

Example of essay on plato's phaedrus

[Life](#), [Love](#)



In Plato's Phaedrus, Socrates describes the correct method of deliberating about a subject under consideration. Socrates, while talking to his friend Phaedrus, contends that to deliberate accurately about a particular subject the first and foremost thing one should do is determine vividly and without any ambiguity the subject that he wants to deliberate upon. Socrates remarks regarding the right way of deliberating as, " If anyone means to deliberate successfully about anything, there is one thing he must do at the outset. He must know what it is he is deliberating about otherwise he is bound to go utterly astray." If someone is unable to determine correctly what he wants to deliberate, in the opinion of Socrates, his inability would lead him astray and he would never be able to reach the right conclusion. Socrates claims that love is some sort of desire, but there are many subjects that men desire without being in love. In other words, love is a desire, but every desire is not love and to distinguish between different desires Socrates put forward two guiding principles. According to Socrates two rules that guides men are " One is an innate desire for pleasure, the other an acquired judgment that aims at what is best." In the views of Socrates, love is an unrestrained and innate desire for beauty that undermines one's control and moral values. In the light of this first definition of love, Socrates claims that love is something harmful as such maddening desire would destroy the body and soul of the lover and would bring him no good. Only it is when the madness of love is controlled by the reason and rational judgment then it leads to the " boon" of a philosopher and only in this form love is beneficial. " Now a man who is dominated by desire and enslaved to pleasure is of course bound to aim at getting the greatest possible pleasure out of his

beloved" The issue, Socrates clarifies, is that one overcome with this craving of love will need to transform his beloved into whatever is most satisfying to himself, instead of what is best for the loved one. The beloved's scholarly advance will be smothered and his physical condition will suffer, all on the grounds that the lover is forming him out of craving for "eros" as opposed to what is best for the loved one. Sooner or later, the faculty of reason would take the spot of the infatuation, and the lover's pledges and guarantees to his beloved will be broken. In the words of Socrates, "Let that then, my boy, be your lesson. Be sure that the attentions of a lover carry no good will; they are no more than a glutting of his appetite, for 'As wolf to lamb, so lover to his lad.'" The non-lover, Socrates opine, will do none of this, constantly controlled by judgment as opposed to yearning for delight and "eros".

The concrete subject of Socrates's first speech is the definition of love and the determination of harmful or otherwise impacts of love on the loved one. In his first speech, Socrates mentions that out of two guiding principles love is a form of innate desire and that is why it produces harmful influences for a beloved. Therefore, one should prefer a non-lover over the lover.

The radical difference between the two speeches is that Lysias in his speech simply enlists the benefits of giving one's attention to a non-lover while Socrates approached the subject from a whole different standpoint. Socrates first define the subject matter i. e. love and then instead of describing the benefits of a non-lover he addresses the disadvantages of love by presenting two guiding principles, reason and desire. What makes Socrates's speech radically different from the Lysias's speech is the way he approaches the subject matter of love.

Works Cited

Plato. The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including the Letters. Princeton University Press; New Impression edition, 2005. Hardcover.