

The Crito is a portion of the story of the trial and execution of Socrates. Plato is writing about a conversation between Socrates and his friend Crito in which Crito urges Socrates to escape from prison and flee his execution. In this story Socrates and Crito both use explanation and logic to argue their positions.

(43) Socrates awakes to find his dear friend Crito has come to visit him at the prison. Socrates asks why Crito has come so early even though he does not know exactly what time it is. Socrates is surprised that his friend is allowed to see him in prison. Crito tells him that the guards are friendly to him and also that he has been watching Socrates sleep for some time and is surprised at how peaceful he seems in spite of his present situation. Crito expresses that in the past and now he has wondered why Socrates is so happy. Socrates tells him the first premise for his argument concerning his execution. He says that it would not be right for a man of his age to be angry about dying.

Crito's Reasoning

(43b) **Crito's first Premise:** Other men of old age experience misfortunes
Premise: Their age does not prevent them from being angry about their fate
Conclusion: Socrates should resent his fate regardless of his age or his misfortunes

(43-44b) Socrates agrees with Crito. Crito tells Socrates he has bad news. Crito believes the ship from Delos will arrive later that day and Socrates will be executed the following day. Socrates says that it is for the best, but he does not agree with Crito that the ship will arrive later that day but instead the next day. He claims that he had a dream where a beautiful woman dressed in white told him that he will "arrive at fertile Phthia on the third day". The quote expressed in Socrates dream is referring to the ninth book of "The Iliad" when Achilles threatens Agamemnon that he will return home and arrive on the third day "in fertile Phthia". The dream is an analogy for when Socrates believes his soul will find it's home and he feels it will be on the third day (from the present day).

(44b-c) **Crito's argument: Premise:** Crito will be deprived of an irreplaceable friend if Socrates dies.
Premise: People will think that Crito could have saved Socrates with money but did not.
Conclusion: Crito will suffer multiple misfortunes because of Socrates' death, not only the loss of a friend but also a bad reputation among the majority of people, for valuing money more than friendship.

(44c) **Socrates counter argument: Premise:** You should only pay attention to the reasonable people.
Premise: The reasonable people will believe things were done correctly.
Conclusion: Therefore you should not care what the majority of people think.

(44d) Crito claims that it is important to pay attention to what the majority of people think because they can inflict the most evil on someone who is slandered among them. Socrates claims that if the majority could inflict the most evil than they would also be capable of the greatest good, but they cannot do either. Instead they inflict things upon people haphazardly.

Comment [dp1]: ??

Comment [dp2]: Assumed/understood premise: Crito does not want this. (Modus Tollens)

Comment [dp3]: This is an additional part of moving to the conclusion: To not save a friend and instead prefer money, is poorly thought of (even though mistaken) and will lead to a bad reputation. (Crito again focuses on consequences as "the many" do and ignores the question of justice.)

Comment [dp4]: Correct generalization of the previous premises and needs the implicit premise that this is to be avoided (again, appeal to consequence and what matters to the majority.)

Comment [dp5]: This is OK, but you have included/restated all the premises in this. The precise conclusion is: **Escape and avoid death.**

Comment [dp6]: conclusion

Comment [dp7]: Premise indicator

Comment [dp8]: Premise (implied premise: You should avoid having evil done to you)

Comment [dp9]: premise

Comment [dp10]: premise

Comment [dp11]: Show the premise/conclusion relationships in these statements as indicated above (plus the premise the many cannot make one wise, the greatest good, or foolish, the greatest evil) to the final conclusion that paying attention to what they think is not important (setting up what is yet to be said about what IS important, namely, wisdom about justice and virtue).

(44e-46e) Crito agrees with Socrates. Crito then makes an argument for Socrates to escape. He also anticipates that Socrates is refraining from escaping for fear of the repercussions it will have on his friends as well as the loss of his property or other punishments. Socrates admits he does have these things in mind. Crito explains to Socrates that the guards require little money to allow Socrates to escape and the money is available. Also there are many places Socrates will be welcome to stay including a place in Thessaly where Crito's friends will keep him safe.

Comment [dp12]: This is the conclusion of the entire line of reasoning by Crito by appeal to consequence. Socrates will show that consequences only matter insofar as they are in line with or guided by justice.

(45c-d) Crito gives an explanation of why he believes Socrates is wrong in giving up his life. **A)** He should not hasten his fate as his enemies wish. **B)** He is betraying his sons for leaving them orphans and not educating them. **C)** Choosing death is the easier path and as man who claims to care for virtue, Socrates should not choose the easier path.

(45e-46b) Crito explains that he is ashamed on behalf of Socrates and his friends (including himself) for many reasons **A)** the trial should not have come to court. **B)** The way the trial was handled. **C)** The horrible result of the trial. **D)** The cowardice of all parties involved if Socrates is not saved.

(46) Crito makes his final plea to Socrates to escape tonight, because it is his last opportunity.

Comment [dp13]: Because escaping is right and will avoid death and because this will be the last chance to do this, Conclusion: He must escape tonight.

Socrates' Reasons for his Refusal

(46b) Socrates acknowledges his friends eagerness, but he wants to examine the situation just as he has done throughout his life. He will only listen to arguments that he can reason are the best. Even in light of his current fate Socrates does not want to discard the arguments he used in court because they have the same value now.

(47) **Premise:** One must not value all the opinions of men, but some and not others.

Premise: One should value some people's opinions and not others.

Premise: One should value the good opinions, and not the bad ones.

Premise: Good opinions are those of wise man and not bad people.

Implied Conclusion: One should not value everyone's opinion.

(47b-47d) **Analogy/Premise:** A man engaged in physical training should pay attention to his trainer's opinion, and not the opinion of others.

