Title: A comparative study of the basis of morality in the writings of Ellen G. White and in three current selected models of morality

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Abstract:

How do you know you are doing right which you make an ethical decision? Since there are different norms (or bases) of right and wrong in our contemporary world, on what basis should we formulate our ethical decision? The primary purpose of this study is to compare the basis of morality presented in the writings of Ellen G. White with the three current selected models of morality. It is to determine whether Ellen White’s model is different of unique from them.

The three current models have been presented by using selected representative writings from each model. The teleological model represented by Bentham and Mill (utilitarianism) determines the basis of right and wrong from the calculated results of pleasure or pain. It is known as the principle of utility- “the greatest happiness of the greatest number.” Kant’s “categorical imperative” says that a moral action is an action done for the respect of the moral law, or duty for duty’s sake. Niebuhr’s responsibility model states that a moral action is the fitting response to God’s action upon an individual.

Ellen White’s model of morality has God’s will expressed in His laws as its basis of right and wrong. God’s law examines not only actions, but also every motive.
From an Adventist perspective, Ellen White’s model is unique from the other three models for the following reasons. (1) It is theocentric and Bible based. (2) It is comprehensive. (3) It is holistic. (4) It explains human predicaments and provides solutions. (5) It draws attention to the greater issues in morality. (6) It provides complete guidance.