Chapter 1

The Euthyphro
Defining Philosophical Terms
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Plato (427?–347 B.C.)
  – Greek philosopher
  – Student of Socrates
  – Established the Academy in Athens

• The first of the major schools of ancient Greece
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Plato
  – Exerted more influence on the development of Western philosophy than any other writer

• Writings
  – *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Republic, Protagoras, Gorgias*, and *Philebus*
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Characters
  – Socrates and Euthyphro

• Scene
  – Hall of Justice
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Euthyphoro and Socrates meet in the king’s hall.

• Socrates tells Euthyphoro he is being prosecuted by Meletus for
  – Corrupting the youth by
    • Inventing new gods
    • Not believing in the old ones
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

- Euthyphro tells Socrates he is prosecuting his father for murder.
- Socrates asks if the victim was family.
- Euthyphro replies that it doesn’t matter
  - The question is did the murderer kill justly or not
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Euthyphoro’s father killed a slave.
  – He bound the slave’s hands and feet then threw him into a ditch
  – Father sent a messenger to ask the priest what to do with the slave
  – Neglected the man while the messenger was gone and he died
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Euthyphro tells Socrates his family asserts his father
  – Did not kill the man at all
  – Even if his father did kill him
    the man was a murderer himself

• His family is calling him an impious son to for prosecuting his father.
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Socrates asks Euthyphro if he understands
  – Divine things and piety and impiety so accurately that
    • He can bring his father to justice
      – Without fear he is doing something impious
  • Euthyphro says he defiantly does.
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

- Euthyphro defines piety as
  - Prosecuting the unjust individual who has committed
    - Murder or sacrilege, or any other such crime
  - What is pleasing to the gods
  - What the gods love
The Euthyphro: Defining Philosophical Terms

• Euthyphoro defines impiety as
  – Not prosecuting an unjust individual
  – What is not pleasing to the gods
  – What the gods hate