The concept of good life is a complex one. It is one of the most difficult concepts to define. Good life can be regarded as a product of society in the sense that without society its existence is meaningless. Good life is inherent amongst the unity and harmony both in external and internal aspects.

Good life is a systematic organized moral concept which implies all round perfection of an individual as a religious, political, economic, rational and spiritual being. So good life of human being can be measured in terms of all round development of individual from all these aspects. It is the harmonious well being of an individual as a social being. Man’s moral life is concerned primarily with the relations between men, his behavior towards fellow being in conformity to rules governing the human relation to adopt a society. The individual life and the social life are inseparable because the interest and claims of these two lives are reciprocally inclusive. So the good life of an individual cannot be looked in isolation from the society. Society is a bundle of individuals. It is the systems through which individual’s own life either it is moral or religious or spiritual is expressed. Therefore development of society depends upon the all round development of the individuals.

Society has been viewed in three different perspectives: The individualistic perspective of thinker J.S. Mill holds that individual is the only reality. Apart from the individual society has no relevance because society depends upon the individual. The wholistic perspective of thinkers such as Marx, Hegel and M.N. Roy maintain that society is the only reality, individual is real as long as it is the part of that whole. Apart from the society individual has no importance. The contemporary perspectives
thinkers Aristotle, Russell, Gandhi maintain that individual and society both are equally important. Individual is important for the society because it is the constituent of the society and society is important for the individual because the individual has been shaped and developed in society. When an individual attains perfection which he actually aims then he finds a state of highest good and that is the *summum bonum* of life and this can be called the good life. In simply good life is the perfection of moral standard and ideals of practices.

Moral Philosophy aims to develop a set of principles and a view of our aims in life that will allow us to live with clarity and confidence. It consists with our general quest which includes not only morality but also the search for the good life. So to know the good life it is very much essential to study the moral philosophy. Because the good life implies the best way to live and the right principles for our action. Good life is a life well lived, it is the most desirable way to live.

Moral life arises due to the fact that man is a social animal. Since man is a social animal, so the good life must be life in society. Morality assumes that men have certain aims, purposes and desires which they wish to achieve, fulfill and satisfy. The achievement of these aims is variously called the good life, the Good for Man, Happiness and Felicity. Good life is the Ideal of life. It is the end in itself. It is the end of human activities. Good life can be understood with the help of other correlated concepts such as conduct, human action good, duty and virtue because all these concepts fall under the domain of moral philosophy. To understand clearly the concept of good life it is necessary to explain such moral concepts.

Conduct is a way of behaviour; it is the expression of character. Human conduct is the conscious purposive activity which includes both voluntary and
habitual action. These actions are moral actions. Generally, voluntary action means such an action which is done by a self-conscious being deliberately and intentionally with a prespecified end of choice. On the other hand, when a voluntary action is done repeatedly it is called habitual action. These two actions are the object of moral judgment. It means that these actions can be judged as right or wrong or these actions have moral worth.

Duty refers to an act which we ought to do under the moral law. It is an action which is in conformity with the standard of moral goodness. Virtue signifies an acquired type of character in harmony with moral law. It is a quality of character which expresses itself in our action. Duty is the outer manifestation of virtue or duty is virtue in action. Virtue is used by different thinkers in different ways. According to Socrates 'knowledge is virtue'. He says a person can never knowingly commit any wrong. Knowledge constitutes the essence of virtue. But according to Aristotle virtue is a relative mean which is determined by reason. It is a habit of choice, the character of which lies in moderation or middle stage of excess and defect.

According to Plato, there are four virtues, wisdom, courage temperance and justice. Man's moral life is based on these virtues. So these are known as 'Cardinal virtues'.

'Good' is another moral concept which have also different uses. These uses are also necessary to understand the concept of good life. Good may be (i) intrinsic and extrinsic (ii) subjective and objective (iii) relative and absolute (iv) specific or particular and general or universal (v) moral and non-moral and so on.

Intrinsic good is one which is good for its own sake. It is the good as an end. It is synonymous with independent good i.e., which does not depend anything for its
existence. On the other hand extrinsic good is one which is taken for something else, not for its own sake.

