

Eastern and western philosophy comparison essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Siddhartha Gautama lived many different lifestyles which ultimately led to his ideas and beliefs on how to properly live without human suffering, selfish cravings, and being enslaved to individual desires and passions. He began life in a wealthy lifestyle, moved ahead to a life with a wife and child of his own, left his family to live a life of poverty so that he could understand the suffering he saw others living, and then onto six years of solitude once he realized neither riches or poverty was the way to live life. During all of these experiences Siddhartha Gautama was able to come to a middle ground on how life should be lived. According to Siddhartha Gautama, the most immediate causes of human suffering are ignorance, which closes the door to enlightenment, and selfish craving, which enslaves an individual to desires and passions.

Siddhartha Gautama spent almost 50 years teaching ways to deal with suffering in the world. Siddhartha Gautama wrote the Eight Fold Path which he believed was the way to living properly. The Eight Fold Path includes the Right View, Right Aim, Right Action, Right Living, Right Mindfulness, and the Right Contemplation. The first two steps represent the mental outlook of an individual, the next four steps specify appropriate behavior to live by, and the final two steps pertain to the higher mental and spiritual qualities which are needed for total disattachment from self. Siddhartha Gautama found a way to live without suffering, selfish cravings, and not being enslaved to his individual desires and passions. Gautama lived what he learned from his experiences and he taught what he learned to others to try and end human suffering.

Each step Guatama took to learn and teach helped others live more freely and backed up his ideas. St. Thomas Aquinas interpreted Aristotelian philosophy from a Christian perspective. St. Thomas Aquinas had the belief that no one can prove that a God exists.

Aquinas said that it was known a square has four sides because we can see them. To know God exists, one would have to presume the essence of God. St. Thomas Aquinas had five ways to prove of God's existence. According to Aquinas, the first way to prove God's existence was the fact that natural things are in motion and things in motion did not begin by themselves and going back in time, there must have been something that began the first movement.

Aquinas' second way to prove God exists was that nothing caused itself so indeed there was a creator who created effect. The third way Aquinas said you could prove that God exists is by saying that everything you can touch, need not exist, but that one supreme being must have existed to create all that need not exist. Aquinas' fourth way to prove God exists was to consider the fact that all natural things possess perfections to some degree, therefore something perfect must have created all that exists to provide these degrees of perfection. The fifth way Aquinas believed one could prove that God exists was that each thing functions in accordance with a certain plan or design and intelligent being exists by which things are directed toward their end and that this intelligent being must be God. Aquinas also believed that some theological truths, truths of revelation, are such that philosophy could never discover them and therefore will always be unknown.

St. Thomas Aquinas had ideas that could never be proven while Siddhartha Gautama lived to prove his ideas. Aquinas also based his philosophies did not base his beliefs on any kind of religion but Gautama based his ideas on Buddhism. The two philosophers really had different ideas and beliefs and not similarities on what their ideas were. I believe I am prone to the Eastern way of thinking. Siddhartha Gautama ideas that I believe in.

I do feel that human suffering could be minimized if people did not live with selfish cravings. I feel like Guatama lived in several different lifestyles and learned how to live in peace not giving into individual desires and passions that he might have had otherwise. University of Phoenix (Ed.).

(2008). Eastern Influences. [University of Phoenix Custom Edition e-text]. The McGraw? Hill Companies.

Retrieved August 4, 2009 from University of Phoenix, PHI/105- eCampus – University of Phoenix Student and Faculty Portal Website. University of Phoenix (Ed.). (2008). Philosophy of Religion: Reason and Faith.

[University of Phoenix Custom Edition e-text]. The McGraw? Hill Companies. Retrieved August 9, 2009 from University of Phoenix, PHI/105- eCampus – University of Phoenix Student and Faculty Portal Website.