

AN ANALYSIS OF KIERKEGAARD'S AND WITTGENSTEIN'S NOTIONS OF FAITH

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Faith in God can mean believing in God subjectively or believing in God objectively. Those who believe in God subjectively think that passion plays an important factor in having faith in God. Those who believe in God objectively think that reason plays an important factor in having faith in God. Both stances in having faith in God have problems. Can faith coming from passion be irrational? Can one be an honest religious thinker and still have genuine faith? This paper will give light to those questions by analyzing the notion of faith of these two great thinkers, Soren Aabye Kierkegaard and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Although both great thinkers brought great illumination to the relationship between faith and reason, the paper ends in challenging Kierkegaard's thinking that faith can be irrational at times, like what happened in his discussion of the story of Abraham in his work entitled "Fear and Trembling." The paper also challenges Wittgenstein's thinking that one should approach the reality of faith by using reason only with his ideal of the honest religious thinker, written in his work posthumously published under the title "Culture and Value," by using Kierkegaard's discussion of the passion of the infinite.

Keywords: knight of faith, subjectivity, passion of the infinite, honest religious thinker

INTRODUCTION

The statement "I believe in God" can be broken down into two parts. It can mean, "Objectively, there is a God" and "Subjectively, there is a God." When we say, objectively, there is a God, one's belief is based on a sound argument. On the other hand, when we say, subjectively, there is a God, one's belief is based on experience or personal experience or attitude in life.

Objectively, there are people who think that they are able to provide sound arguments on God's existence, like the ontological argument of St. Anselm, the cosmological and teleological arguments of St. Thomas Aquinas. If by the word "sound" in sound argument, we mean the arguments are able to provide a certain

conclusion, that is, the objective certainty of God's actual and not conceptual existence, then their arguments are not sound. In relation to the ontological argument of St. Anselm, aside from the criticism of Gaunilo that conceptual existence does not entail actual existence, the ontological argument of St. Anselm does not really provide objective certainty of God's actual existence. In relation to the cosmological argument of St. Thomas Aquinas, aside from its questionable assumption that infinite regression is impossible, one flaw of this argument is given by Jeremiah Joven Joaquin (2013, 170), who stated that "Nicholas of Autrecourt claims that there is no real connection between what is caused and the agent of cause." In relation to the teleological argument of St. Thomas Aquinas, although Joaquin (2013, 170 -171) claims that "many contemporary philosophers see this as the strongest of all Aquinas' arguments" on the existence of God, he points to a questionable assumption, that is, "The assumption that the world moves purposely lacks much justification. It might have been the case that things in the world really do not move purposely; it just looks as if they do." Immanuel Kant said that belief in God's existence is an example of the antinomy of reason which means that we can give equally powerful arguments to prove and disprove God's existence. That is one of the limitations of our reason.

Subjectively, many people around the world choose to believe in God based on experience or their personal experience or attitude in life. Beginning from experience, we encounter many things that our reason cannot explain. There are lots of mysteries in the world. Based on this, we may infer a higher being or a greater intelligence that many call "God." Also, belief in God subjectively can come from an individual's religious experience. In the objective approach to God's existence, assuming that there is a sound argument or rational proof that there is a God, then believing in God's existence is not faith but science. On the other hand, in the subjective approach to God's existence, believing in God even if there is no rational proof is what we can call "faith."

"Faith in God" implies a personal relationship with God. In this kind of relationship, there can be two problems. First is "how can we know that it is really "God" whom we relate to?" It is because God is unknown, and so when we relate to God, there is no assurance rationally that he is the true God. Second is "will God command us something that is irrational or unethical in human standards?" Assuming that it is really God whom we relate to and since God is the ultimate intelligence, will he give us an irrational or unethical command in human intelligence? Should we just obey if he gives us an irrational or unethical command in human intelligence?

Because the ontological status of God's existence is always a question mark and since "faith in God" gives us some serious problems, there are people who choose not to have faith in God and just rely on what they think is the essence of being a human, that is, reason. One problem in not having faith in God is that one only puts one's faith in something else, and in this case, it is in reason, which may just be a small part of being human. Another problem in only putting one's faith to reason is that one may not live life to the fullest or experience an unexplained happiness which we can call "joy" that can only come from having authentic faith in God.