Subjective good is that type of good which is approved only on the basis of its appeal to some individuals or group of individuals feeling and emotion. It can be regarded as private good. On the other hand, when good is commended in the light of some criteria or standard without having any feeling or emotions of the individual, then it is called objective good.

Relative good is one which is meant for a particular person at a certain place and time. Another name of relative good is condition good. On the contrary Absolute good is that which is independent of all references to a particular individual or group of individuals. It is also known as unconditioned good. Kantian sense of unconditioned good is an example of Absolute good.

Particular good is that which is for a particular situation or a particular person. Again general good is that which is meant for whole society or all men under some favorable and relevant conditions.

Moral good is that which is confronted to one’s moral principles and which helps to attain moral principles. Non moral good is that which do not come in to the domain of moral good i.e. the good which is not moral is known as non moral good.

The good which is absolute is always a personal good and it is a good of moral person living in societies. So the individual good and common good are mutual. As the society casts its influence on the life of the individual, so the individual also contribute towards the moral progress of the society by their culture and moral insight. So the social progress and the individual progress go hand in hand. Both are contributory and correlative.
Question arises 'what is culture'? Culture is a way of life of people living in particular society in a particular time. It is the whole way of life – material, intellectual and spiritual of a society. In another sense, culture implies perfection of every aspect of life. It is those aspects of life of the community which satisfy an on going quest for achieving the good or aim of the society. In this sense we can say that culture is a means for realizing the good life of the society. Through culture of a society we can determine the end of the society or the sumnum bonum of society. Moreover, religion can be considered as an important factor in influencing the way of life of people. The essence of religion is not only constituted with the ideas about God, worship festival, beliefs, rituals etc, but it is considered as a practical system of belief in something which is beyond the human being and which binds people together to organize a socio-religious community. Religion is central to culture. Culture without religion will lose its significance and meaning, because religion determines the way of life of people in culture. Culture is a way of self-realization, self perfection and for achieving the goal of life.

The concept of good life may differ to different persons. For some people, good life seem to include more peace and security and for other, more adventure and novelty. It indicates that some people find their end of life in peace and security and on the other hand some people find their highest good in realization of some new adventures. So good life of one may not be as good intrinsically as that of another. Morality is not only a minister to one’s own good life but it is also for others.

The good life and the right conduct are the two central aspects of Moral Philosophy. Value is one of the related concepts of human conduct. It is not only the norms of a society but also important element for proper realization of social
relationship in between man. This is an important task for good life. Therefore value plays an important role in the good life which means worth living. Just like food, shelter and cloths are the basic elements of survival for ultimate realization of human existence in society, so also moral philosophy and values are the basic human elements for the civilization and development of society. Moral life is essential because it leads man to live a happy and comfortable life.

Values are the conditions of human life which serve as indicators to judge human behaviour and conduct. Moral philosophy is the code of principles of human nature to serve as guidelines for righteous actions and behaviour of individuals as a political, legal, economic, spiritual and social being. So as an aspect of Moral philosophy, good life can be attained through the proper knowledge of moral principles which sets before us a right way of life and to know the proper use of it value is essential or proper use of morality is known through value. Value is a multi dimensional, relative complex concept and ethics is a code of values which determines the purpose and the course of our lives. There are five core human values which are known as universal values. There values are right conduct, peace, truth, love and non-violence. The concept of value has a prominent place in both western and Indian thought. In western thought Truth, Beauty and Goodness occupy an important place. These are the ideals of life. The Indian thought provide a scheme of practical values which are known as ‘purusartha’ meaning ‘objectives of human life’ (literal meaning). These are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa. The aim of these values is to attain the end of life i.e. summum bonum or these are the means for attaining the self realization, the ultimate end of life. The pursuit of these ideals in the right direction will make the life of an individual successful and happy. So from the
Indian standpoint the good life consists in the attainment of such values. Generally ‘dharma’ implies moral values, ‘kama’ implies hedonistic values i.e. pleasure, ‘arthā’ implies politico-economic values and mokṣa implies religious and spiritual goal of life.

Truth, Beauty and Goodness are regarded as the value of coherence, harmony and moral perfection respectively. Values as ideals is realized in God, the eternal embodiment of truth, beauty, goodness, righteousness, justice and love, informing the world and inspiring mankind to strive and struggle to achieve a better order, seem to satisfy our intellectual, moral, religious and aesthetic aspiration.

