I will describe and expand upon the three different ways in which something can be Good, as explained by Glaucon (Plato’s older brother)\(^1\). He further categorized these ways into hierarchically ranked classes in The Republic\(^2\). I will assess why this classification is important for the debate of whether it is in every way better to be just rather than unjust, the challenge made by Glaucon to Socrates. Thereafter, I will discuss the identification by Socrates that justice is in fact one of these types of labeled Goods in question, as well as distinguish what type of Good he deems justice to be. In denouement I shall attempt to critically examine to what extent Socrates succeeds in this determination. Collectively, my core goals are to lucidly explain Socrates’s analysis of Justice in the second book of Plato’s Republic and simultaneously critique it. Further, I hope in the process to unveil a more concrete description and understanding of Justice itself.

Progressing into Book II\(^3\) Glaucon explains to Socrates that all Goods can be divided into three separate classes. The classification follows:

1. The lowest class: X is desired for its consequences (in other words the Good is made such by the results it brings about; it is a means-to-an-end kind of Good) such as medical treatment to result in good health, or essay-writing to result in good marks.

2. The middle class: Here X is desired for its own sake (made good by its own being; it is an end-in-and-of-itself kind of Good) such as joy or laughter.

3. The highest class: Here X is desired for its ability to constitute both 1 and 2. It is dualistically good in that it is good as a means-to-an-end as well as good as an end-in-and-of-itself. Such a classification could be something like knowledge, or sight.

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\(^1\) Plato, Republic, 357b-d

\(^2\) Plato, Republic

\(^3\) Supra