Wood (2008, chap. 2), and, for more information about the concept of virtue in Kant's philosophy, see, for example, Baxley (2010), Betzler (2008), Denis (2006b, 2013), Grenberg (2010), Guyer (2000, chap. 9), Hill (2008) and Wood (2008, chap. 8). Peterson and Seligman (2004) include a general overview of various virtues.

[4] For more information on various theories of happiness, see, for example, Bok (2010), Boniwell et al. (2013) and White (2006).

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second critique (see also KrV A800/B828, A806/B834). According to Kant, "… all human beings always have of themselves the most powerful and inward inclination to happiness, because precisely in this idea all inclinations are united in a sum." (G 4:399) In *Critique of Practical Reason*, he expresses the same basic idea: "*Happiness* is the state of a rational being in the world in the whole of whose existence *everything goes according to his wish and will.*" (KpV 5:124) *The Metaphysics of Morals* (MM) contains a similar characterization: "That *everything* should *always* go the way you would like it to…. What is such a condition called?… It is called *happiness.*"[5] (MM 6:480)

Everyone (or at least everyone who is rational) wants to be happy, according to Kant. We can think of happiness as a 'higher-order' end. It is not a 'first-order' end, like money, political power, or fame, that we pursue directly; if it were, it would just be one end among many. But there is something special about happiness, according to Kant. Happiness is a final, all-inclusive end, an end that contains all other ends. Someone who wants to be happy wants *all* her desires or inclinations to be fulfilled. Pursuing money, political power, fame, or any other first-order end at the expense of happiness is, therefore, not reasonable.

In this paper, I will use the following definition of happiness:

> **Def 2.** It is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) happy iff everything x wants is true.

This can be classified as a kind of desire-satisfaction theory. It is an objective form of desire-satisfaction theory, since the important thing is that our wants are *actually* satisfied, not that we *believe* that they are satisfied or that we *feel* satisfied. We are happy when the world is the way we want it to be. It is an unrestricted form, since absolutely *every* want must be satisfied for an individual to be perfectly happy. This includes, among other things, desires about other people and objective states of the world and the future, and not just desires about one's own life, subjective mental states, or the present. It is, of course, possible that an individual is happy in some vague sense even though not all of her wants are fulfilled, but it is not possible to be *perfectly* happy and unfulfilled, according to this theory. When I speak of 'happiness,' I will usually mean 'perfect happiness.' The theory is an actual and not an ideal form of desire-satisfaction theory. It is an individual's *actual* wants that must be satisfied, not her ideal wants or the wants she would have if she were (perfectly) rational.[6]

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[5] For more on the concept of happiness in Kant's philosophy, see, for example, Brännmark (2002, esp. Section 5.3), Guyer (2000, esp. chap. 11), Hill (2002, part II, chap. 6, 164-200), Hills (2006, 2009), Johnson, A. B. (2005), Johnson, R. N. (2002), Paton (1948, 55-57, 85-87, 91-92, 104-107), Reath (1989, 2006, chap. 2), Watson (1983), Wike (1987, 1994), Elizondo (2016) and Walschots (2017).

[6] Elsewhere, I try to develop this theory in more detail and defend it against some possible counter-arguments (Rönnedal 2021). I show that everyone who is perfectly rational wants to be happy and has happiness as a final end. Nevertheless, for our present purposes, the current characterization should suffice. Note that I do not make a distinction between wants and desires

1.3 The highest good

We have now described the elements in the highest good: virtue and happiness. So, let us turn to the former concept itself. Kant's doctrine of the highest good is summarized in the following quote:

> *virtue* (as worthiness to be happy) is the *supreme condition* of whatever can… seem to us desirable and hence of all our pursuit of happiness and… it is therefore the *supreme* good… But it is not… the whole and complete good as the object of the faculty of desire of rational finite beings; for this, *happiness* is also required…
>
> inasmuch as virtue and happiness together constitute possession of the highest good in a person, and happiness distributed in exact proportion to morality (as the worth of a person and his worthiness to be happy) constitutes the *highest good* of a possible world, the latter means the whole, the complete good, in which, however, virtue as the condition is always the supreme good… whereas happiness is something that, though always pleasant to the possessor of it, is not of itself absolutely and in all respects good but always presupposes morally lawful conduct as its condition. (KpV 5:110-111)

In this Section, I will begin to prove some theorems about the highest good. I will show that it is necessary that the highest good ought to be realized, that it is necessary that the highest good is realized only if every virtuous individual is happy, and that it is necessary that it ought to be that everyone who is virtuous is happy.

