

What do you see as the main sources of Tolstoy's struggle for meaning in his life...

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Tolstoy's Struggle for Meaning in Life Insert Insert of Insert of Supervisor  
Tolstoy's Struggle for Meaning in Life Tolstoy's struggle for meaning in life was catapulted by religion. It is after realizing that the religion he was taught at school was meaningless that his quest to search for his place and true meaning in life began. At the age of 18, he is of the perception that religious people tend to be cruel, immoral and dull-witted while honesty, morality and intelligence were qualities found among the so called non-believers. He also finds the signs of the cross he makes in his prayers meaningless for him and therefore can not continue doing the signs (Lukacs, 10).

Though Tolstoy is not religious, he believes in Christ and his teachings and therefore yearns to be considered morally good. But his efforts are met with contempt and scorn. But in a world that considers lust for power, ambition, anger, self interest and pride respected as qualities, his lust to be morally good is replaced by the urge to be more important, wealthier and famous. His morality is once again tested when he starts to mingle with poets and writers, who would term themselves as the finest and most useful teachers than the other. On the other hand he was of the opinion that if one had the mission of teaching others, at the time a role bestowed on poets and writers, he should not seek personal esteem as first priority and thus begun to doubt their sincerity (Lukacs, 17).

While in Paris, Tolstoy decides to follow his instincts after witnessing an execution. Although people believed that the execution was necessary, he believed that judgment should not be based on what other people say or do but rather on ones instincts from the soul. When his brother dies without Tolstoy understanding the reason of him living or dying, he trusts his

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instincts that at one point all these will be known by him (Lukacs, 14).

The question of what my purpose in life is has no definite answer. After soul searching for many years, I have realized that the answers I seek can not be found in religion or in what the society perceives of our meaning in life, but in ones instincts within the soul. Therefore I live by instinct and faith, content with the fact that the only inevitable thing is death.

### References

Lukacs, G. (1977) Tolstoy and Development of Realism. Marxists on Literature: An Anthology, London: Penguin.