In this paper, an analysis of the thoughts of the two great thinkers on faith is articulated. They are Soren Aabye Kierkegaard and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Specifically, this paper will answer the questions “Can faith in God imply irrational or unethical commands in human standards?” and “Can one be an honest religious thinker, that is, using your reason and at the same time having faith in God?”

KIERKEGAARD'S NOTION OF FAITH

Kierkegaard's notion of faith is contextualized in his three spheres of existence: aesthetic, ethical, and religious. The articulation of these three spheres of existence is needed to understand his notion of faith better.

In the aesthetic sphere of existence, the individual lives only for himself. What is important is what is pleasurable, so commitment to anything is not an option in this sphere of existence. In *Either/Or* Volume 1, Soren Kierkegaard (1959, 37) stated, “If you marry, you will regret it; if you do not marry, you will also regret it; if you marry or do not marry, you will regret both; whether you marry or do not marry, you will regret both.” In this passage, the aesthete refuses to make any commitment, and this kind of existence can be labeled as nihilistic. Clare Carlisle (2006, 78) stated, “The aesthete in *Either/Or* suffers from boredom, melancholy and sense of emptiness; his writings show that his way of life is ultimately nihilistic, and tends to lead to despair since pleasure is so transient.”

In the ethical sphere of existence, the individual chooses a particular way of life and takes responsibility for his life. He lives for the universal, which is the ethical. The ethical is understood in the Kantian sense, that is, there are duties that we must fulfill as a human being which are *a priori*. The ethical here can also be understood in the Hegelian sense, that is, there are duties that we must fulfill which come from being a member of a community in a particular culture. The way of life of a person living in this sphere can be seen in a passage from Kierkegaard's work where the ethical person is trying to persuade an aesthete why marriage is a good thing. In *Either/Or*, Volume 2, Kierkegaard (1959, 65) writes, “One of the most reputable answers, apparently, to the “Why?” of marriage is that marriage is a school for character; one marries in order to ennoble and improve one's character.”

Just like a person in the aesthetic sphere of existence, which led to despair, a person in the ethical sphere of existence will also lead to despair because moral perfection, which is its goal is impossible to attain.

In the religious sphere of existence, the individual lives a life in relationship to God, which is the most important relationship. Unlike the first two spheres of existence that led to despair, if lived rightly, in the perspective of Kierkegaard, this sphere of existence can lead to joy. That is what happened to the model of faith for Christians in the Old Testament - Abraham. Abraham is considered the father of faith because he is the first man in the Christian tradition to show his faith in God's mercy in spite of all evidence to the contrary. Carlisle (2006, 115) writes, “Johannes de Silentio describes this kind of faith as ‘that prodigious passion, that supreme passion.’” The story that made Abraham the “Knight of Faith” is found in *Genesis*

22:1-3 (1987, 20-21), which is as follows (*The New American Bible: The New Catholic Translation*):

Some time after these events, God put Abraham to the test. He called to him, "Abraham!" "Ready!" he replied. Then God said: "Take your son Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him up as a holocaust on a height that I will point out to you." Early the next morning, Abraham saddled the donkey, took with him his son Isaac and two of his servants as well, and with the wood that he had cut off for the holocaust, set out for the place of which God had told him.

This story will either make Abraham a "knight of faith" in the religious sphere of existence or a murderer in the ethical sphere of existence. In the ethical sphere of existence, the universal is higher than the single individual, and the universal in the story of Abraham is the duty to love his son, and so if he kills his son even because of his faith in God, he is condemned as a murderer. On the other hand, in the religious sphere of existence, if it is really God who commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac even if that is unethical by human standards, then Abraham is praised as a Knight of Faith. Faith is just this paradox, as Kierkegaard (1985, 84-85) claims:

...that the single individual as the particular is higher than the universal is justified before the latter, not as subordinate but superior, though in such a way, be it noted, that it is the single individual who, having been subordinate to the universal as the particular, now by means of the universal becomes the individual who, as the particular, stands in an absolute relation to the absolute. This position cannot be mediated, for all mediation occurs precisely by virtue of the universal; it is and remains in all eternity a paradox, inaccessible to thought. And yet faith is this paradox.

