

## End of the Text (Plato's Cave)

- What is good according to Plato? How do we attain it/break free of chains?
  - Good is very related to enlightenment – The light of the visible world is very connected to good. It also points out that what is good is sketchy and consists of a grey line – you need to think long and hard to know what is good.
  - Good is what intellectuals should do – however, good should be more related to morals than intelligence.
  - Good comes only after knowledge – good appears last of all, if at all. You have to look for good, and strive for it. Does good govern the world? Good is above the creator in this text.
  - According to Plato, good is freeing yourself of ignorance. As long as one is open to seeing things, you need to be able to see it.
  - The idea of good is the last thing to be discovered and is the creator of all good things and beautiful things.
- Group Discussion
- Good has to do with reason and truth - enlightenment is the good. Enlightenment and good are almost synonymous – when you're in the cave, you are ignorant. You first need to be enlightened, then you can become good.
- Plato is saying that the differences between good and bad and desiring good things will allow you to be good – Plato's saying you aren't naturally born good – you need to be taught, and have to be freed from the chains.
- Is ignorance the opposite of good? – Plato thought more that the prisoners were bad, but it wasn't because they were willingly bad – once you're told about the heightened reality, and if you still live in the ignorance, that is much worse than just being ignorant.
- In the text, Plato says that the leg of the fire in the cave is the sun. If we transplant that to our world, how do we reach that enlightenment if we can't just walk out of a cave? Plato, as a philosopher, thinks of himself as enlightened.
- Good is a higher being – it is capable of creating light or beautiful – it's a creator. To apply that to the allegory, the prisoners are evil and they're underground. This is about understanding goodness. You need to make an effort to be good.
- Do you have to escape to become enlightened? – escape from internal or physical bondage? – in the story of Buddha, Buddha was in a similar state (but in luxury) and he had to break free of his chains – he was also a prisoner – had to go out into the real world.
- When we're living in a world with no real thing to escape from, how do we become enlightened?
- Enlightenment is different for everyone.

- Different people's versions of reality and enlightenment are not as important as the journey – to learn to be humble and to strive for enlightenment is more important than actually getting there.
- Knowledge is good – the more enlightened you get, the better person you are. But what's knowledge? – you could know a lot in the shadowy world, but not know much in the real world.
- Plato's idea of really being enlightened is to see yourself in your own proper place. What does that really mean? – For us today, what's above us – he says that we're in a cave. Where we literally are – seems like an analogy, but it doesn't explain what the goal is.
- In order for us to comprehend everything, we need to take a step back.
- There is a rejection of the material world as we know it. If we try and transport that to our world, then the higher world would have to be purely intellectual – would have to give up all physical things.