Chapter 11: Commanders Are the Foundation

1. Functions of the Commander

- Leadership
  - Visionary
  - Strategic
  - Empowering
- Communication
  - Clear
  - Consistent
  - Effective
- Decision Making
  - Quick
  - Bold
  - Ethical
- Resource Management
  - Efficient
  - Effective
  - Sustainable

The commander's role is crucial in ensuring the success of any organization. They must lead by example, communicate clearly and consistently, make quick and bold decisions, and manage resources efficiently and effectively. Ethical decision making is also essential to maintain trust and credibility. Leaders who excel in these areas can inspire their teams to achieve greatness.
cause," so Allyn contends, "in the class of obligatory law, it is the first law or rule." 8

Another medieval philosophical theologian, Andrew of Neuchtâtel, constructed an argument in support of the divine command position which draws an analogy between the metaphysical notion of God as "first being" and the ethical notion of God as "first good." 9

These types of arguments in defense of an ethics of divine commands may leave the impression that this ethical theory belongs to the "God of the philosophers." However, divine command ethics has a solid foundation in the life of the religious faith community.

A biblical basis has been claimed for an ethics of divine commands. The twelfth-century theologian Emil Brunner remarks that the search for the basis of the Good "led us out of a certain elevatemonistic and anthropocentric definition of the Good -- away from the Aristotelian and Thomist conception (that the Good is that which is adapted to human nature) -- back to the truth of the Bible, namely, not only that which God wills is good, but what we want when we will it." 10 The same position is articulated by another twelfth-century Protestant theologian, Carl F. H. Henry: "This notion of an 'intrinsically good' is alien to biblical theology. The God of Hebrew-Christian revelation is the ground of all ethics; He is the supreme rule of right. He defines the whole content of morality by his own revealed will." 11

Like Brunner, Henry contrasts biblical ethics with the natural law tradition: "The good in Hebrew-Christian ethicistic ethics is not that which is adapted to human nature, but it is that to which the Creator obliges human nature." 12

Exactly what the Bible serves as a grounding for an ethics of divine commands? In the Old Testament there are cases in which holy persons perform actions which are normally regarded as morally wrong. These include Abraham preparing to kill Isaac, the Israelites despoiling (i.e., stealing from) the Egyptians on their way out of Egypt, the prophet Hosea committing adultery by taking a "wife of fornication," Samson killing himself, Jacob lying to deceive his father, the Israelites divorcing foreign wives, and the patriarchs engaging in polygamy. These are cases in which the action violates a prohibition laid down by God himself in the Ten Commandments, yet is performed under a divine command and is not considered morally wrong. 13

The most straightforward interpretation of these cases is to conclude that "divine commands can and do determine the moral status of actions." 14 In other words, according to biblical ethics, the thirteenth-century divine command ethicist Andrew of Neuchtâtel describes them as actions which, because per se by the law of nature and by the dictate of natural reason, appear to be prohibited," contending that it is "impossible that such actions not be sins with respect to the absolute power of God." 15

Grounding for an ethics of divine commands can also be found in the New Testament. The contemporary philosopher Philip Quinn finds such a foundation in the well-known command of Jesus to love one's neighbor as one loves oneself.

The love of neighbor which Jesus speaks is unnatural for humans in their present condition. It does not spontaneously engage their affections, and so training, self-discipline and, perhaps, even divine assistance are required to make its achievement a real possibility. For most of us most of the time, love of neighbor is not an attractive goal, and, if it were optional, we would not pursue it. It must therefore be an obligatory love with the feel of something that represents a curb or check on our natural desires and predilections. Because the divine command conception holds that all obligations depend on God's will, such "obligatorily love is properly generated as subject to being commanded by a divine authority. It is, then, the assurance that the love of neighbor the Gospel's proposer to us it a commanded love." 16

Natural law ethics base righteousness and wrongness on human nature. Quinn essentially makes the point that the obligations to love all other people as we love ourselves (an obligation which natural law ethics in the Christian tradition would not deny) does not seem to be derivable from our human nature. Quinn describes the love of neighbor which Jesus commands as "unnatural" for humans in their present condition, as something which does not spontaneously engage our affections, as something that represents a curb on our "natural desires and predilections." Since not all people are "attracted to love," Jesus, that is to say, God, is asking us to love one another in a manner which is not "natural." 17

In other words, Christians "seem to be committed to the view that the obligation to love the neighbor as oneself is a duty imposed by a direct divine command." 18 And since "this commanded love is foundational for Christian ethics" and "what sets Christian ethics apart from all its rivals," Quinn proposes that we "find in what is most distinctive about the Christian ethics of the Gospel another reason for the Christians to favor a divine command conception of moral obligation." 19

When defining ethics of divine commands, we stated that it is often expressed in terms of right and wrong being determined by the will of God. Down to the present day, conformity to the will of God is an important theme in Western spirituality. Hubert van Zeller, a monk at Downside Abbey in England, begins a book of popular spirituality with these words:

There can hardly be a better provocation in the spiritual life than that of noting everything in an expression of the will of God. Pleasure is "to God wills" and "I must be the will of God." 20

8 Ibid., p. 57.
9 Ibid., p. 50.
12 Ibid., p. 186.
17 Ibid., pp. 506-7.
2 | Chapter on Material Ethics
Eros is Based on Natural Law

In discussing the concept of eros, it is essential to comprehend the fundamental principles that underlie its manifestation. Eros, as described by philosophers and thinkers throughout history, is often depicted as a force that is both all-consuming and transformative. It is a natural phenomenon that is deeply intertwined with the human experience, driving individuals towards acts of creation, destruction, and transformation.

As a force that is both powerful and unpredictable, eros has been the subject of countless philosophical and artistic interpretations. From the ancient Greek philosopher Plato to the contemporary artist Andy Warhol, eros has been celebrated and scrutinized as a force that shapes the human condition.

In conclusion, the study of eros necessitates an exploration of its multifaceted nature, its historical context, and its implications for contemporary society. Through this exploration, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between eros and the human spirit.