

Kierkegaard

Fideism: Religious beliefs are not subject to rational evaluation

Objective inquiry: study into whether the belief in question is true or not.

Subjective inquiry: study into the relation between the believer and what he/she believes

Faith is best understood as a kind of subjective inquiry -- what matters is *how* you believe, and how your beliefs influence how you live. Whether or not your belief is actually true is not (as) important!
Faith as a kind of embracing of risk -- It doesn't matter what you believe so long as you believe it passionately!

Rational inquiry:

It seems that religious people *do* give reasons for believing what they believe, and respond to criticism!

- 1) If the goal of religious inquiry is not truth, then rational inquiry about religious matters is impossible.
- 2) Rational inquiry about religious matters is possible
- 3) Therefore, the goal of religious inquiry is truth.

Religious beliefs become irrefutable – there is no room for doubt about religion, let alone philosophy!

Clifford

Unreasonable belief: A belief not properly based on or responsive to available evidence
(If our belief is not open to rational reflection, as religious beliefs are for Fideists, then it is an unreasonable belief)

Unreasonable beliefs lead to bad actions:

- 1) If a belief is unreasonable, it will lead to bad actions.
- 2) If a belief will lead to morally bad actions, it is wrong to hold that belief.
- 3) Beliefs that are based in faith are unreasonable
- 4) Therefore, it is wrong to hold beliefs based in faith

Weakened argument, inductive form:

- 1) If a belief is unreasonable, it is likely to lead to bad actions
- 2) If a belief leads to bad actions, it is wrong to hold that belief
- 3) Beliefs that are based in faith are unreasonable
- 4) Therefore, it is likely wrong to hold beliefs based in faith

Unreasonable beliefs make us credulous:

- 1) It is wrong to make people credulous
- 2) If it is wrong to make people credulous, then it is wrong to hold unreasonable beliefs
- 3) Therefore, it is wrong to hold unreasonable beliefs

Some other normative notions: Language, etiquette, law. We need the norms of rationality to make sense of communication, science, etc!