In this paper, I have endeavored to present Nietzsche’s perspective on ethics as faithfully as possible, without criticism. He draws a sharp contrast between the ethics of the common or last man and the ethics of the superior man. The ethics of the former advocates the pursuit of happiness, which amounts to a life of safety and small pleasures. It also promotes a relationship among persons of mutual pity and benevolence. Nietzsche attacks this ethics as one that arises out of psychological weakness and one that will lead to the decline of the human race.

In the place of this common ethics, he calls for a life based in courage and on a readiness to face all of life’s trials and sufferings. Only the superior few are strong enough to live the life of passion to the fullest. This is the strenuous life that takes danger, risk, and adventure for its companions. Such a life seeks above all to extend from moment to moment the powers of the individual over that which resists him on the path toward his goal. In the process, this strenuous life creates new works and values, which may well lead to a new higher type of human and to the salvation of the human race.

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