



The Quest for Genuine Freedom

IN DEFENSE OF KIERKEGAARD'S
UPBUILDING OF FAITH AND THE
UNITY OF TEMPORALITY AND
ETERNITY

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Overview for Today

- ❖ OVERVIEW FOR TODAY
- ❖ INTRODUCTIONS?
- ❖ BRIEF REVIEW OF MONDAY'S SLIDES
- ❖ LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (FROM MONDAY)
- ❖ TIME AND THE UNITY OF TEMPORALITY AND ETERNITY
- ❖ TIME AND ETERNITY
- ❖ SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
- ❖ THE UNITY OF TEMPORALITY AND ETERNITY: KIERKEGAARD'S "LEAP OF FAITH" AND THE PARADOX OF CHRISTIANITY
- ❖ SHORT VIDEO CLIP: [JESUS GIVES THE BEATITUDES TO MATTHEW \(THE CHOSEN SCENE\)](#)
- ❖ CONCLUSION: KIERKEGAARD'S GENUINE FREEDOM
- ❖ FINAL LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
- ❖ CLOSING REMARKS AND RESOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Welcome Back to Class!

Introductions

- TELL ME A BIT ABOUT YOURSELF!
- TELL ME YOUR NAME AND WHY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THIS CLASS IN PARTICULAR?
- ANY EXPERIENCE READING KIERKEGAARD OR FAMILIARITY WITH HIS PHILOSOPHY?
- INTEREST IN OR FAMILIARITY WITH THE SUB-DISCIPLINE OF EXISTENTIALISM IN PHILOSOPHY?
- FAVORITE PASTIMES, HOBBIES, INTERESTS IN LIFE?
- FINALLY, HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE OLLI PROGRAM, AND ARE YOU TAKING OTHER COURSES HERE AS WELL THIS SEMESTER? WHICH ONES?
- JUST ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SAY ABOUT YOURSELF, BRIEF OR A BIT MORE DETAILED... THE FLOOR IS YOURS!



Kierkegaardian Ethics: A Concrete Example

- **TRANSFORMATION OF THE PASSIONS: ROMANTIC LOVE TO MARRIAGE**
 - Marriage as ethical, lends to ethical openness (versus aesthetic concealment)
- The importance of choice for an **AUTHENTIC LIFE** (existentialism)
- **For Kierkegaard, choosing aesthetically is not choosing at all! (This is the first of the three ethical stages: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious.**
 - There arises the need to choose choice itself, taking responsibility for the person he has become.
- Self-acceptance (**facticity in the world**) versus self-alienation; The "I" **CHOOSES ITSELF**.
- Seeking a balance between Possibility (too much choice, paralysis of the Will)/Necessity (complete absence of choice).
- **Voluntary self-limitation**: Devotion to work, his wife, his children **less a sacrifice** than the source of joy and satisfaction (God) (**RELIGIOUS PHASE**)
- The ethical only **appears** to be grounded in social requirements and expectations for Kierkegaard, but.... The religious life also comes into play (and Kierkegaard is highly critical of organized religion!). So, we are moving toward a more personal relationship with God.

The Inward Journey to God

- **Despair as a misrelation of the synthesis, a sickness of the spirit**
- ***The Sickness Unto Death***
- **Knowing oneself in relation to God**
- **Standing before God from within**
- **The “leap of faith” towards the Kingdom of God**
- **The inward journey of despair into hope  Genuine freedom**

A Challenge to Kierkegaard's Original Synthesis and the Inward Journey to God

**SARTRE, DE BEAUVOIR,
AND THE FREEDOM OF THE
FOR-ITSELF**



Discussion Questions

- ❖ What is the most significant aspect of Sartre and De Beauvoir's challenge to Kierkegaard's "Original Synthesis"?
- ❖ What is the most significant aspect of their challenge to Kierkegaard's Inward Journey to God?
- ❖ Does their idea of the Synthesis work without God?
- ❖ Can the Being-for-Itself make meaning out of life without God in the movement of the transcendent ego? Why or why not?
- ❖ Which approach are you most attracted to and WHY?