On the philosophical level values can be graded as natural, social and spiritual. One word for all values of natural life is happiness, that for all values of social life is ‘justice’ and for all values of spiritual life is perfection. Since the good life centers round all these three aspects of life, so attainment of happiness, justice and perfection is essential as a way of good life. Values are important not only because it is one of the leading trend of philosophical thinking but also because it forms the cultural pattern of a society. The middle age philosophers remark that the man who have all positive knowledge he is morally perfect being and whose have perfect harmony he is truth, beauty and goodness. These three are not only ideals of life but also the intrinsic values of life and these three indicates three aspects of life i.e. thinking feeling and willing. Truth is the ideal of knowledge, beauty is the ideal of feeling and good is the ideal of willing. So the good life is the fulfillment of all these aspects of life in a harmonious way.

‘Good life’ and the ‘civil society’ both are reciprocal. Good life or the life of a good man always leads to the concept of ‘civil society’. Good life has two dimensions
- the individualistic as well as social. Civil society as an organization related with the responsible citizens- responsibility towards oneself, towards other human beings and towards community of all life form. It means that every individual’s personal freedom of willing and deciding is controlled by other human beings. Civil society is not merely social phenomena between inter-human behaviour, but it considers man’s being as a substantial part of nature and also for the misuse of destruction of nature and also for the misuse of discoveries. So ‘civil society’ is for the well being of man. It does not imply property oriented outlook on life, it implies a world to a value oriented one because it tries to upgrade the living condition better by changing our way of thought. It does not imply the development of social and economic condition of the society. Because the success and failure should not be judged in terms of economic gains and technological development, but only in terms of human values in civil society. Duties and responsibilities would be acceptable to all irrespective to caste, culture, religion, creed and state. The primary basis would be the universal principle which is underlying all the principles and values.

Good life is explained by host of thinkers and philosophers in various ways qualifying the different aspects. Here some of the views regarding the good life are given in the following.

In Greek tradition, ethics was conceived as relating to the good life. So, good life was an important factor in the discussion of moral philosophy in Greek period. At that time most of the people were busy in enquiring the nature of happiness. There are different opinions regarding the characteristics of the happiest life (good life) and the means for achieving it. A quite different orientation was introduced by Judaeo-Christian ethics which says that the ideals of righteousness constitute the substance of
morality, not the happy or pleasant life. These differences are represented in a major division (Cleavage) between two theories – one which gives importance on duty and right as the primary ethical concept and the other which takes happiness and good life as the fundamental concern of ethics.

In Plato’s dialogues, the search for good life is a recurrent theme. From the time of Socrates various discussions on good life were put forwarded by different thinkers and one of the most prominent options is that the philosophy called Hedonism. This philosophy says that the good life is in getting as much pleasure out of life as we possible can i.e. highest amount of pleasure acquired in life time is called the only element for considering the good life. Though Hedonism is an attractive candidate for the good life it is not free from criticism. Socrates and other philosophers criticized it by making a distinction between the acting for the sake of pleasure and acting for some other goals whose achievement gives pleasure. Hedonism falls under the first category, i.e. it takes pleasure as an activity for its own sake, not for others. But pleasure is not an activity in itself; it is something which accompanies activities.

For Socrates, the good life is the life of wisdom, the life of principles and creative thinking. Like the sophists, Socrates also agreed that morality is guided by knowledge, but there is a difference in between them and this lies in the kind of knowledge and kind of goodness. Because, according to Socrates, morality is knowledge of the good through concepts and moral laws are based on rational thoughts, not on feeling and desires. Virtue is the knowledge through concept. He says health, wealth, good looks are good but without knowledge they can be misused. So also courage, temperance are good and they lead to happiness when they guided by
reason otherwise they would be evil. So Socrates remarks that concepts are given by reason. Knowledge is virtue and virtue is true knowledge and it is one in the sense that the self of a good man is an organic unity of all functions. Reasoning temper and desires are the three parts of the soul and the health of the soul follows from the discipline among these parts. A successful functioning of the harmonious activities under the regulation of reason yields happiness. In this sense, he says that virtue is one and the good life can be attained through pursuing virtue. Socrates opinion regarding the good life not only influenced Greco-Roman moral theory but also in modern times has influenced modern theories of utilitarianism and Hedonism.