To prove these theorems, I will use techniques developed by modern deontic logicians. The advantage of this approach is that we can show with certainty that our arguments are deductively valid. Hence, we must either accept the conclusions, or else, in each case, reject at least some premise. I will assume that it is true that it is obligatory (or that it ought to be the case that) A in a possible world, w, iff A is true in every possible world that is deontically accessible from w. I will also assume that it is true that it is (historically) necessary that A in a possible world, w, iff A is true in every possible world that is (alethically) accessible from w. Furthermore, I will treat the alethic accessibility relation as an equivalence relation, and the deontic accessibility relation as a serial, transitive, and Euclidean

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in this paper. According to this view, it is possible to want 'anything,' even things that are not possible. It is perhaps not *rational* to desire something that is impossible, but it is not *impossible*. Kant, however, seems to think that it *is* impossible to want (or will) something that cannot be reached by one's own actions. One may hope for it, wish for it or desire it but cannot 'want it.' He appears to believe that a desire alone for something immoral is not damaging my virtue, as long as I do not want it and act on it. For him, morality depends on the will. My happiness, on the other hand, can depend both on the success of my own actions and on my satisfaction of things happening to me. If this interpretation is correct, the terminology in this paper is different from Kant's. However, it is not obvious exactly how concepts such as 'drive' ('incentive'), 'desire,' 'inclination,' 'interest,' 'wish,' 'motivation,' 'choice,' 'will,' etc., are related to each other in Kant's philosophy. For more on Kant's use of such notions, see, for example, the introduction to MM, Englert (2017), Engstrom (2010), Frierson (2005), Grenberg (2001), Schapiro (2011) and Wilson (2016).

relation that is included in the alethic accessibility relation. Intuitively, to say that a possible world w' is deontically accessible from a possible world w means that w' is one of the best possible worlds that are alethically accessible from w. The highest good is realized in a possible world iff this possible world is one of the best (alethically accessible) possible worlds in this possible world. Technically, this means that the highest good is realized in a possible world just in case this possible world is deontically accessible from itself. Finally, I will also assume that, if w' is alethically accessible from w, and w'' is deontically accessible from w', then w'' is deontically accessible from w.[7]

According to Kant, the highest good ought to be realized. He expresses this idea in several different ways in the second critique: "It is a priori (morally) necessary *to produce the highest good*" (KpV 5:113); "we *ought* to strive to promote the highest good (which must therefore be possible)" (KpV 5:125); "The moral law commands me to make the highest possible good in a world the final object of all my conduct" (KpV 5:129), and "[i]t [is] a duty for us to promote the highest good."[8] (KpV 5:125) We shall now prove that it is necessary that the highest good ought to be realized.

T1. It is necessary that the highest good ought to be realized.

Proof. Suppose that **T1** is not valid. Then there is a possible world, w_1, in which it is false that the highest good ought to be realized. It follows that there is a possible world, w_2, that is deontically accessible from w_1, in which the highest good is not realized. Still, since w_2 is deontically accessible from w_1, w_2 is deontically accessible from itself (since the deontic accessibility relation is Euclidean), i.e. w_2 is one of the best possible worlds in w_2. Hence, the highest good is realized in w_2. But this is absurd. Q.E.D.[9]

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[7] These assumptions are plausible, but – due to considerations of space – I cannot defend them in the present paper. Many deontic logicians would accept them. For more information on deontic logic, see, for example, Gabbay et al. (2013) and Hilpinen (1971, 1981). The modal principles that are employed in our proofs are perfectly standard (see any introduction to modal logic). The theory of 'wants' that is used in this paper is developed in more detail in Rönnedal (2020). See also Rönnedal (2019b, 2019c, 2021). The 'quantifiers' that are employed in the deductions are so-called propositional or sentential quantifiers. In Rönnedal (2019), I say more about how such quantifiers can be combined with various modal systems. The talk of possible worlds might seem to be anachronistic, and of course in some sense it is, but the idea of different possible worlds was not foreign to Kant: see, for example, KpV 5:111, where he speaks of the highest good of a possible world; KrV 836, where the idea of a moral world is important; and RGV 6:5, where Kant considers what sort of world a human being who honors the moral law would create, were this in his power. The possible world semantics that is used in our proofs in this paper is a natural development of certain fundamental Kantian ideas.