To make Abraham the "Knight of Faith" in that story, Abraham should have a certain kind of certainty that it was really God who gave him the command. The problem here is that there is no objective certainty to say that it was really God who gave him that command. But based on the context of the story, Abraham had subjective certainty that it was really God who gave him that command. Before receiving that command from God, as an old man, Abraham, through the years, was able to discern well if the voice that he was hearing was really coming from God, and he was subjectively certain in that story that it was really God. Because of this, even if the command is unethical in human standards, he felt the need to obey it. Because of this, there is what we call a "teleological suspension of the ethical." We have an absolute duty to God, and everything else is relative. In this context, as Michael Hodges (2001, 74) articulated it, faith means doing what we firmly believe God commands us to do despite all standards of evaluation, even the ethical ones.

A very important attribute of the knight of faith is being able to do the double movements, the movement of infinite resignation, and the movement of faith. The former movement should be the antecedent of the latter movement. Kierkegaard (1985, 89) stated, "the person who denies himself and sacrifices himself for duty gives up the finite in order to grasp the infinite." That is the movement of infinite resignation, and Abraham was able to do it in willing to sacrifice Isaac as his absolute duty to God, and we can only imagine the suffering that he experienced having in mind the love that he has for Isaac. After doing that, Abraham was able to do the second movement that made him the "knight of faith." Although Abraham gave up Isaac in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac because of his faith in God, he believed that he would somehow get Isaac back by virtue of the strength of the absurd. This is a paradox or a logical contradiction. Before Abraham received that command from God to sacrifice his son Isaac, God promised him to be the father of all nations through Isaac. So, the paradox here is how will both the command and the promise happen? Robert Herbert (1989, 151) claims that the idea of logical contradiction in the story arises from the mistake in thinking that the promise and the command in conjunction involve the nonsense that a dead boy should grow to manhood, marry, and father children. Although one can approach the story in that way, what is critical in the story is the nature of Abraham's response, that is, by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, he believes at the same time by the strength of the absurd that he would get Isaac back. Because of these double movements, although there is great suffering in the whole experience as a whole, there is also an inexplicable joy because of Abraham's faith.

What made Abraham really great as a "knight of faith" is not really the result of the whole experience but the suffering that he experienced as he executed the command given to him by God, which for him is the right to do because of God. We can only imagine the distress, the agony, the paradox that he experienced as he completes his 3-day journey to Mount Moriah, where he will execute the command. What made this suffering even greater is his inability to share it with anyone since the experience belongs to a different level of human existence. And if he does, no one will understand him, and also, he will not pass the test of faith. Kierkegaard (1985, 103) puts it in the following words:

But he also knows that higher up there winds a lonely path, narrow and steep; he knows it is terrible to be born in solitude outside the universal, to walk without meeting a single traveler. He knows very well where he is and how he is related to men. Humanly speaking, he is insane and cannot make himself understood to anyone. And yet 'insane' is the mildest expression for him. If he is not viewed thus, he is a hypocrite, and the higher up the path he climbs, the more dreadful a hypocrite he becomes.

Another description of faith given by Kierkegaard (1985, 97) in *Fear and Trembling* is that "Faith is this paradox, that interiority is higher than exteriority, that

the interior is incommensurable with the exterior.” This conception of faith of Kierkegaard leads to his conception of truth, which is subjectivity. For Kierkegaard, subjectivity is the truth. To explain this, in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Kierkegaard (2009, 167-168) puts it in the following words:

When truth is asked about objectively, reflection is directed objectively at truth as an object to which the knower relates. Reflection is not on the relation but on it being the truth, the true that he is relating to. If only this, to which he relates, is the truth, the true, then the subject is in the truth. If the truth is asked about subjectively, reflection is directed subjectively on the individual’s relation; if only the how of this relation is in truth, then the individual is in truth, even if he related in this way to untruth.

