Rethinking the Question ‘Why Be Moral?’

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My question is ‘why should we be moral?’. H.A. Prichard points out that we face a dilemma: There is either a reason from the moral point of view (i.e. moral reason), or a reason from the non-moral point of view (i.e. non-moral reason). If the reason why we should be moral is a moral reason, we beg the question. If it is a non-moral reason, it is the so-called wrong kind of reason. T. M. Scanlon calls this the ‘Prichard’s dilemma’. How to solve it? I suggest that such a dichotomy is false. There is another kind of reason: a reason from a more comprehensive point of view or a standpoint of practical reason (i.e. unqualified reason or reason *simpliciter*). In this paper I offer an argument for why we should be moral. My argument is this:

(1) We should be moral.
(2) If we should be moral, there is a reason why we should be moral.
(3) Then, there is a reason why we should be moral.
(4) If there is a reason why we should be moral, it is a reason from the moral point of view (i.e. moral reason), a reason from the non-moral point of view (i.e. non-moral reason), or the reason from a more comprehensive point of view or a standpoint of practical reason (i.e. reason *simpliciter*).
(6) The reason why we should be moral is not a moral reason.
(7) The reason why we should be moral is not a non-moral reason.
(8) Then, the reason why we should be moral is a reason *simpliciter*.
(9) What is the reason *simpliciter* why we should be moral? It is the fact that practical reason requires us to be moral.
(10) Therefore, the reason why we should be moral is because practical reason requires us to be moral.