

Søren Kierkegaard

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Biography

Born on May 5, 1813

youngest son of Michael Pedersen Kierkegaard

attended prestigious boys school (Borgerdydskolen)

father dominated him (treated him like a servant)

received degree in theology in July 1840

entered seminary in November 1840

engaged to Regine Olsen, September 1840

attended Copenhagen University



Spiritual History and Point of View

- religious poet
- Christianity
 - ~ serious strain of Lutheran pietism
- believed that faith is an individual's subjective passion
- published *Training in Christianity* in 1850 and is a summary of his interpretation of what it means to follow the teachings of the Bible
- Lutheran pietism
- influential religious reform movement that began among German Lutherans in the 17th century
- appeared throughout Christian history

Existentialism POV

Often questioned how a human life was meant to be lived.

Believed there are 3 modes/stages of life.

1. **The Aesthetic (Passion)**- Lives for the moment and rush of short term things, but can not keep deep or long term commitments. Doesn't think much about what happens after life, is only focused on enjoying it while they can. Despises being bored and repetition so they go by impulse.
2. **The Ethical (Societies Rules)**- Focuses on bettering themselves and fitting into society. Believes it's not what you accomplish, but it's about what you try to do. Not very individual, looks at morals on a more universal scale. Deals with most human psychological pressures.
3. **The Religious (Faith in God)**- The highest level of life, takes religion into their own hands because it is very exclusive and not meant to be done in large groups so it can be personal. Faith leads to the relief of human problems such as boredom, despair, and anxiety. He who accepts the Lord and takes a leap of faith can finally see the truth of life.

Ethical Point of View

Thinks ethics is a stage in human life

An individual must accept and embrace the meaning of their life

You make your life your own

You should enjoy life and be the best you can

thinks we should all have a meaning to life

Philosopher Influences

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel - one of the main reasons Kierkegaard started, Kierkegaard's work was to disprove the Hegelian philosophy, hegelian philosophy = all reality is capable of being expressed in rational categories

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling - attended his lectures in Berlin, modified and critiqued the ideas of Hegel

Arthur Schopenhauer - worked with him to disprove hegelian philosophy

Johann Eduard Erdmann - studied and was inspired by his works (*Vorlesungen über Glauben and Wissen als Einleitung*, which were lectures on Faith and Knowledge). He used much of Erdmann's work with his own, but only cited Erdmann his *On the Concept of Irony with Continual Reference to Socrates*