[8] In a strict sense, these propositions are not necessarily equivalent, but it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the subtle differences between them.

[9] For more on my views on the concept of the highest good and the relation between the good and the moral law, see Rönnedal (2020b, 2020c).

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Our next theorem establishes a necessary condition for the highest good to be realized.

T2. It is necessary that the highest good is realized only if every virtuous individual is happy.

Proof. Suppose that **T2** is not valid. Then there is a possible world, w_1, in which the highest good is realized even though it is false that every virtuous individual is happy. Hence, there is someone, c, who is virtuous but not happy in w_1. Since c is virtuous in w_1, everything c wants to be the case in w_1 ought to be the case in w_1 (by **Def 1**). Since c is not happy in w_1, it is not the case that everything c wants in w_1 is true in w_1 (by **Def 2**). Accordingly, there is some X such that c wants X to be the case in w_1, even though X is false in w_1. It follows that if c wants it to be the case that X in w_1, then it ought to be the case that X in w_1. Hence, it ought to be the case that X in w_1. Since the highest good is realized in w_1, w_1 is one of the best possible worlds in w_1. So, w_1 is deontically accessible from itself. Therefore, X is true in w_1. Yet, this is absurd. Q.E.D.

From **T1** and **T2** we can derive our next theorem, **T3**, by the so-called means-end principle. According to the means-end principle, it follows that it ought to be the case that B if it ought to be the case that A and A necessarily implies B. Hence, we can use the following argument: (1) It is necessary that the highest good ought to be realized. (2) It is necessary that the highest good is realized only if every virtuous individual is happy. Hence, (3) it is necessary that it ought to be that every virtuous individual is happy. However, I will now use a reductio argument to prove **T3** directly. Accordingly, we do not have to assume **T1**, **T2**, and the means-end principle to establish **T3**.

T3. It is necessary that it ought to be that everyone who is virtuous is happy.[10]

Proof. Suppose that **T3** is not valid. Then there is a possible world, w_1, in which it is not the case that it ought to be the case that everyone who is virtuous is happy. Hence, there is a possible world, w_2, that is deontically accessible from w_1 in which someone, c, is virtuous but not happy. Since c is virtuous in w_2, it is true in w_2 that everything c wants in w_2 ought to be in w_2 (by **Def 1**); and since c is not happy in w_2, there is something, X, that c wants in w_2 that is not true in w_2 (by **Def 2**). It follows that it is true in w_2 that if c wants it to be the case that X, then X ought to be the case. Hence, X ought to be the case in w_2. Since w_2 is deontically accessible from w_1, w_2 is deontically accessible from itself (for the deontic accessibility relation is Euclidean). It follows that X is true in w_2. Still, this is absurd. Q.E.D.

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[10] Note that the 'converse' of **T3** does not hold. We cannot prove that it is necessary that it ought to be the case that someone is happy only if she is virtuous (where 'ought' has wide scope). However, we can prove that it is necessary that someone ought to be happy only if she is virtuous (see **T9** below) (where 'ought' has narrow scope). Suppose that we say that someone is virtuous iff everything she wants is permitted. Then we can prove that it is necessary that it ought to be the case that someone is happy only if she is virtuous.

2. The Relation between Virtue and Happiness

We have established that there is a *normative* relationship between virtue and happiness (**T3**). In this Section, I will, however, show that virtue is neither sufficient nor necessary for happiness, even though acting virtuously (doing the things one ought to do) is a necessary condition for happiness for every upright or conscientious individual. This is clearly a Kantian position. According to the Prussian philosopher, two elements that are combined in one concept form a unity that is either analytic (logical) or synthetic (real). Therefore,

> The connection of virtue with happiness can… be understood in one of two ways: either the endeavor to be virtuous and the rational pursuit of happiness are not two different actions but quite identical, in which case no maxim need be made the ground of the former other than that which serves for the latter; or else that connection is found in virtue's producing happiness as something different from the consciousness of virtue, as a cause produces an effect. (KpV 5:111)