Objectively, truth is understood as the conformity between thought and being or reality or what is out there. In this approach, the subject should be detached from the object as much as possible to get a grasp of the objective truth. Subjectively, truth is understood as how authentic the subject is in his/her relation to the object, even if the object at hand turned to be untrue. In other words, the object is not important for the individual to be true, but subjective and objective truth should be both aspired. Regarding our reflection on God, which side is there more truth? Is it on the side of the individual who reflects on God objectively and as a result is led to a never-ending approximation process because God cannot be proven rationally, or is it on the side of the individual who reflects on God subjectively which can result in an authentic relation to God which may not be the true God? For Kierkegaard, there is more truth in the individual who reflects on God subjectively, which leads us to Kierkegaard’s definition of truth. For him (2009, 171), “the objective uncertainty maintained through appropriation in the most passionate inwardness is truth, the highest truth there is for someone existing.” The passionate inwardness or the passion of the infinite is the truth. This definition of truth is another way of saying “faith.” Kierkegaard (2009, 171-172) writes:

Without risk, [there is] no faith. Faith is just this, the contradiction between the infinite passion of inwardness and objective uncertainty. If I can grasp God objectively, then I do not have faith, but just because I cannot do this, I must have faith. If I wish to stay in my faith, I must take constant care to keep hold of the objective uncertainty, to be ‘on the 70,000 fathoms deep’ but still have faith.

This is the kind of faith shown by Abraham in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac. Since that command from God is unethical or irrational in human standards, the objective uncertainty of the command coming from God is at its highest. However, despite that or because of that, the passion of the infinite shown by

Abraham there being subjectively certain despite the objective uncertainty present is at its highest. Abraham should be regarded as the "Knight of Faith."

AN ANALYSIS OF KIERKEGAARD'S NOTION OF FAITH

What is the role of reason in Kierkegaard's notion of faith? Ranhilio Aquino (1993, 41-42) states:

For Kierkegaard, rationality lies beyond the bounds of the rational man; it has its roots in passion, not in intellection. The subjective thinker becomes the most 'rational' man because he realizes that rationality is an offshoot of his passionate aspiration for the infinite. With subjective thinking, the knower arouses his aspirations and moves beyond the limits of his intellect to an action rather than to an idea alone.

The humanness of the individual for Kierkegaard is passion, specifically the passion of the infinite. That is what makes him truly human. This does not mean that reason does not have an important role to play. For him, it is just that reason is just the offshoot or the outgrowth of passion. In other words, reason is just part of the full consciousness of man, and the man who has true faith is the one with full consciousness, like what is shown by Abraham in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac. Since reason is just a small part of the humanness of the individual because what matters is passion for Kierkegaard, is it all right to be irrational, like what happened to Abraham in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac? We can say that is irrational because it is against reason, that is against the ethical accepted in society, to kill your son.

Although reason is just a small part of our humanity, it is still an essential part of our humanity. It should always be used especially in matters of importance. Since reason has lots of limitations, it should transcend itself in faith. Aquino writes (1993, 46), "While the content of faith may not conform to what is proffered by reason, faith is not really a denial of reason, and hence is not irrational. The transition to faith from reason occurs where reason finds its own limitation as reason to affirm a content beyond itself." Faith is non-rational, and it should never be irrational.

Although the presentation of Abraham's act by Kierkegaard in the story is irrational since it is against the universal, the ethical, and the rational in human standards, examining the story deeper will lead us to a different conclusion. If faith can be irrational in that sense, will it be all right if someone else today says that he received a command from God to sacrifice his son?