According to Plato, the good life is the well rounded life guided by reason. Rational life is as same as good life. Plato holds that the good life is a mixed life consisting of activities and experiences. These activities and experiences are the content of the good life. Again Plato insisted that the good life must have form i.e. pattern and for a life to be good it must be harmonious. Accepting Plato’s view D.H. Parker remarked that unity in diversity, balance, rhythm, hierarchy are the features of a good life. A.N. whitehead remarks that novelty, adventure, continuity and tradition are also be regarded as the features of good life. He says that for one’s life to be good both moral and non-moral sense, one must not be too concerned with the goodness of one’s life, but rather with causes and objects outside oneself.

Thus in the philosophy of Socrates and Plato, it is seen that rational life is the highest life and it constitutes the highest good. Through reason man becomes one with the highest principle of the universe, the Logos (thinking) or Theos (God) and that man through reason may become universal and immortal. So according to these philosophers universality, immortality and rationality are the features of man.
In the same vein Aristotle also remarks that happiness is the good life. Aristotle formulated the classical argument against hedonism as the good life by suggesting that pleasure is not an activity in itself but rather something which accompanies satisfying activities. So, according to Aristotle the key word to the good life is to be found in the notion of satisfying activities not in the pleasure itself. Our aim is not the pleasure, but the activity because by performing activities pleasure can be attained. These activities may be forbidden or admirable or challenging and painful e.g. running, jumping etc. Happiness is the end of human activities and it is attained by the performance of virtuous activities. Perfect happiness lies in the best activity which is contemplative. So, the good life, according to Aristotle, is the happiest life which is accompanied by virtue. Again the good life is the contemplative life which has great faith in reason in its universality, immortality and its power to taken man nearer to God. Thus, Aristotle says that pleasure may be a component for good life, but it cannot be a good life itself. The good life is happiness which is wanted for its own sake, not for the sake of anything Happiness is not just a sense of well being as it is for us, it is for Aristotle good life as a whole.

Chinese and Jewish thinkers do not accept this view of Aristotle. They accept that for good life commandments of God is a universal rule but they do not give much more emphasis on the rational aspect like Greek.

According to Cynics the good life consists in being independent of human desires and their satisfaction, so that for them pleasure has no connection with goodness. Stoics said that the good life is found in the avoidance of feeling and the rational pursuit of duty.
Medieval western thinker Saint Augustine remarks that the ultimate end of human life is union with God and it is not possible in the life of living it is possible only in future life. So according to him, man is unable to attain his ultimate end in earthly life.

According to St. Tomas Aquinas, the highest end is contemplation and love of god and the aim of life are two folds- one is self perfection and the other is intuition of god. The first is regarded as mundane aim and the second is called celestial aim.

Evolutionary hedonist Herbert Spencer says that the good life is pleasure and knowledge, beauty and other objects are the means to pleasure.

Perfectionists say that ultimate aim of human being is self improvement, self development or perfection. It is also called 'Eudaemonia' derives from Greek, meaning welfare. Therefore the ultimate aim of human being is the total welfare i.e. the welfare of the complete personality of the integral self. In Green’s theory, it is seen that spiritual element is the most worthy of realization and development in human nature. It is nothing but consistency or coherence in willing. So consistency is one of the features of good life. In Bradley’s view we find that the aim of the good life is to make to some degree unique personalities. In concrete moral life the living of a good life means the performing of a particular function in the community. He pointed out in his ‘Ethical studies’ that “each individual has a particular ‘station’ in the society to which he belongs e.g., as teacher or as farmer or as labourer and the most important part of his moral life consists in carrying out the duties of his particular station” (essay-v). Thus perfectionists give importance on spiritual element as a way to the good life.
Modern western thinker Spinoza says that the good life is nothing but the intellectual love of God, the Eternal Being.

Karl Marx gives a special view on the good life. He gives more emphasis on the development of social and economic condition for the consideration of good life. He considered good life in terms of economic and social development. Rousseau considered the good life in terms of a political community, the democratic state in which we are all citizens. According to him, understanding of citizenship is the moral agency which is the key of democratic idealism. Good life includes all round development of human being as a social being not only political aspect or economic aspect. A good life must be lived through which we must know how to live a good life. As a concept it is grounded in reality. There two persons give importance on one sided development with political emphasis or economic emphasis. So it is said that they give a way of good life not good life. Good life consists in transcending these ways of good life.

