

STUDY QUESTIONS
for the *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Euthyphro*

Questions to Consider when Reading the *Apology*:

1. Socrates suggests that there are two sets of accusations which are being brought against him. What are the accusations? What are the differences between the two sets? Why were they brought against him (do you think there might be some unstated reasons)?
2. Socrates claims to have a divine mission. What is the mission? Why did he choose to die rather than give it up? If the divine mission calls him to action here on earth, isn't allowing himself to be executed a way of giving it up? Why or why not?
3. Socrates claims that a good person cannot be harmed by a worse person, and suggests that a person who does harm is worse off than the victim of the harm (30d). What are his reasons for believing this? Do you agree?
4. At 26a, Socrates says "Either I do not corrupt the young, or, if I do, it is unwillingly...." What is the argument which leads him to this conclusion?
5. Socrates believes that wickedness is worse than death ("death is something I couldn't care less about...my whole concern is not to do anything unjust or impious" (32d).) Is this belief connected to the claim that "the unexamined life is not worth living"(38a)? How are they connected? What's wrong with an unexamined life?
6. Does Socrates have wisdom or not? What is the nature of his wisdom? Does he believe he has wisdom?
7. Is Socrates' defense convincing? How would you have voted at his trial?

Questions to consider when reading the *Crito* (recommended text):

1. Socrates argues in the *Apology* that if he were put in the position of having to choose between obeying the authority of the laws and the authority of god, he would be right to choose the authority of god. Yet in the *Crito*, Socrates claims that we are bound by our just agreements, and that he has made an agreement with the city to obey its laws. Can these two positions be reconciled? How?
2. What reasons does Socrates give for thinking that he has made a just agreement with the city to obey its laws?
3. What reasons does Socrates give for thinking that breaking the laws of the city cause the city harm?
4. Why does Socrates think that doing harm is never right, even in return for harm? (Consider in connection with this: why does Socrates think that doing injustice is never right, even in return for injustice?)

5. What reasons does Socrates give in the *Crito* for disregarding the views of the majority? Compare his views on this with the views of a cultural or moral relativist.

Questions to consider when reading the *Euthyphro*:

1. At 5d, Socrates asks Euthyphro "What is the pious?". On what basis does Socrates reject Euthyphro's answer: "...to do what I am doing now, to prosecute the wrongdoer...?"
2. Socrates continues to press the question "what is the pious?". On what basis does Socrates reject Euthyphro's answer at 7a1: "What is dear to the gods is pious...."?
3. What is Socrates interested in finding something "the same and alike" in every pious action? Do you think there is something "the same and alike" in every pious (or just or courageous) action?
4. Do Socrates and Euthyphro reach any conclusions about piety? If so, what are the conclusions? Do they agree on a definition of piety?

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