According to Kant, there were basically only two ancient Greek schools concerned with the highest good: Stoicism and Epicureanism. Both denied that the highest good includes two elements. They differed, however, in their opinion of which of the two – virtue or happiness – was the fundamental concept:

> The Stoic maintained that virtue is the *whole highest good,* and happiness only the consciousness of this possession as belonging to the state of the subject. The Epicurean maintained that happiness is the *whole highest good,* and virtue only the form of the maxim for seeking to obtain it, namely, the rational use of means to it. (KpV 5:112)

Kant thought that both the Stoics and the Epicureans were wrong. In light of **T3**, their views are nevertheless understandable. We have shown that *it is necessary that it ought to be that everyone who is virtuous is happy*. Since it ought to be the case that the virtuous are happy, we have a tendency to want this state of affairs to obtain, and we sometimes believe that the things that we want to be true are actually true because we want them to be true. Hence, we have a tendency to believe that there is in fact a necessary relationship between virtue and happiness, that it is necessary that the virtuous are happy, or that virtue is a necessary means to happiness. We do not usually want the virtuous to suffer and the wicked to prosper; we normally want those who have a good will to be happy and, in general, that people get what they deserve. We want the world to be fair. But the belief that the world *is* fair is perhaps just based on wishful thinking. Just as one cannot derive an *ought* from an *is*, one cannot derive an *is* from an *ought*.[11] From the fact that it *ought* to be the case that the virtuous are happy, it does not follow that the virtuous *in fact* are happy, or that there is a necessary connection between virtue and happiness. It is possible to want to believe something and in

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[11] The former thesis is often called Hume's law. For more on this law, see, for example, Pigden (2010) and Schurz (1997). Schurz (1997) also discusses the latter proposition and shows that it can be proved in many deontic systems.

fact believe something that is not true. Moreover, it does not follow that everyone ought to be virtuous, or that everyone ought to be happy from **T3** in itself. **T3** is a conditional norm.

According to Kant, virtue is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition for happiness. Let us now establish this result.

> **T4.** Virtue is not a sufficient condition for happiness. It is not (logically or analytically) necessary that everyone who is virtuous is happy.[12]

> *Proof.* To prove this theorem, it is sufficient to establish that it is possible that there is someone who is virtuous who is not happy. It is easy to show that this is logically possible. We just have to construct a model that includes one individual that is virtuous but not happy in some possible world w. Everything this individual wants in w ought to be in w (by **Def 1**), but it is not the case that everything this individual wants is true in w (by **Def 2**). To show that it is not *analytically* necessary (in some wider sense) that everyone who is virtuous is happy we can use the following scenario. Sophia is a 'saint'; in the possible world w, everything Sophia wants ought to be the case. Hence, Sophia is virtuous in w (by **Def 1**). However, Sophia also wants her daughter not to be murdered and her daughter ought not to be murdered. Still, w is not an ideal world and her daughter is murdered. So, it is not the case that everything Sophia wants in w is true in w. Hence, Sophia is not happy in w (by **Def 2**). Accordingly, there is someone who is virtuous in w who is not happy in w. In conclusion, it is not the case that everyone who is virtuous is happy in w. But this possible world is conceptually conceivable, it does not include any *conceptual* contradiction. It follows that it is not (analytically) necessary that everyone who is virtuous is happy; virtue is not a sufficient condition for happiness. Q.E.D.

We can, of course, *stipulate* that 'virtue' should include 'happiness' and that we shall not call anyone virtuous if this individual is not also happy. Then it follows that it is necessary that everyone who is virtuous is happy. But this result is trivial. It does not follow that it is true that it is necessary that everyone who is virtuous is happy if we use the terms 'virtue' and 'happy' in the sense that we use these terms in the present paper. Furthermore, it does not seem to be the case that we normally use these terms in a way that makes it analytically true that there is a necessary connection between virtue and happiness. Most people do not think that it is a conceptual truth that everyone who is virtuous is happy.

> **T5.** Virtue is not a necessary condition for happiness. It is not (logically or analytically) necessary that someone is happy only if she is virtuous. Virtue is not a necessary means to happiness.[13]

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[12] One might think that this proposition is trivial since everyone accepts it and that we, therefore, do not have to spend any time on arguing for it. However, this is not obviously the case. The proposition seems to be rejected by orthodox Stoics, who believe that the wise and virtuous person is happy even on the rack. Kant thought that this Stoic view was wrong, and if the argument for **T4** is sound, he was right about this.

