

Xenophanes critique of greek religion assignment

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Xenophanes' Critique of Greek Religion In this paper, I will show how Xenophanes was a man before his time. Even though everyone around him followed and believed in all the same things, he was not willing to conform or stop attaining knowledge for anyone. He is a man who will challenge the belief of not only his generation but of generations to come. During a period where people prayed to many gods and had beliefs in gods that we now today view as fiction, Xenophanes was not afraid to stand up and tell them that they were wrong.

Twenty five hundred years ago Athens, people believed in the stories of Homer and Hesiod. Greek religion studied the religious text of Hesiod, which is called "Theogony" and the religious text of Homer, which is known as "Iliad". It took Xenophanes and other Pre-Socratic philosophers to come along and dispute these texts. Greeks believed that the universe was created by different gods like Kronos and Zeus. According to Greek text, Kronos created the world after being horny and masturbating it into existence. Now you and I might find this ludicrous but until men like Xenophanes came along it was life.

Xenophanes critique of Greek religion could be called explicit. He believed that a God had to be worthy of your worship because god is perfect and so much better than us. He proclaimed that the works of Hesiod and Homer were fiction due to the fact of how the Greek gods behaved. According to Homer and Hesiod, the gods had no problem with stealing, killing, lying, cheating and even raping women. Xenophanes was the first to suggest that there was only one God that they should be worshiping instead of all the hundreds the Greeks worshiped.

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Not everything that Xenophanes taught I believe in, however he does make you think. I was raised to believe that we are made or created in the image of God but a quote from Xenophanes states that, " God does not make us in his image; rather we make god/goddesses in our image. " Which means, that when we try and describe god, we often end up making him look a lot like ourselves. Xenophanes teaches that we should get away from any concept or description of God that would have him to be human. There were five things that he said a god should be.

They should be able to see all over, think all over, and hear all over. They should also, remain the same (never change), and be able to set all things in motion with just the power of its mind. He says that, " there is one god, unlike humans in either mind or body. " Another quality Xenophanes proclaimed a God should have is that they should have no physical body. The problem with Greeks was that they worshipped god's that could come down and interact with humans that were supposed to be their own creation. Our physical body has limitations. Therefore, a god would only be limited if he was like us.

So, if God is supposed to be a spirit with no physical body and not in our image, then why do we limit him and even refer to God as him. This is a part of his teachings that has even made me reflect on some things I have been taught in my religion of Christianity. Xenophanes has a way to make you question any religion that individuals believe in. Don't get me wrong, Xenophanes believed in God himself but he just wanted everyone to know for themselves if they were worshipping someone that is " pure and unlike

themselves". An example of Xenophanes helping someone decide for themselves is in his advice that he left behind.

He teaches that you should read a religious text and start from the beginning. If you are to get to a point in which god is behaving in a manner in which you would not behave or that you would condemn as morally wrong, then you should close the book and walk away because that is not the right god for you. According to Xenophanes, if that happens(having to close the book and walk away), then it's no way that it is a perfect being. I tried his technique or " advice" while reading the passage of (1 Samuel 15: 3) and (Joshua 6: 2, 21) from the Bible.

It tells of how God favored the Israelites during battle and whenever they would conquer a city, he would have their army destroy everything in that city. God instructed Joshua to have the army kill all the Amelecites. They destroyed, " man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey. " In Canaan he had them kill everyone except for a woman called Rahab. In taking Xenophanes advice into consideration, I would do what God did nor do I understand understand all the things He did during scripture time, however I trust in what I've been taught and I cannot close the bible and walk away.

I might not have all the answers like Xenophanes, but that is why a person has faith when they choose to believe in whatever God is in their life. In this paper, I showed that because of Xenophanes philosophy, he has changed the way that some people view, not only their religion but others as well. He wasn't afraid to think outside the box and be different from others. He knew

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that there was a supernatural being out there that was “ pure and unlike ourselves”. Thanks in part to Xenophanes; people are not afraid to seek the truth and answers for themselves.