

Example of essay on god in the meditations of rene descartes

[Religion](#), [God](#)



In writing his six Meditations, Rene Descartes was not really being a skeptic about the existence of God and a soul, but rather he was attempting to provide definite proof for that they did exist, and would also be compatible with the new science of the 17th Century. Although he was a rationalist, he also took it on faith that God and the soul were real, and that the teachings of the Bible and the church were the truth. What Descartes really required was a method that could also demonstrate this using the methods of science, logic and reason. He carries his skepticism to the point where he concluded that his own mind and thoughts actually exist, and then builds from there to conclude that God created his mind and soul, as well as other bodies and the entire physical and material universe. God was also the First Cause and the Prime Mover of everything else that existed. .

For Descartes skepticism was only a temporary expedient that he used to confirm his own existence, and then the existence of God and the physical universe, which was governed by rational and scientific laws. In his First and Second Meditations, he wonders whether his senses have deceived him and if matter and all the physical objects he perceives are simply nightmares of delusions. Perhaps God does not exist at all or is really a demon that has created false images and sense impressions to deceive him into believing in a false reality. As he concludes in the Second Meditation, however, even if his thoughts and perception are completely bogus, he still cannot deny their actual existence, and that leads him to the bedrock of his entire philosophy, the starting point of Cogito Ergo Sum or ‘ I think therefore I exist’. Descartes cannot deny this and still be considered a sane or rational philosopher.

In his Third and Fourth Meditations Descartes reiterates the ideas of earlier

philosophers like Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas that God is the First Cause and Prime Mover of everything in nature, but that science and reason could be brought to bear in order to understand all the secondary ('efficient') causes in nature. God had given human beings minds and senses so these could understand the physical world around them, even though all their abilities, senses and thought processes were very limited and flawed compared to the Creator of the universe. People were flawed and made many errors, so they certainly could never aspire to the same kind of ultimate and absolute knowledge that God possessed. This type of dualism left a great deal of room for 17th Century science to explore and explain the universe, while still maintaining a firm belief in the existence of God and the soul. Descartes did not intend that it should ever be an atheistic or materialistic science, since the universe and the human mind had to have a Creator and First Cause. He could not conceive that world and human beings had simply come into being by accident, but that it all must be part of some divine purpose or plan.