[13] Theorem **T5** is not 'trivially' true either. It seems to be rejected by at least some so-called Epicureans. Some ethical egoists and consequentialists might also question this proposition.

> *Proof.* If we can show that it is possible that someone is happy without being virtuous, we have established this proposition. To show that this is logically possible we just have to construct a model that includes one individual that is happy but not virtuous in some possible world w. Everything this individual wants in w is true in w (by **Def 2**), but it is not the case that everything this individual wants to be the case in w ought to be in w (by **Def 1**). To establish that it is not *analytically* necessary (in some wider sense) that someone is happy only if she is virtuous we can use the following scenario. Mr Bully is a criminal sociopath. Everything Bully wants in the possible world w is true in w. Hence, Bully is happy in w (by **Def 2**). However, it is not the case that everything Bully wants ought to be the case, for Bully wants all small business owners in the neighbourhood to pay him money for his 'protection,' and it is not the case that they ought to pay him (even though they do in fact pay him). Hence, Bully is not virtuous in w (by **Def 1**). It follows that there is someone who is happy but not virtuous in w. The world w is analytically possible; that is, it does not include any conceptual contradiction. Therefore it is not (analytically) necessary that someone is happy only if she is virtuous; virtue is not a necessary condition for happiness. Q.E.D.

T4 and **T5** show that it is possible for good people to suffer and for villains to prosper. If you are unhappy and suffer it is not necessarily your own fault, and it is not necessarily the case that everyone who prospers is worthy, according to this Kantian view. It is possible that there are people who have a perfectly good will, who want nothing that is wrong, who still suffer due to frustrated desires and unfulfilled dreams. A perfectly pure heart does not guarantee happiness. Whether or not all our desires will be fulfilled is usually not something that is entirely within our own control; it depends on what other people do and what happens in the world. Good people might be treated badly by other people and they might, for example, suffer from illnesses and accidents (even when they have done all that they should to be healthy and avoid various risks). Nor does viciousness necessarily exclude success. From **T4** and **T5** we can now immediately derive our next theorem, **T6**.

> **T6.** Virtue is neither necessary nor sufficient for happiness.

> *Proof.* **T6** follows from **T4** and **T5**. Q.E.D.

Kant wants to show not only that there are no analytical relations between virtue and happiness, but also that there are no causal relations. It is not necessarily the case that virtue causes happiness (at least not without divine intervention) and it is not necessarily the case that happiness leads to virtue. If we think of virtue and happiness as quantities that we can have more or less of, it is likely that there is a positive correlation between virtue and happiness, so that it is more likely that you will be happy if you are virtuous.[14] Yet, Kant is not primarily

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[14] Roughly, we can think of individual x as more virtuous than y if y wants more things that are forbidden than x, and we can think of x as happier than y if x's wants are fulfilled to a higher degree than are y's wants. These are rough measures of the degree of virtue and the degree of happiness, since not everything that is wrong is equally wrong and since some things a person

interested in such empirical correlations. He wants to investigate necessary and universal principles, and it does not seem to be causally necessary that virtue leads to happiness or happiness to virtue. Morality can demand that we make great personal sacrifices.

Establishing this, however, seems to be more difficult than proving **T4**–**T6**. It is not enough that we come up with some *conceivable* counter-examples; the counter-examples must be *causally possible*. If we can find some actual persons who are virtuous but not happy and some actual persons who are happy but not virtuous, it follows that there are no necessary causal connections. Still, this might be difficult since it is not certain that there ever has been anyone who is (perfectly) virtuous, nor anyone who is (perfectly) happy. If this is the case, it is vacuously true that everyone who is virtuous is happy and that everyone who is happy is virtuous (in our 'actual' world). I will not try to describe any examples of this kind in the present paper. However, there seem to be many real examples of persons who are virtuous to a high degree and who suffer a lot due to other people's viciousness or bad luck, and other quite vicious or immoral people who prosper (at least for some significant period of time).[15]

Even though virtue is neither necessary nor sufficient for happiness, Kant makes the following interesting observation:

