

Theology and philosophy

Religion



Theology and Philosophy ID: Difference between theology and philosophy

Not much difference is evident. However, theology refers to faith and philosophy is about the reason to believe. Philosophy believes in the power of one's own intellect and capability to dissect the theological beliefs. On the other hand, theology is all about faith. For example, Christian theology is about the trinity, the bible and the incarnation. Similarly, Hindu religious faith revolves around karma and concept of rebirth.

While philosophers start with discussing about faith, they do not blindly believe in everything. Hence, philosophy applies the power of reasoning to understand the theological principals of faith.(Cortez, 2012)

Philosophical approaches to nature and existence of God

Pascal's Wager

This approach emphasizes that belief in existence of god relates to the self-interest of people, rather than their faith in the god's existence. This approach is supported by the argument that believing in god's existence will mean being rewarded in heaven. However, if god does not exist, then only loss that people can have is the absence of this reward. Similarly, god's existence would mean, for non-believers, going to hell and receiving infinite punishment. However, if god does not exist, it means no change in their condition.

Therefore, the approach argues that believing in God's existence would be in the self-interest of the people as it provides them an opportunity to be rewarded in heaven.

Ontological approach

This approach emphasizes on the reasoning that mentioning about god means talking about some concept that exists. Hence, god is a concept that

can be proved through abstract reasoning.

Pascal's Wager is a better argument as it clearly defines the reason as self-interest of people to believe in god's existence, while ontological argument is based on abstract reasoning only. (Arguments, nd)

Similarities and differences

Natural theology and philosophy cannot be different, when discussing about the personal beliefs. For example, natural disasters such as the recent Nepal earthquake and Asian Tsunami reaffirm the belief that god exists. However, rational thinkers and philosophers provide scientific evidence for such happenings. The timing of these disasters cannot find any support from philosophical reasoning. Hindus and Buddhist have strong faith that the god is creator, destroyer and responsible for recreation as well. (Burke, 2015)

When discussing about natural theology and philosophy, rational thinkers cannot deny about the existence of god, as the plain proofs such as above are sufficient to convince them. As human beings begin to ponder on the issues involving life and death, they realize that people are obliged to remain obedient to the god's commands. However, these aspects of natural theology find scientific support from philosophy in establishing that the events or situations created by god can be scientifically explained and justified, as is evident in the Nepal's earthquake. This affirms the existence of god, which is supported by the philosophical reasons and scientific explanations. As natural theology aims to convince the atheists about existence of god, philosophers tend to raise questions about the existence of any human being. For those who believe in god's existence, humans owe their life to the great creator, called god. (Joyce, nd)

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