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## **The Influence of Plato's Teachings, Sermon on the Mount and Forgiveness on Me**

"Ignorance is the curse of God; knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven" (William Shakespeare). In this quote, William Shakespeare outlines the correlation between knowledge and religion. Knowledge brings people closer to God, it steers individuals towards a life filled with contentment. I feel very fortunate that I got the opportunity to receive a Catholic school education. Binding academics with religious instructions pave a way to happiness and success. This course has helped me fulfill the expectations of an Ontario Catholic school graduate. The knowledge I have attained from this course has made me a better person. I began to evaluate each decision I make with regards to what God would want me to do. The teachings of Plato, Sermon on the Mount and forgiveness helped me become a reflective, creative and holistic thinker who makes responsible decisions with an informed conscience for the common good.

To begin with, the teachings of Plato helped me reach the Catholic school graduate expectation of becoming a reflective thinker who makes responsible decisions with an informed conscience for the common good. Decisions we make on a daily basis affect the people around us. We should ensure that our decisions are made based upon our moral sense of making the world a better place. Plato is a Greek philosopher who wrote many philosophical dramas to convey his concerns on matters such as existence, knowledge, and value. Plato urges us to progress beyond all opinions and move towards an ethical reality. He conveys this message through his philosophical drama about a character named Socrates. Socrates said, "...let no day pass without discussing goodness and all the other subjects about which you hear me talking...examining both myself and others is really the very best thing a man can do...life without this sort of examination is not worth living...". Plato, through Socrates, stresses the importance of engaging in ethics in our day to day lives. This teaching of Plato has helped me achieve the Catholic school graduate expectation because it has made me rethink the meaning of "good". Our immediate desires are not the good. From Socrates story, I came to a conclusion that keeping in mind the struggles and happiness of others is a part of the idea of good. Socrates story helps me make responsible decisions with an informed conscience for the common good. I can apply Plato's teachings and the Catholic school graduate expectation into my life through the little decisions I make every day. For example, using a reusable water bottle instead of a plastic water bottle can better our society. Plastic water bottles are made from polyethylene terephthalate which uses high levels of fossil fuels to produce. Fossil fuels have an atrocious effect on the environment. They release excess carbon dioxide emissions which impart to climate change and global warming. Plato's urge to engage in ethics shown through his philosophical drama on Socrates, inspires us to do good for ourselves and others. Making a simple decision, such as investing in reusable water bottles instead of plastic ones, can make this world safer for humanity. Ongoing generations will be able to live in a world that is clean and secure. Thus, the teachings of Plato helped me reach the catholic school graduate expectation. I have begun to reflect on decisions that I make every day so the outcome of my actions will be at an advantage for us all.

Secondly, the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount have helped me reach the Catholic school graduate expectation of becoming a creative thinker who makes responsible decisions with an informed conscience for the common good. Sermon on the Mount is an important story a part of

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the Catholic faith. Some of the main teachings of Jesus Christ were conveyed during the Sermon on the Mount. The beatitudes are teachings and blessings recounted by Jesus during the Sermon on the Mount. The beatitudes reflect all things that are to be held in order to be good. The beatitudes gave me an insight on the Catholic school graduate expectation. Despite being a part of the Sikh faith, I found that the Sermon on the Mount gave me a creative insight to the way I should be making my decisions. Creativity is to embrace originality and to make unique links between dissimilar ideas. Although Christianity and Sikhism can be different in many ways, similarities are vividly evident depending on how you look at the religions. During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied". In Sikhism, a similar idea is brought upon by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He outlines the importance of seeking justice for all those prosecuted. In this beatitude and Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings, the importance of righteousness and justice for all is expressed. This idea of endearment will bring you closer to God. To be righteous, in a biblical sense, is to respect the creation of God, and to build a better world for everyone. Doing this would mean to give justice to all those who are mistreated despite being children of God. I can apply this teaching into my life and use the idea of creative thinking to make decisions with respects to the common good. For example, the mistreatment of the LGBTQ community. I have made a decision to be righteous and bring justice to all those who are mistreated because of their homosexuality. This issue can only be solved if we think outside the box. I have made a connection between humor and this issue. A creative solution to abolish the hate towards the LGBTQ community is to use humor to educate others on the importance of respecting one another despite differences. Humor stimulates active learning and is something all people can understand. Standing up for the greater community is an act of God. Thus, the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount helped me reach the Catholic school graduate expectation. I have begun to use a creative thinking process to make decisions, while keeping a conscience for the common good.

Lastly, learning about forgiveness has helped me reach the Catholic school graduate expectation of becoming a holistic thinker who makes responsible decisions with an informed conscience for the common good. To be a holistic thinker is to take in all aspects of a situation. I learnt that forgiveness has many different aspects to itself. Forgiving means to abolish negative energy from yourself, recompense the wrongdoer, and overall brings you closer to God. This teaching of forgiveness has helped me become a holistic thinker and make decisions that benefit the greater community. An extraordinary depiction of this is Justin Trudeau. First Nations dealt with years of abuse from the government. They were stripped of their identities and westernized by residential schools which were put in place by the Canadian government. However, the First Nations received a well-deserved apology by Justin Trudeau. He took a stand and apologized on behalf of all Canadians and previous leaders of the Canadian government. To add on, many decisions were made by the government to put in place benefits for the First Nations. Many people were impacted by this apology. It left Canadians guilty, the government baffled and the First Nations surprised. Justin Trudeau shined a light upon the mistreatment of First Nations, an issue many seem to ignore. He outlined the importance of forgiveness and its impacts through his speech. Thus, learning about forgiveness has helped me reach the Catholic school graduate expectation. I have begun to use holistic thinking to make responsible decisions with an informed morality for the common good.

To conclude, the teachings of Plato, Sermon on the Mount and forgiveness helped me become a reflective, creative and holistic thinker who makes responsible decisions with an informed conscience for the common good. From this course I have assimilated more than imaginable.

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While fulfilling the expectations of an Ontario Catholic school graduate, I have also learnt the importance of binding religion with education. Not only did I learn more about the Catholic faith, but I learnt how to make educated decisions by developing different beliefs and ideologies with respects to everyone in this world.

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