> an upright man cannot be happy if he is not first conscious of his uprightness; for, with such a disposition, the censure that his own cast of mind would force him to bring against himself in case of a transgression, and his moral self-condemnation would deprive him of all enjoyment of the agreeableness that his state might otherwise contain… If a human being is virtuous he will certainly not enjoy life unless he is conscious of his uprightness in every action. (KpV 5:116)

It is not entirely clear what Kant means by an 'upright man' and 'uprightness' (Rechtschaffenheit), or what it means to be 'conscious' of one's uprightness. Perhaps an upright man is just a virtuous man according to Kant. I will, however, use this expression in a different sense in this paper. I will treat 'uprightness' or 'conscientiousness' as the 'converse' of virtue; that is, this concept is defined in the following way:

> **Def 3.** It is necessary that an individual x is (perfectly) upright (conscientious) iff x wants everything that ought to be.

Given this definition, we can establish our next theorem, **T7**.

> **T7.** Acting virtuously (doing the things one ought to do) is a necessary condition for happiness for every upright individual. It is necessary that if someone is

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wants are more important than other things she wants. It is beyond the scope of this paper to try to give exact definitions of what it means to be more or less virtuous or more or less happy.
[15] The examples that I describe in the proofs of **T4** and **T5** might perhaps be causally (and not only analytically) possible. If this is the case, we can use these examples to prove that there are no causally necessary connections between virtue and happiness.

upright (conscientious), then this individual is happy only if she does everything she ought to do.

Proof. Suppose that **T7** is not valid. Then there is a possible world, w, in which it is true that there is an individual, c, that is upright and happy, even though it is not true that c does everything she ought to do. Hence, there is something, X, that c ought to do in w that c does not do in w. Since c is upright, c wants to do everything she ought to do in w (by **Def 3**); and since she is happy, everything she wants in w is true in w (by **Def 2**). Accordingly, if c ought to do X, then c wants to do X in w; and if c wants to do X, then c does in fact do X in w. It follows that c wants to do X in w. Consequently, c does X in w. Yet, this is absurd. Q.E.D.

3. Virtue and the Worthiness of Being Happy

We have established that virtue is neither sufficient nor necessary for happiness. If the counter-examples above are possible, we have to accept this conclusion. However, we can show something similar, namely that there is a necessary connection between virtue and the *worthiness* of being happy. In this Section, I will first describe what I mean by this expression, and then I will prove that virtue is both sufficient and necessary for the *worthiness* of being happy. To prove this proposition, I will first establish that it is necessary that someone is worthy of happiness iff she ought to be happy. Then I will prove that it is necessary that someone ought to be happy iff she is virtuous. According to Kant:

> … morals' is not properly the doctrine of how we are to *make* ourselves happy but of how we are to become *worthy* of happiness.…

> Someone is *worthy* of possessing a thing or a state when it harmonizes with the highest good that he is in possession of it. It can now be readily seen that all worthiness depends upon moral conduct, since in the concept of the highest good this constitutes the condition of the rest (which belongs to one's state), namely, of one's share of happiness. Now, from this it follows that *morals* in itself must never be treated as a *doctrine of happiness,* that is, as instruction in how to become happy; for morals has to do solely with the rational condition *(conditio sine qua non)* of happiness and not with the means of acquiring it. (KpV 5:130)

I will now show how we can prove that it is necessary that an individual x is worthy of being happy or deserves to be happy iff x ought to be happy if we accept certain Kantian theses. According to the quote above: "Someone is *worthy* of possessing a thing or a state when it harmonizes with the highest good that he is in possession of it." But what does Kant mean by 'harmonizes with?' 'Harmonizes with' could perhaps mean the same thing as 'is consistent with.' However, I shall interpret this expression as 'is necessarily implied by' in this paper. Consequently, we can use the following definition of what it means to be worthy of something:

> **Def 4.** It is necessary that someone is worthy of possessing a thing or a state iff it is necessary that the highest good is realized only if he is in possession of it.

From this definition, we can immediately derive the following corollary:

C3. It is necessary that an individual x is worthy of happiness iff it is necessary that the highest good is realized only if x is happy.

Proof. **C3** follows immediately from **Def 4**. Q.E.D.

To establish the proposition that it is necessary that an individual x is worthy of happiness (of being happy) iff it ought to be the case that x is happy, I will first prove the following lemma:

L1. It is necessary that it ought to be the case that A iff it is necessary that, if the highest good is realized, then A obtains.