To answer that in the negative, we need to examine deeper the nature of that biblical story. Is it historical, or should it be read in a symbolic way? The Bible is not a single book. It is composed of many books by different authors coming from different times and places. Although the biblical stories may have a historical basis, the Bible as a whole, generally speaking, is not a historical book. It is a religious book which means that it should be read with the eyes of faith. To get the right interpretation, we should try to know what the author is trying to say in writing a

particular story. It is very possible that the author of Abraham's story of sacrificing Isaac is simply trying to send a message that a man of faith like Abraham is willing to do anything for God, even sacrificing the person he loves dearly or most loved, like in sacrificing his son which is a common practice in his time in other culture. Marcel Gervais (1984, 83) stated, "Sacrificing Isaac as a burnt offering is known in Jewish tradition as Akeidah (the Binding)." He (1984, 83) also stated, "although the practice of human sacrifice then was a problem that plagued the People of God for centuries which they looked upon with horror, still it was a common practice in many cultures at that time and place."

However, as we know, the story is just a test of faith of Abraham. God did not really want Abraham to kill his son Isaac for him. God just wants to know how deep the faith of Abraham is. Michael Hodges argued (2001, 77), "although God stopped Abraham in commanding him to sacrifice Isaac, the question is, "What if God didn't stop him? What if the story ended with a bloody description of the killing of Isaac? Would the story still be included in the Bible?" Although the ethical, understood as what is accepted as right in a particular community, changes from one place to another, assuming that the ethical in the author's time is not to kill your son whatever your reason, then there is a good chance the story will not be included in the Bible. So, looking at the story from this perspective, there is a good chance that the story does not represent a complete suspension of the ethical.

Assuming that the story is really historical, is it already all right for an individual today to sacrifice his son because he heard a command from God to do such a thing since Abraham, the father of faith, did the same thing? In the article of Stephen Evans, there is an epistemic difference in Abraham's knowledge of God and cultural difference in Abraham's time and our time that would make it impossible for the person to do the same thing.

In the epistemic difference, Stephen Evans (2015, 65) writes, "Kierkegaard portrays Abraham as *knowing* that God has asked him to sacrifice Isaac. It is, however, difficult to imagine a contemporary person who could *know* that God has asked him to perform such an act." The subjective certainty that Abraham experienced in that story as knowing with certainty that it was really God who has spoken is only applicable to him. Every story is different and complex, and the story of Abraham is uniquely his. The purpose of Abraham's story is not the question, "Is it really God who gave him the command?" or "Should Abraham obey the command of God even if it is unethical in his culture?" Rather, the purpose of Abraham's story is the question, "Did Abraham act rightly in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac as a command coming from God?" Also, the story turned out to be just a test of faith because the Biblical God is against child sacrifice. Even this story of Abraham can be considered as against the practice of child sacrifice because the conditional proposition "If God commanded me to sacrifice my son, then I should sacrifice my son" doesn't mean that "God will command me to sacrifice my son." Abraham just willed to sacrifice his son Isaac because of God's command, but God (Christian God) will not truly give a command of child sacrifice. It is impossible for a contemporary person of Christian faith coming from his own complex and different story to know

or to be subjectively certain, just like Abraham, that God commanded him to sacrifice his son. In the cultural difference, Evans (2015, 69) writes:

The biblical Abraham apparently lived in a culture where child sacrifice was far from unusual. If our ethical knowledge is historically grounded, Abraham would hardly have had any confidence that such actions were wrong. Many cultures have practiced and approved of infanticide for all kinds of reasons. Even if Abraham's own culture condemned the practice as unethical, Abraham would surely have known that there were other cultures that believed that God (or gods) did require such things.

This shows that Abraham's belief that God really commanded him to sacrifice his son Isaac is not irrational. Although it is unethical in his culture, he would have known that it is ethical in other cultures. That can lead Abraham to think that even if it is unethical in his culture, but since God commanded it and it is ethical in other cultures, the act of sacrificing his son is not a total teleological suspension of the ethical, the ethical understood as what is considered good in the cultures in his time. This information from Abraham's culture will make it impossible for a contemporary person of Christian faith today, even if he may also be aware of a possible culture today who approves of child sacrifice, to believe that God commands him to sacrifice his son. Evans (2015, 70) puts it in the following words:

A contemporary person of faith is not in Abraham's situation and, if I am right, cannot be in the exact situation. Abraham could well have thought that it was at least possible that God might require human sacrifice. A contemporary person of faith who is committed to the God of the Bible may be certain that God does not require this, precisely because such a contemporary believes that God has revealed himself fully in the biblical story as a whole. That story, taken as a whole, including Genesis 22, makes it plain that child sacrifice is forbidden by God.

