

# Critical thinking on does god exist

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



This essay will be one that intends to expose the nature of belief comparing philosophers such as Blaise Pascal, Soren Kierkegaard on justifications for a belief in god and the reasons we believe in general to attempt to answer a greater question of whether we can logically determine the existence of God. Pascal believes that arguments for god may be logical, but they prove above anything else that god doesn't care and why would we want to believe in someone that doesn't care?

When we pray we're asking someone to listen to our problems, we expect the one who made use to care about us but evidence points to the opposite. The reason people believe in god is dependent on faith which is more akin to trust, it is belief in something for which there is no evidence. What Pascal is actually saying is if there is a god evidence points to the fact he doesn't care but we believe he cares because we are basically irrational, we believe because we want to. For evil to exist in this theory god would have to be evil himself or he/she/it would have to be good or neutral and allow evil because if god is all powerful, they should be able to stop the evil but have purposefully allowed it instead for some reason. On the other hand the first problem is that this theory presupposes a belief in god and if you don't believe in god, you certainly won't be willing to accept imaginary deities' codes of conduct because obviously if he isn't real these rules were not made by a deity but instead by a very manipulative liar. (Pascal 1662)

The heart according to Pascal is moved by two things; Hope and fear. We want happiness but our happiness is dependent on lack of fear and what we fear most is that our lives will end and there will be nothing to follow and no meaning in our lives. Hence we hope there is a god to give ad hoc

justification to our existence, we exist because god loves us and he made us because he had nothing better to do. It benefits us to believe in god because we don't have to worry about how we're living our life or if our lives have meaning, god is like instant purpose, ' we exist because this guy says so' it's much easier and convenient than actually asking questions about who we are or why we're here, just having some magical man in the sky be the explanation for everything, the winning bid in every argument. The only times we have beliefs based on reason are in regards to things that don't really matter.

Pascal gives an example by proposing a wager. For people who we have just stated are in fact irrational, (because they believe/trust in something that has no basis in reality and no real evidence for the existence of god) Pascal attempts to use mathematical probability to calculate the personal consequences for believing in god and not the other end of the spectrum, not believing in god. In actual fact although we state there is no evidence for god existing, there is actually no concrete evidence for god not existing either so Pascal reasons that the existence of god boils down to a 50/50 chance. If you believe in god and he/she/it actually exists, and then you die or the rapture happens or Armageddon or whatever you may or may not receive eternal if not just from the smug self satisfaction that you were right all along and all those clever atheists with their ' science' were wrong. On the other hand if you believe and god doesn't exist, nothing much happens, you might just look a little silly if you've sold your house and all your possessions preparing for the end. For people who don't believe in god when the time of judgment does or does not come you will be kicking

yourself and we're lead to believe will be eternally miserable tormented by a devil you don't believe in. Of course if god doesn't exist nothing much will happen, things will pretty much just carry on as they always do. Therefore Pascal determines that it's better to believe in god from a probability stand point because you have more to gain than you have to lose, i. e. if you believe and it's real you get happiness and if it's not you get nothing but you don't lose anything but if you don't believe and god does exist you will be worse off than those who believe. Believing to Pascal is rational as a form of soul insurance, because if you believe you're essentially fully covered on all bases, you have nothing to lose by believing and everything to lose by not. Of course it doesn't necessarily address the problem of the fact there are multiple religions all over the globe and how can you be sure you've backed the right horse? For this to be truly effective, surely you'd have to be a member of every religion on earth to cover all your bases. This obviously is impossible and it would completely refute Pascal's claims because by joining and supporting all the religions on earth you'd surely be out of pocket if not time. People generally also have problem with this as they'd prefer to put stock in something that pays off now as opposed to putting time and effort into something that ' might' pay off later.