Proof. Suppose that **L1** is not valid. Then there is a possible world, w, in which it is false that it ought to be the case that A iff it is necessary that, if the highest good is realized, then A obtains. Hence, it is either the case that it ought to be the case that A even though it is not necessary that A obtains if the highest good is realized in w, or else it is true in w that it is necessary that A obtains if the highest good is realized even though it is false that it ought to be the case that A. Suppose that the first disjunct is true. Then there is a possible world, w′, that is alethically accessible from w, in which the highest good is realized even though A is false. Since the highest good is realized in w′, w′ is deontically accessible from itself. Accordingly, w′ is deontically accessible from w. Consequently, A is true in w′. But this is absurd. So, the first disjunct cannot be true. Suppose the second disjunct is true. Then there is a possible world, w′, that is deontically accessible from w, in which A is false. Since the deontic accessibility relation is included in the alethic accessibility relation, w′ is alethically accessible from w. Hence, it is true in w′ that if the highest good is realized, then A obtains. Since w′ is deontically accessible from w, and the deontic accessibility relation is Euclidean, w′ is deontically accessible from itself. It follows that the highest good is realized in w′. Therefore, A is true in w′. But this is absurd. Hence, the second disjunct cannot be true either. Q.E.D.

Now it is easy to prove the desired thesis:

C4. It is necessary that an individual x is worthy of happiness (of being happy) iff it ought to be the case that x is happy.

Proof. **C4** follows more or less immediately from **C3** and **L1**. Q.E.D.

Furthermore, I shall assume the following proposition, from which **C5** easily follows together with **C4**:

P4. It is necessary that an individual x is worthy of being happy iff x deserves to be happy.

C5. It is necessary that an individual x deserves to be happy iff it ought to be the case that x is happy.

Proof. **C5** follows immediately from **C4** and **P4**. Q.E.D.

We are now in a position to prove that virtue is a necessary and sufficient condition for the worthiness of happiness. It is necessary that someone is worthy of being happy iff she is virtuous. In other words, it is not possible that there is someone who is worthy of being happy who is not virtuous, and it is not possible

that there is someone who is virtuous who is not worthy of being happy. First, we show that it is necessary that everyone who is virtuous is worthy of being happy; then, we establish that it is necessary that someone is worthy of being happy only if she is virtuous. The main conclusion follows immediately from these two theorems.

> **T8.** Virtue is a sufficient condition for the worthiness of being happy. It is necessary that everyone who is virtuous is worthy of being happy (deserves to be happy, ought to be happy).

> *Proof.* Suppose that **T8** is not valid. Then there is a possible world, w_1, in which someone, c, is virtuous, but in which it is not the case that c is worthy of being happy. Hence, c is virtuous in w_1 and it is false that c is worthy of being happy in w_1. Hence, it is false that c ought to be happy in w_1 (by **C4**). Accordingly, there is a possible world, w_2, that is deontically accessible from w_1, in which it is true that c is not happy. Since c is not happy in w_2, it is not the case that everything c wants in w_2 is true in w_2 (by **Def 2**). So, there is something, X, that c wants that is not true in w_2. In other words, it is true in w_2 that c wants X and it is false in w_2 that X. Since it is true that c is virtuous in w_1, everything c wants in w_1 ought to be in w_1 (by **Def 1**). Hence, if c wants X, then it ought to be that case that X in w_1. Since w_2 is deontically accessible from w_1, w_2 is also alethically accessible from w_1. Therefore, w_1 is alethically accessible from w_2 (for the alethic accessibility relation is an equivalence relation). Hence, c wants X in w_1. Consequently, it ought to be the case that X in w_1. It follows that X is true in w_2. But this is absurd. Q.E.D.

Since we have established both **T8** and **T4**, it follows that **T8** is compatible with **T4**. It is possible that virtue is a sufficient condition for the worthiness of being happy even though it is not a sufficient condition for happiness itself. Someone might be worthy of happiness without being happy. In other words, it is possible that someone deserves to be happy even though she is not happy. Only in a possible world where everyone who ought to be happy is happy, is it certain that everyone who is virtuous is happy.

> **T9.** Virtue is a necessary condition for the worthiness of being happy. It is necessary that someone is worthy of being happy (deserves to be happy, ought to be happy) only if she is virtuous.