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S APPROACH TO FREEDOM



- ❖ *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947)
- ❖ De Beauvoir sets herself apart from Sartre
- ❖ The journey from Sartrean absurdity (meaninglessness/no meaning at all) to ambiguity (no *fixed* meaning)
- ❖ "To make myself a "lack of being is indeed to make *something out of nothing*"
- ❖ **FOCUS:** The exercise of freedom is *always* an ethical act
- ❖ "Freedom wills itself only by destining itself to an open future, by seeking to extend itself by means of the freedom of others"
- ❖ We move **AWAY/TOWARD** subjectivity through **SEVEN ARCHETYPES**

AWAY FROM SUBJECTIVITY

- ❖ THE "SUB-MAN"
- ❖ THE SERIOUS MAN
- ❖ THE NIHILIST

TOWARD SUBJECTIVITY

- ❖ THE ADVENTURER
- ❖ THE PASSIONATE MAN
- ❖ THE INDEPENDENT MAN
- ❖ THE CREATOR

Kierkegaard's Freedom in Faith

- **Freedom is anchored in the objectivity of the Incarnation at the intersection of Eternity and Time**
- **Freedom is choosing in accordance with essence: self as spirit**
- **Christ is the object of Kierkegaardian ethics; the Theology of Grace**
- **"To work out your own salvation through fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you"
(Philippians 2:12)**
- **The spirit of true Christian charity**
- **Social responsibility to others**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- HOW DO KIERKEGAARDIAN ETHICS (THE THREE ETHICAL STAGES: AESTHETIC, ETHICAL, AND RELIGIOUS) LEAD TO THE INWARD JOURNEY TO GOD?
- IS SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S APPROACH TO ETHICS IN *THE ETHICS OF AMBIGUITY* CLOSER TO KIERKEGAARDIAN ETHICS THAN THOSE OF JEAN-PAUL SARTRE'S, OR IS THERE NO ROOM FOR AN ATHEISTIC EXISTENTIALIST POSITION IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF KIERKEGAARDIAN ETHICS?
- **CAN KIERKEGAARD'S CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM IN FAITH BE EXTENDED TO OTHER RELIGIONS? HOW SO, OR HOW NOT SO?**
- **CAN AN ATHEIST/AGNOSTIC/SECULAR HUMANIST BENEFIT FROM KIERKEGAARD'S FREEDOM IN FAITH?**

A close-up photograph of a mechanical watch movement, showing intricate gears, jewels, and metal components. The image is overlaid with a teal-to-blue gradient that fades from the right side towards the left. The text is positioned on the right side of the image, over the gradient.

Time and the Unity of Temporality and Eternity

Time and Eternity

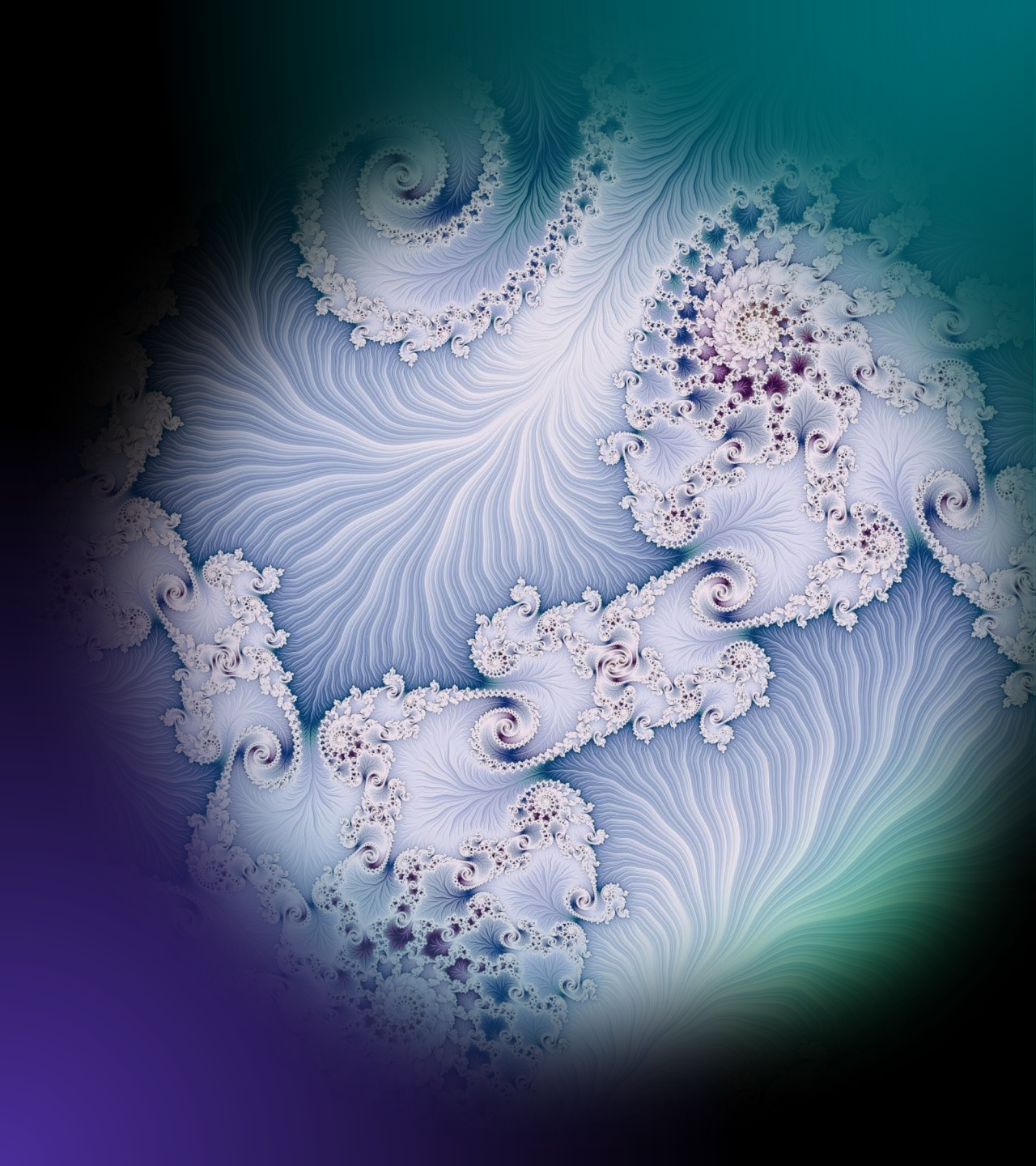
- ❖ De Beauvoir: Freedom as a unity in the *unfolding of time, a creative movement*
- ❖ Human existence is not possible in time; only society is possible in time
- ❖ In Eternity, it is the individual which takes precedence "in the sight of God"
- ❖ Kierkegaard: Time and Eternity are incompatible;
 - ❖ The misrelation of the synthesis
 - ❖ Despair = Sin
- ❖ **Tro**: Faith is volitional and belief an expression of the will
- ❖ **Metabasis eis allos genos**
- ❖ **Tro** depends upon not being able to grasp God objectively and with certainty!