WITTGENSTEIN'S NOTION OF FAITH

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1974, 89) ended his book *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* with the following words:

There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical.

My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to

Speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright.

What we cannot speak about, we must pass over in silence.

These statements tell us that the whole point of the book is not what is written there. It points beyond itself, that is, to the mystical world or to the ethical and religious spheres of existence to use the terms from Kierkegaard. Ignace D'heret (1975, 35-36) writes, "Wittgenstein's response to the idea of God is silence, that is, renounce the expression and simply acknowledge the mystery." His notion of God in this book is prerational and suprarational, which is implied in this statement of him (1974, 88) "How things are in the world is a matter of complete indifference for what is higher. God does not reveal himself in the world."

In his work entitled *Culture and Value*, he gave his personal remarks on religion which was only posthumously published. In this work, he specified his ideal of the honest religious thinker, which he aspired and became based on what he has written. For him (1998, 101-102), "The honest religious thinker is like a tightrope walker. It almost looks as though he were walking on nothing but air. His support is the slenderest imaginable. And yet it really is possible to walk on it."

The honest religious thinker for Wittgenstein is someone who is an honest thinker, on the one hand, that is, being reasonable, which is an objective approach to the object at hand, and a religious, on the other hand, that is, being passionate which is the subjective approach to the object at hand. Before making the act of faith, he wants to keep his intellectual integrity. Because of the importance he puts on reason, he used his reason to understand the phenomenon of faith. He (1998, 91) stated: "It appears to me as though a religious belief could only be (something like) passionately committing oneself to a system of coordinates. Hence, although it's a belief, it is really a way of living, a way of judging life." This implies that to understand religious belief correctly, it is primarily a particular attitude towards life, and with this attitude, it leads to a belief in a religious metaphysics as true and not the other way around. Severin Schroeder (2008, 96) claims, "For Wittgenstein, a belief in religious metaphysics is not the basis of one's faith but a mere epiphenomenon." This means that belief in God does not come from the objective approach but from the subjective approach. Schroeder (2008, 92) also stated, "It begins from a proto-religious attitude, a way of experiencing the world or certain aspects of it, as basic and of primary importance." Because of this, Wittgenstein (1998, 74) wrote, "The way you use the word "God" does not show *whom* you mean, but what you mean." It is because the word "God" for us is dependent on how we interpret our experiences in life that leads us to believe in God. One possible experience that can lead us to believe in God is an experience of infinite distress. Wittgenstein (1998, 68-69) writes:

Or again, no distress can be greater than what a single person can suffer. Hence one human being can be in infinite distress and so need infinite help. The Christian religion is only for the one who needs

infinite help; that is only for the one who suffers infinite distress. The whole Earth cannot be in greater distress than one soul. Christian faith – so I believe – is refuge in this ultimate distress.

Wittgenstein is an example of a person who experienced infinite distress. Schroeder (2008, 100) writes, “His own life was full of despair, he lived through a number of intense crises when time and again he was close to suicide. And he knew that his wretchedness and despair, the disgust he felt with what he regarded as his sinfulness and vanity, was of the kind that others had overcome by conversion to faith.” Because of these, he (1998, 53, 68) encouraged himself in his diary,

“Go on, believe! It does no harm.” and “What inclines even me to believe in Christ’s resurrection? I play as it were with the thought... But if I am REALLY to be redeemed – I need certainty – not wisdom, dreams, speculation – and this certainty is faith. And faith is faith in what my heart, my soul, needs, not my speculative intellect.”

Because of his ideal of the honest religious thinker and of his experiences in life, he was not able to believe. His bad experiences and his intellect are very powerful. Schroeder (2008, 102, 105) claims, “He was fully aware that the arguments of natural theology are unconvincing.” and “On Wittgenstein’s account, the respectable theist is the one who is knowingly *not* reasonable in his religious beliefs.”