> *Proof.* Suppose that **T9** is not valid. Then there is a possible world, w_1, in which it is false that everyone who is worthy of being happy is virtuous. Hence, there is someone, c, who is worthy of being happy in w_1 who is not virtuous in w_1. Therefore, c ought to be happy in w_1 (by **C4**). Since c is not virtuous in w_1, it is not the case that everything c wants in w_1 ought to be in w_1 (by **Def 1**). Accordingly, there is something, X, that c wants in w_1 even though it is false that it ought to be the case that X in w_1. It follows that there is a possible world, w_2, that is deontically accessible from w_1, in which X is false. Since c ought to be happy in w_1, and w_2 is deontically accessible from w_1, c is happy in w_2. Hence, everything c wants in w_2 is true in w_2 (by **Def 2**). So, if c wants it to be the case that X in w_2, then X is true in w_2. Since w_2 is deontically accessible from w_1, w_2 is alethically accessible from w_1. Hence, c wants it to be the case that X in w_2. It follows that X is true in w_2. But this is absurd. Q.E.D.

Note that **T9** does not say the same thing as **T3**. In **T3**, 'ought' has wide scope; in **T9**, it has narrow scope. Necessary propositions are necessarily equivalent. Given the assumptions that we have made in this paper, both **T9** and **T3** are necessarily true; so, they are necessarily equivalent. But this is trivial. Two sentences may be necessarily equivalent and yet say different things.

Since we have shown that both **T9** and **T5** are valid, it follows that **T9** is compatible with **T5**. It is possible that virtue is a necessary condition for the worthiness of being happy even though it is not a necessary condition for happiness itself. Someone might be happy without being worthy of happiness, without being virtuous. Only in a possible world where everyone who is happy ought to be happy, is it certain that everyone who is happy is virtuous.

> **T10.** Virtue is a necessary and sufficient condition for the worthiness of being happy. It is necessary that someone is worthy of being happy (deserves to be happy, ought to be happy) iff she is virtuous.

> *Proof*. **T10** follows immediately from **T8** and **T9**. Q.E.D.

From **T10** we can immediately derive the following corollaries:

> **C6**. It is necessary that someone is worthy of being happy (deserves to be happy, ought to be happy) iff she is a morally good individual, human being, or person.

> **C7**. It is necessary that someone is worthy of being happy (deserves to be happy, ought to be happy) iff she has a good will.

> *Proof*. Both **C6** and **C7** follow from **T10**, **C4**, **C5**, **P1**, and **P2**. Q.E.D.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have developed a Kantian view of the highest good and the relation between virtue and happiness. I have proved several Kantian propositions, among them the thesis that the highest good is realized only if every virtuous individual is happy, the view that virtue is neither necessary nor sufficient for happiness, and the proposition that virtue is both necessary and sufficient for the *worthiness* of being happy. I have shown that the highest good ought to be realized and that it ought to be that everyone who is virtuous is happy. To prove these claims, I have used techniques developed by modern deontic logicians. Hence, we have been able to show that all theorems follow from our assumptions with necessity. Consequently, we must accept the conclusions, or else, in every case, reject at least one premise. Furthermore, since the assumptions we have used in the proofs appear to be plausible, we seem to have very good reasons to accept the conclusions. In other words, the Kantian propositions we have discussed in this paper appear to be very well justified.

A classic question that has been asked by philosophers for thousands of years is the following: Why should I be moral? One possible answer is that one should be moral because being moral is a means to the end of happiness. But this is not Kant's answer. It is not necessarily the case that everyone who is moral, who has a good will, and who is virtuous is happy. Morality is not a means to happiness,

but it is a means to the worthiness of being happy. According to Kant, we do not have an immediate duty to promote our own happiness, the aim of morality being not personal satisfaction, but rather virtue and the good will. The important question is not "How do I become happy?" but "How do I become good?" or "How do I become worthy of happiness?".

Doing the things that you ought to do is therefore not (necessarily) doing the things that will make you happy, but doing the things that are necessary to create a possible world where those who are worthy of happiness are happy. Virtue (the good will, morality) is the supreme condition of the highest good, which is virtue and happiness together; it is not necessarily a sufficient condition for being happy. If the arguments in this paper are sound, as they clearly seem to be, this Kantian view is correct.[16]

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