Also this doesn't address the existence of evil, how can evil exist when god is the creator and is supposedly good and aware of all things that transgress on earth, unless he/she/it is not good and cannot witness all the goings on of earth? Now I'm going to move on to Soren Keirkegaard's position on belief, now initially the views are similar, both of their views are subjectivist. This means that they believe that the way humans view the world is subjective

and our decision and beliefs are actually motivated by our emotions and passions and desires, we see the world how we want to. The differences come when it comes down how decisions are actually made and they both have entirely different views on the nature of passions. Pascal believes that passions get in the way of our long term goals of eternal happiness; the need for instant gratification is non-virtuous and damaging to society. He believes that it was the job of the church to terrify these desires out of people so that they could live without them or at least learn to control them, to keep you on the path of eternal happiness.

Although god gives you free will he/she/it still has a plan and free will is given to you in a sort of 'it's better to have it and not need it, than need it and not have it' sort of a way, which is entirely ridiculous as Keirkegaard tries to point out, why have passions if not to indulge them? For Keirkegaard passion is something integral to existence it's something that you can't live without. Keirkegaard states that passion is a subset of desire to have passions you must have a desire but you don't necessarily need passion to have a desire, everyone desires something passion or not. Passion is something we all have, we can't help it, it's the way we're designed, its core to every decision we make whether we like it or not. Passions determines what we do with our lives, it drives us and it helps us make choices but as human beings we tend to deny we have passions at all or at least pretend we have passions which we don't to disguise our actual passions because we as a culture or maybe more as a result of religion, see passion or moreover desire as a weakness. An example of desire that isn't contingent on passion could be as simple as a food or sweet, we desire it but it's not a massive

thing if we don't get it, there's no emotional attachment to an item of food, it's not necessary for our existence it's just nice. On the other hand someone can say they can't live without something like chocolate and then if they're told that chocolate doesn't exist anymore, will they just die?

It's more than likely that person instead of accepting the non-existence of chocolate will put stock in the possibility that chocolate can be made in the future. Although we can't have the chocolate we're passionate that we will be able to enjoy it in the future and that thought can bring us happiness, so we develop a passion for future happiness. We as human beings we want an infinite amount of happiness, we live so that we never run out of happiness. Therefore although we have no evidence for life or indeed happiness (because life after death is not worth it without happiness) after death but we believe it anyway.

Essentially we are going to believe there is a god or something after death (you don't necessarily need to believe in god to believe in some form of existence after death) that will secure us happiness eternally even though it's only a rumor, a statement based on no evidence whatsoever, because that's exactly what we want. Human beings want to feel accepted, we're terrified of rejection and embarrassment and loneliness because we're afraid of what other people will think of us. We want people to like us because we want them to make us happy. The reason people do a lot of things including believe in god is because if you're different, you won't be accepted and you're life will be hell. We're agreeable if you say you believe in god because everyone else says it, it's because you want acceptance from that group, you don't necessarily believe in god but you believe in the importance of

saying you do.

If you have a passion for the acceptance of others, you'll inevitably be very concerned with what you believe and trying to convince people of your beliefs and that you actually believe it and the reasons' they do this is to hide the doubt not only from others but themselves. The people who start these rumors are people who want to force you to act a certain way and conform to the way in which they think people should. Keirkegaard basically says that having a passion for acceptance is not as healthy as having a passion for happiness because it's more important how you believe than what you believe because if you have a passion for acceptance you'll believe (and possibly do) absolutely anything just to be feel accepted by a group. What would you actually do once you've achieved your passion? Keirkegaard believes that people are subjective creatures; they see the world how they want to, regardless of evidence or reason. Actual objective beliefs like the belief in gravity are based entirely on reason and evidence i. e. we go outside and we don't float off into space, therefore we have evidence of gravity. On the other hand objective studies do not actually make decisions; they just state facts. That's why we as beings can never be objective, because we need something to base our beliefs on that result in decision making.

In conclusion objective debate can go on forever but it will never effect anyone's decision making, even if you discovered evidence refuting the existence of god, there would still be people that would believe because without god they won't know how to live. As a result of this Kierkegaard says it's impossible for people to be objective.

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