Socrates, who was born & lived in Athens, wrote no philosophical treatises but his influence on development of philosophy was so powerful that all philosophy before him has come to be known as “Presocratic.” Evidently, he had a compelling personality which attracted aristocratic young men & made him welcome in prominent Athenian circles. It is common to assign the method & doctrines of Plato’s early period to Socrates. In fact, some say that the theory of Forms, prominent in *Phaedo*, was invented by Socrates. But Socrates’s questioning was perceived as threatening & rebellious. In 399 B.C he was charged with both corrupting the youth of Athens & not recognizing the gods of the city. Once convicted, he was condemned to drink the poisonous hemlock (which killed him).

These powerful scenes are framed in Plato’s Dialogues: *The Euthyphro* portraits Socrates on his way to court; the *Apology*, the trial itself; the *Crito* shows Socrates’ refusal to escape from prison, and the later *Phaedo*, the last conversation & death of the philosopher who brought philosophy to the person on the street, literally & figuratively.

**VIRTUE ETHICS: 3 MAJOR CLAIMS:**

A. Knowledge of goodness is necessary & sufficient for virtue [arete]; Knowledge & Virtue were the same thing

1. No one does wrong intentionally.
2. We always will what we perceive as good: “To know the good is to do the Good.” Thus, there is no such thing as weakness of the will [akrasia].
3. Why equate virtue with knowledge? virtue meant fulfilling one’s function. As a rational being, a person’s function is to behave rationally. Every person has the inescapable desire for happiness or well-being of his/her soul. This inner well-being, this, “making the soul as good as possible,” can be achieved only by certain appropriate modes of behavior. We choose our acts with the hope that they will bring us happiness. It is ignorance about one’s soul, about what it takes to “make the soul as good as possible.” Wrongdoing, is thus, a consequence of an inaccurate estimate of modes of behavior. It is the inaccurate expectation that certain kinds of things or pleasure will produce happiness. Wrongdoing is the product of ignorance simply because it id done with the hope that it will do what it can’t do. Ignorance is consists in not knowing that certain behavior can’t produce happiness. It take a true knowledge of human nature to know what it requires to be happy. 7. Happiness is the ultimate end of all human action.
8. Happiness is the ultimate human good. 9. Knowledge is necessary for virtue. 10. Vice is not from weakness of will.

B. Contends for the Unity of Virtues: Anyone who has one virtue has them all.

A person who is virtuous can’t lack any of the virtues (for example, a just person must be also courageous and temperamen).

C. There can be no higher good than virtue: a virtuous person is bound to be happier than one who is not.