Kant says that ultimate end is virtue. It is the good will which shines by its own light just like Jewel. It is intrinsically good which implies the determination to do the right for the sake of right and it is the necessary and only requirement of being a good man. So according to Kant, the good life consists with good will. The ultimate end, according to Kant, is the doing the duty for the sake of duty. But he fails to integrate reason and motive in achieving good. He looks upon his own or other as a possessor of general value, a source to promote the general good. But in this pursuit it becomes impossible for a person to combine his motive of affection for the other and the reason of duty for duty sake. The good life requires an integrated approach in which the values of interpersonal relations and activities can be realized. The harmonious existence of motive and reason is a then strip in the direction of a good life where one can safely entertain virtuous disposition. Generally, it is accepted by all
that the attaining of moral personhood is almost synonymous with the actualization of a virtuous life, so long as a virtuous life is considered to be essentially a good life, the life of a good man. Moral personhood implies that human have the capacity to become moral persons.

Nineteenth century British Philosopher Jereme Bentham and J.S. Mill consider good life as the happy life. General happiness is the ultimate end of human life, both admit. Bentham acknowledges good life from the legal standpoint and Mill from the societal standpoint. Both give altruistic standpoint. According to Mill, good life is the life of happiness and the life of happiness is the satisfied contended life.

Indian thinkers accept that the good life is rational life, but rational life is not necessarily good life. Because rational life may be evil also, for reason can be pressed in to the service of evil. But in good life there is no place for evil.

In Indian Ethics, there are four ends of life which are called ‘Purusarthsas’ (dharma, artha, kama and moksa). These are the ideals of life, (Puru means soul or self and artha means aim or goal which signifies completely the effort to attain the spiritual goal). Like western thinkers Indian thinkers are not satisfied with the fulfillment of man’s rational curiosity only, it is engaged in search for ultimate values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness through its science of Reality. Every Indian systems of thought include the problem of moral values as the primary subject matter of discussion. So I. C Sharma writes in his articles on ‘Indian Ethics’, ‘By Indian Ethics I mean the ethical views expounded in the entire philosophical, religious, cultural tradition represented by the Vedas, Upanishad, Buddhism….’(p-15). The goal of Indian ethics is self realization which is the state of awakening and consciousness of Atman. The attainment of such goal is not merely ideal but also attainable in the empirical life. Self realization from the Indian standpoint is an actual state of human existence. The man who attains self realization is called ‘Jivanmukta,’ it provides the
individual complete freedom. This is the state of sthitaprajnata of Gita, Nirjara of Jainism and levels of Bodhisattva of Buddhism. Indian ethics may be termed as spiritual utilitarianism which means integrated development of human personality through the unfoldment of man's 'Atman'. Atman implies the core of human personality, the truth of truths (satyasya satyam) and the centre of centres (Kendrasya kendram) in man” (Indian Thought – An introduction: Ed. D.H. Bishop by I.C. Sharma p. 234). This view is also accepted by perfectionist of western thought.

Indian ethics upholds a principal rule, Right is as important as good, Means are as important as the End. Indian culture presents us with the paradox that in spiritual life perfecting the Means to attain the End is the end of life.

In the Upanishad we find that the essence of good life constitutes with the dama, dana and daya (da, da, da). These three constitutes the essentials of good life. ‘dama’ means self control, restraint which is the mark of a human being. In the Ramayana, when Lakshmana sets out for the forest his mother tells him, Look upon Rama as your father Dasaratha, look upon Sita as myself as your mother, look upon the forest as Ayodhya, go my dear’(Radhakrishna S. The creative life, p. 117).