The Unity of Temporality and Eternity

- **The “leap of faith” and the Paradox of Christianity**
- **The Incarnation (descending moment)**
- **The Imitation of Christ (ascending moment)**
- **A new creature in Christ through the “leap of faith”**
- **Total dependency on God**
- **Faith + Charity  Genuine Freedom**

The Paradox of Christianity

- Jesus Gives the Beatitudes to Matthew (The Chosen Scene)



Conclusion

- Genuine Freedom is an inward journey. Acts of charity coupled with faith lead to inner fulfillment and relief from despair, which is inevitable. In the quest for authentic existence, my reliance on the Teacher allows me to experience the unity of time and eternity here on earth before the Kingdom of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- For Kierkegaard, despair is equal to sin. Do you agree? Disagree? How so?
- How do you understand Kierkegaard's understanding of *Tro* (faith/belief) as depending upon not being able to grasp God objectively and with certainty?
- How do you understand the Paradox of Christianity with respect to time and eternity?
Why does Kierkegaard's idea of Genuine Freedom depend on faith AND charity and not JUST faith alone?
- How does the scene from "The Chosen" reflect the Paradox of Christianity?
- How do YOU understand the Incarnation of Christ as the Unity of Temporality and Eternity according to Kierkegaard's approach to ethics as a whole?

Closing Remarks

REFERENCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

"FEAR AND TREMBLING": EXPLORE KIERKEGAARD'S THOUGHTS ON FAITH AND THE PARADOX OF ABRAHAM'S WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE ISAAC.

"THE SICKNESS UNTO DEATH": UNDERSTAND KIERKEGAARD'S CONCEPT OF DESPAIR AND ITS RELATION TO GENUINE FREEDOM.

"CONCLUDING UNSCIENTIFIC POSTSCRIPT": DIVE INTO KIERKEGAARD'S PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL IDEAS ON FAITH, REASON, AND THE LEAP OF FAITH.

"TIME AND ETERNITY" BY GORDON H. CLARK: EXAMINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TIME AND ETERNITY IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY ^{1 2}.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS: THIS COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE COVERS KIERKEGAARD'S PHILOSOPHY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS.

CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS: ANSWERING THE TOUGH QUESTIONS: THIS BOOK PROVIDES INSIGHTS INTO DEFENDING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING KIERKEGAARD'S IDEAS IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN SKEPTICISM ¹.



Thank you!