Premise: He must act accordingly with the praise and blame of his trainer

Premise: If he disobeys the trainer and values the opinions of the many (whom are not trained in physical training) he will suffer harm to his body.

Sub-conclusion: With other matters, such as justice, good/bad, we should follow only the opinions of the person who has knowledge of these things.

(47d-48b) **Continuing the Analogy/ Premise:** If we ruin our body by not following the opinion of the trainer life is not worth living.

Premise: If we are corrupted by unjust actions instead of benefited by just actions life is not worth living.

Premise: The part of us concerned with justice is more valuable than are bodies.

Conclusion: Therefore if we are corrupted with unjust actions than life is not living (even more

so than if we corrupt our bodies.)

The Good Life

(48) Socrates explains **A)** “The many are able put us to death.” **B)** The most important thing is not life, but it is living the good life, **C)** the good life is the same as the beautiful life and the just life.

(48c) Socrates will now examine if it is right for him to escape. He has already explained that the good life and the just life are the same, **Therefore:** If it is not just to escape than it is not more important that Socrates’ life and he will not do it.

Note: Socrates asks Crito several times if their values and opinions should change because of the present circumstances. Socrates holds that what he has believed his whole life will not change because he is now facing death and Crito agrees.

(49-49e) **Premise:** One must never do wrong willingly and is harmful and shameful to do so for the wrongdoer.

Premise: When wronged, one must never inflict wrong in return (since one must never do wrong).

Premise: Injuring someone is the same as wrongdoing.

Premise: When one has come to an agreement with another he/she should stick to it and otherwise he is injuring that person.

(50) **Conclusion:** If Socrates escapes without the city’s permission he is injuring people and cheating on his agreement.

(50-50b) Escaping his judgment would injure the laws of the city-state because **A)** The verdicts of the court will have been nullified by a private individual, **B)** It will create the question of “which orders of the courts shall be carried out.”

(50b-51b) Socrates acknowledges that he could say that the city has wronged because their decision was not right. But according to the previous premise this is nullified because “when wronged, one must never inflict wrong in return.”

Premise: Socrates (and other citizens) is under an agreement with his city to respect the judgments the law comes too.

Premise: It was through the city-state that Socrates was born, and educated.

Premise: Socrates is the offspring of the city-state and just as he was not on equal footing with his father in regards to right and wrong as a child, he is not on equal footing now with the city-state.

Premise: A child is not right in retaliating for punishment he receives from his father.

Sub-Conclusion: One must obey the commands of their city-state and it is impious not to do so.

(51d-52d) **Premise:** The law gives a citizen the right to leave the city-state if the laws do not please him/her.

Premise: If he/she stays then they have come to an agreement to obey the laws of that particular

Comment [dp14]: The exact phrase is “just agreement.” By using this phrase we eliminate any bad agreements that are questionable with regard to whether we have an obligation to do bad because we have agreed to it. In other words, justice is more important than agreements and is what makes reasonable and morally binding agreements binding. This is also why when morality and law conflict, one has a moral duty to refuse to follow it, BUT to also suffer the punishment. It is the duty of a citizen by virtue of the “social contract” to follow the law, but it is also never right to do anything unjust, including carrying out an unjust law (which Socrates in fact refused to do as retold in the Apology). He must persuade or obey. To do otherwise is to put himself above the law, as a law unto himself, which completely contradicts the relationship entered into with the collective.

city-state.

Premise: If one does wrong he can either persuade the city-state he in fact was right, or pay the punishment.

Premise: Socrates has never left Athens, so he is therefore a citizen of that city-state.

Conclusion: Socrates must accept the punishment inflicted on him by the court of Athens.

(52b-53) **Premise:** At the beginning of Socrates' trial he could have assessed his penalty at exile, and left Athens.

Premise: Leaving now would be against the city's wishes.

Premise: Socrates prided himself on accepting death over exile.

Conclusion: It is wrong to escape now that the court has sentenced Socrates to death.

Comment [dp15]: Part of the final conclusion

(53b-54b) Socrates explains further how escaping would produce a bad outcome, **A)** His friends will be in danger of exile, disfranchisement or lose of their property. **B)** Socrates will strengthen the conviction of his accusers by destroying the laws of Athens, which is evidence that he is capable of corrupting the young. **C)** Socrates will not be accepted in lawful, just city-states because he will be thought of as someone who does not obey the laws. **D)** Socrates will be thought of as someone so greedy for life that he disobeyed his own values and his city's laws. **E)** His children will either be brought up with him in another city-state as strangers, or stay in Athens where they will also suffer and he will not be with them.

(54b-end) Socrates concludes that he must value goodness over everything else. He claims that when he arrives in Hades he will have this as his defense. Overall, the voice of reason keeps resounding in his head and it is telling him he must not escape.

Comment [dp16]: Yes. This is the final conclusion.

YOU CORRECTLY IDENTIFY THE FINAL CONCLUSION: I MUST NOT ESCAPE (Since the question was: Which ought I to do, escape or not?)

PREMISE: because it is wrong/unjust (subconclusion of previous arguments)

PREMISE: because it has bad practical consequences that are themselves unjust (subconclusion of previous argument).

PREMISE: none of crito's arguments succeed to the contrary (subconclusion of previous arguments. (all good reasons are against it, none are for it)

The lesson in all this that comes down through many subsequent thinkers such as Thoreau, Ghandi, and King are the detailed sub-arguments about the relation between the individual and the collective that support the final conclusion. THAT is what is powerful.

Comments: Although you have captured the general lines of reasoning well, I have made a few comments in the first pages on how to more precisely parse and diagram these arguments. The same would apply to some of the rest, as well.

Grade: A-