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Professor Sanchez

Intro to Philosophy

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Reading Questions Week 8

1. Explain Pascal's "Wager" about belief in God. Why should someone believe, according to Pascal?

Pascal's "Wager" is an argument that states it is more rational to believe in God, even if there is no evidence of God's existence. Pascal argues that if God does exist, then believers will be rewarded with eternal happiness in heaven, while non-believers will suffer eternal damnation in hell. Therefore, it is a safer bet to believe in God, even if one is not entirely convinced of God's existence.

2. Later in the reading, Pascal has an imagined conversation with someone who understands the wager, but still can't commit to belief in God. What advice does Pascal give for that person?

In the conversation, Pascal advises the person to live their life as if God exists, even if they are not entirely convinced. Pascal suggests that by living as if God exists, the person will eventually come to believe in God through their actions and experiences.

1. Why does Kierkegaard think that proving or disproving the Bible is not the real issue when it comes to faith?

Kierkegaard believes that faith is not a matter of proving or disproving the Bible or any religious text. Instead, faith is a subjective experience that involves a personal relationship with God. Kierkegaard argued that faith cannot be understood or experienced through objective reasoning, but rather through a subjective experience of surrendering oneself to God.

2. Explain Kierkegaard's distinction between "objectivity" and "subjectivity" when it comes to living life and searching for truth.

Kierkegaard distinguishes between "objectivity" and "subjectivity" when it comes to living life and searching for truth. Objectivity involves looking at the world through reason and logic, while subjectivity involves looking inward and experiencing the world through personal experiences. Kierkegaard argued that faith cannot be understood through objective reasoning, but only through subjective experiences and personal encounters with God.

3. Explain some of the problems Kierkegaard looks at when he discusses trying to get to God through approximation and objectivity.

When discussing approximation and objectivity, Kierkegaard argues that these approaches are insufficient for understanding faith. Approximation involves trying to understand God through logic and reason, while objectivity involves trying to understand God through external signs and symbols. Kierkegaard argued that faith cannot be understood through approximation or objectivity, but only through subjective experiences and personal encounters with God.

4. What is Kierkegaard's ultimate definition of truth for an "existing" individual? Why does this definition involve uncertainty, not objective certainty?

Kierkegaard defines truth for an "existing" individual as a subjective experience that involves a personal encounter with God. Kierkegaard believes that truth cannot be objectively defined, but only subjectively experienced through a personal relationship with God. This definition involves uncertainty because it cannot be proven or objectively verified, but only experienced subjectively through personal encounters with God.