One of the most important Indian scripture Gita remarks that to lead a good life one must have to follow the path of Niskama Karmayoga in which knowledge, devotion and action (jhana, bhakti and karma) are synthesized in an integrated way because in this state one is able to attain the highest culmination of thinking (intellect), feeling (emotion) and willing (action). Therefore, it is said that when a person would be able to satisfy his mind by fulfilling the activities of all sphere of life, he is capable to lead a good life as depicted in Gita and then he is regarded as Shitaprajna. Like Kant Gita also says that the pure moral life is the life of pure reason. But against the individualistic view of Kant Gita's Ethics is universalistic in the sense that it contains feeling of world community as contrasted to Kant, Gita’s
concept is perfectionism as contrasted to one sided view of Hedonism. Hedonism aims at reckless enjoyment but Gita assimilates control and enjoyment, knowledge and action. Hedonism emphasizes pleasure as the ultimate end, but according to Gita perfection and God realization is the ultimate end and niskama karma is a way of attaining it. Carvaka philosophy accepts egoistic hedonism, which says that greatest amount of physical pleasure in the present life is the ultimate end of human life. So, when a person finds greatest physical or sensual pleasure he is able to lead a good life.

According to Buddha, for leading a good life prajna, karuna and samata are essential. The end of human life is nirvana which can attained through the eight fold path (astangika marga) These paths are right views, right efforts, right conduct, right resolve, right mindfulness, right livelihood and right concentration. Prajna, sila and samadhi are the three steps in which these eight- fold paths are included and these three are the ways of attaining Nirvana, i.e. summum bonum of life.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar describes the concept of good life in the same manner of Buddhism. According to him, good life is one which is devoted to protect and preach the principles of liberty, equality and enlightenment amongst the people and promotes the values of karuna (love) maitri (brotherhood) and prajya (right understanding). Good life requires some qualities such as knowledge, kindness, courage, love, trust, inspiration, reason, fearless outlook, broad mind and open-heart. It does not require rigid morbid system of human relations whether old and new. It also needs favorable social condition, political and economic situation of the society.

All other system of Indian philosophy also believes in the liberation or mukti as the summum bonum of life. The person who attains liberation he is capable of attaining a good life and for this performance of four values is essential. The liberation is used by different schools by different names e.g. Buddhism calls it Nirvana, Jainism Kaivalya, Moksa by Hinduism, Apurva by Mimamsa etc. Yoga
philosophy gives importance of practicing the Yoga. Samkhya – Yoga philosophy maintains that liberation can be attained only by knowledge. Samkhya says that pain and pleasure both are inseparable and relative. So there is no happiness in the state of liberation. It is above pleasure and sufferings. But according to Vedanta, liberation is a state of happiness. If we accept the views of Samkhya then we find that they confused happiness with pleasure. The ultimate end of Vedanta philosophy is beyond right and wrong. Because the ultimate end of man is the attainment of Brahman consciousness. This Brahman is beyond the dualism of right and wrong. So the end is beyond ethics, because if there is no conflict between right and wrong in one’s mind he is not on the moral level.

The contemporary Indian thinkers also give their own views regarding the good life. According to M.K. Gandhi, realization of God is the ultimate end of human life. He says that good life is a life led on the precept of Ahimsa together with a service to God. To lead a good life there must be two basic needs – one is celibacy and other is non-possession and for this restraint and self-control is necessary. These can be attained through the rigoristic performance of duty and by these man is able to go nearer to Divine. Since god lives in man’s own self and selves of other, so His realization can be attained through the love of other and the performance of duties towards other.

S. Radhakrishnan says that ‘Sarvamukti’ is the highest end of human life. It implies not only the mukti of human being, but also the mukti of humanity as a whole. For this moral progress of the world is necessary. For Radhakrishnan, the ultimate end of human life is the spiritual self realization which transcends the ethical level. He was not interested to follow the conventional morality, but in creative good life which consists perfect knowledge, absolute love and completion of will. For this, man must have supernatural vision and perfect self integration. Thus, Radhakrishnan opines that
good life which is nothing but spiritual self realization can be attained through integral experience.

Sri Aurobindo says that cosmic salvation is the highest end like Mahayana Buddhism. His concept is more comprehensive than Buddhism because it includes not only the salvation of the whole human race, but also of the physical universe. Salvation means the attainment of perfect consciousness and bliss, while refraining the individuality. The most remarkable point is that his view is not only theoretical, but also practical. Because he says that by practicing Yoga man is able to attain it. Therefore we can say that to lead a good life man should follow path of a ‘Purna yogi’.

The history of European ethics can be conventionally divided into three periods. In Greek period, (500 B.C to A.D 500) good man was that who performed his duties as a citizen and so good life is considered as the life which is able to perfectly fulfilled duties as a citizen of Greek city. Here state was important in moral life.

