

Kierkegaard and sartre's versions of existentialism

[Philosophy](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Task: Kierkegaard and Sartre's Versions of Existentialism Kierkegaard and Sartre are philosophers who demystify the rule of existentialism. However, they hold divergent views as one, bases his theme on Christianity, while the other bases his on atheism. Nonetheless, the two versions share a major line on similarities and deduce differences due to their split line of thought. The main difference between the two versions is that Sartre, an atheist, fronts a rationale idea that the choices man make define their existence and their will shapes their image whilst Kierkegaard, a Christian, fronts a stronger idea that the existence of men is due to their religious beliefs and the in-depth understanding of God.

On the other hand, they are similar in ways such as their trust on individuality, will power and meaningful decision making through choices. Sartre defines existentialism in ways that deduce the nature of man as man himself and that he uses his wills to accomplish his own destiny using various principles. The first one is that a man is only what he designs of himself. This means that men in the world shoulder responsibilities due to their mere existence on earth and each man knows his in full. He further explains that every man is responsible for humanity in its entirety and not merely for himself (individuality). Every choice that a man makes affects the rest of his species.

In another perspective, he declares that God does not exist. Therefore, all men carry the responsibility of their actions. He defines an ethical person as an independent thinker who lives generously in consideration to the needs of others. He sets goals, pursues them actively and enumerates decisions on how to achieve them. This is under the choice of active life. This drives to invisibility of a man's existence if he fails to pursue his goals in an active

<https://assignbuster.com/kierkegaard-and-sartres-versions-of-existentialism/>

manner or make plans of achieving them. This eventually leads to despair, where a man loses hope and the meaning of life itself.

Kierkegaard however contradicts this by setting three models of existentialism, namely: aesthetic, ethical and supranational religious faith. The importance of making a choice and the difference between ethical and aesthetical choices are the areas of emphasis. Men shape their personalities through their choices, which in itself is an ethical quality. High levels of determination together with thorough thinking enables man to make an ethical choice that is absolute and genuine. Aesthetical choices are neither meaningful nor stable and usually made for timely or sensual pleasure. Thus, they are not as genuine as ethical choices. An ethical person's duty is within himself. This gives the individual a sense of security and serenity.

Aesthetical choices may later lead to despair in life after their periods elapse. This is where he now introduces an antidote to despair, which he calls faith. Faith is drawn from Christianity which is the belief in the existence of a supernatural being who has power and authority to watch over and control the choices and duties of men - a God. Unfortunately, many people in the world become Christians because it is a norm in the society rather than a belief. This is the bar of judgment individual's moral character. Practice of independent choices before making religious choices by ethical persons is mandatory because the relativity of Christianity existence is individualized. Finally, the nature of self as fronted by Kierkegaard can be either ethical or aesthetical. People live to pursue happiness. Nevertheless, the achievement of this is through the discovery of one's talent. Practice of this talent is for both personal gain and for the benefit of others. Satisfaction comes through assistance given to others, offered with inner passion in earnest. This is a <https://assignbuster.com/kierkegaard-and-sartres-versions-of-existentialism/>

doctrine of ethical living. If not, the law governs survival leading to loss of spirit and serenity.

Work Cited

Guignon, Charles B. *The existentialists: critical essays on Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Sartre*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004. Print.

Crowell, S. *The Cambridge Companion to Existentialism*: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Cambridge.

Shand, J. *Central Works of Philosophy Volume 3: The Nineteenth Century*: Acumen PublishingLtd, 2005. London.

Edmonds, D. & Warburton, N. *Philosophy Bites Back*: OUP Oxford, 2012. Oxford.

Irwin, T. *The development of ethics: a historical and critical study*: Oxford University Press, 2007. Oxford.