

Paper Reference(s) 9RS0/02
Pearson Edexcel Level 3 GCE

Religious Studies

Advance

PAPER 2: Religion and Ethics

Monday 19 June 2023 – Afternoon

Source Booklet

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Source A

When we talk about ethics, we mostly mean a series of rules and laws and principles by which we act and which tell us what to do. Mostly we take it that ethics classifies words and actions into things which are good and things which are bad, and we take it that the goodness and the badness belong to the thing as such. On the whole this is meant to simplify things and to make life easy. It means that we have got, so we think, a series of prefabricated rules and laws and principles, which we accept and apply. It saves us from the difficult and the often dangerous task of making our own judgments and deciding things for ourselves. But ... Fletcher's basic principle is that there is nothing which is universally right or universally wrong; there is nothing which is intrinsically good or intrinsically bad. Goodness and badness ... are only things which happen to actions in different situations; they are only descriptions of things in different circumstances; they are not properties, they are predicates.

(Source: adapted from Ethics in a Permissive Society, by William Barclay, Collins, 1971, Chapter 4, Situation Ethics, Edexcel Anthology)