In the second period i.e. medieval period, (A.D 500 to A.D 1500) good life is identified with the holy life or the religious life. Here Church dominated the morality and Church is important in moral life. In the modern period (A.D 1500 onwards) morality is concerned with free individuals, his rights and duties towards other free individuals. At that period good life is considered from the various standpoints. Sometimes good life is equated with success. It may mean money, social status, responsibility etc. The person who has sufficient money, who have higher social status and where responsibility towards society is more significant than others, is able to lead a good life. The people who earned money e.g. Gangsters may be admired as successful without knowing the process of acquiring wealth and status. On the other hand, some people at that time work hard for success in life until the retirement, but as a result they are sometimes seen unable to acquire simplest pleasure. They can be
regarded as success addict, just like money addict who works for earning more money night and day. In the life of seeking success there is always the possibility of failure. So success itself cannot be a good life. Moreover failure of success conception of good life leads a society to an opposite direction where many people demand simplicity, lack of responsibility, enforced poverty and freedom from possession which can be regarded as asceticism means life of simplicity and self denial. Though asceticism is important as a corrective, but as a candidate for good life, it is not so much attractive because sometimes it gives the way of giving up the search for the good life. Some people accept simplicity and self denial as a means to the good life, not as the good life itself e.g. Some religious people accepted self denial as a way to salvation or a means to the holy life. Sometimes it is seen that artists consider ascetic life as the best way to achieve the good life. Here good life implies creativity. So, if asceticism implies simplest simplicity then it can be counted as a means for the good life, not end in itself.

Another conception of good life is freedom which generally indicates a means, the freedom to do what one wants to satisfy pleasure or ambitions, create or worship retreat from society on live as one wishes. In Dostoevsky’s ‘underground man’ we find the extreme conception of freedom where he was willing to give up everything even his health in order to his freedom.

As there are different goals of different human beings, so there are many conceptions of good life. One of the most important conceptions of good life is power which implies power to grow as a person to expand one’s consciousness, to develop one’s talent and to create new things. Nietzsche considered ‘power’ as a conception of good life which is proved by his saying ‘will to power’. In his ‘will to power’ he says that all people ultimately want power. Against the British moralists’ view (human acts only for freedom) he says ‘Man does not desire pleasure, only the English man does’.
He says all other conceptions of good life are the different ways of seeking power and the highest sense of power is only for such people who live autonomously and creatively. E.g. philosophers' lives, artists' lives or saints' lives etc.

Religious conception of good life is the truly the goal of life in which all other goals are subordinated. Religious person lives with an emotional attachment with his own religions that permeates and dominates everything else. It means religious person performs different activities, but the primary place is covered by the religious behaviour. So when religious person gives much more emphasis in performing the religious rites and rituals rather than others then his life can be regarded as a good life from religious conception.

All the conception of good life (success, self-denial, freedom, creativity, power) discussed above seems to be one-sided. And each conception singles out one goal among the many that we desire and it claims that one goal as the mark of the good life. But good life seems to be something more general than one single goal.

In perfectionism as theory of Ethical standard, we find some characteristics of good life. In Green's theory we find spiritual element of human nature which is the most worth of realization and development. It is consistency or coherence in willing. It is one of the features of good life.

In the ancient world Greek philosopher Aristotle examined the different one sided conception of good life. By rejecting these he formulated a single conception of good life with which most of the people are probably in agreement. This is nothing but happiness. According to him happiness is the good life. It is not itself a single activity but the results of a great many activities. Aristotle took personal development or self-realization as his goal. In his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle examined two one sided conceptions of the good life – pleasure and success. Here success implies political success. By rejecting these two he insisted that one cannot possibly lead the
selves, not others. But Aristotle’s conception of good life is somewhat different because he developed it without emphasis upon the good life for a single person. Mill’s concept of good life though starts with individualistic approach; he gives emphasis on universal happiness for all. In the same way, Radhakrishnan’s concept of good life bears the same attitude i.e. ‘sarva mukti’ in terms of spiritual self realization. Therefore this study tries to explain the concept of good life with special reference to these great philosophers of all times which would be able to establish an ideal society and would help to establish world peace.
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