AN ANALYSIS OF WITTGENSTEIN’S NOTION OF FAITH

In Wittgenstein’s ideal of the honest religious thinker, reason is of primary importance. Before making an act of faith, there should at least be a good chance using reason that the object of faith is really true. Although Wittgenstein was able to see using reason that faith arises primarily from passion, he still places more value on objective truth rather than subjective truth. It is worth noting a good definition of reason. Taylor (1992, 50-51) writes:

Our reason does not just refer to our logical ability, which is a highly controlled use of precise rules of reasoning and which has an important but limited area of application in the human experience. Our reason refers to the whole mental process of generating beliefs, opinions, points of view, and daily explanations of our experience in the world, which is about what is going on 95 percent of the time when people use the word “reason.” It is also interesting to note that the precarious and limited nature of reason is an insight provided by reason itself.

Being an authority in logic, Wittgenstein knew well the limited nature of reason. Although that is the case, for him, there is still more truth in reason than in passion, even in religious matters. That is the reason why he was not able to believe in his life even if he knew that faith arises from an attitude in life coming from particular interpretations of the world and also even if he knew that making the act of faith can save his life from despair. Again, he cannot compromise his intellectual integrity. But then reason has only absolute authority to facts about the world, empirical facts, and logical facts. Regarding spiritual matters, reason only plays a small part. As Kierkegaard says, there is more truth in passion than in reason in spiritual matters. The most truth is in the passion of the infinite. The passion of the infinite is precisely subjectivity, and thus subjectivity becomes the truth.

“REASON AND PASSION” IN KIERKEGAARD’S AND WITTGENSTEIN’S NOTION OF FAITH

This paper highlights the importance of reason, as shown by Wittgenstein, to the notion of faith of Kierkegaard. It also highlights the importance of passion, as shown by Kierkegaard, to the notion of faith of Wittgenstein.

For Kierkegaard, we can never be certain of the object of our faith, who is God. Actually, the uncertainty of our faith is what makes faith “faith.” Because of this nature of faith, the “leap” in making the act of faith cannot be avoided. Although this seems like a negative part of our human condition at first, for Kierkegaard, this becomes positive in the context of our relationship to God. It is because the more uncertain we are objectively in our faith, the more risk that it may be wrong, but the positive consequence is the more passion that we will have in the relation, that is, assuming that we are subjectively true in the relation. This is what is most important in our faith for Kierkegaard, that is, to be subjectively true even if the object of our faith is not true. With this idea, the object of our faith is less important than the subject’s relation to the object of faith, and it may even suggest that the truth value of the object of faith is not important at all. It is because the more we are uncertain, that is, the more possibility that the object of our faith is untrue, the better because we will have more passion of the infinite. There are great dangers in these implications of Kierkegaard’s notion of faith. Because of this, it is very important to highlight the importance of reason, as shown by Wittgenstein’s notion of faith. We should not just be religious, but equally important is we should also be a thinker. We are given a reason for a reason. We should be able to use it in its proper place in our lives. Although it has many limits in our lives, it also has many uses. It helps us a lot in having more certainties than probabilities in empirical and logical matters. It can also help us a lot in having a greater probability of the truth in spiritual matters. Because of this, faith should never be irrational. However, because of the mystery of life, faith can be irrational at times, and the outcome may be good, and the object of faith can be true, but there is a big question mark on morality since reason is not used. On the other hand, by using our reason in our faith, there is still no guarantee that the outcome will be good and the object of our faith is true. There will just be a greater

probability that the outcome will be good, and the object of our faith is true. Assuming that we have used our reason to the best of our ability in our faith, but the outcome was bad, and the object of our faith turned out to be false, we believe God will understand.

For Wittgenstein, we should be honest religious thinkers. Unlike Kierkegaard, he placed more importance on being an honest thinker rather than on being religious. Using reason, where he is really brilliant, he was able to uncover lots of important things about faith. He also knew using reason that unless one would surrender oneself to God, that is, to have faith in God whom one can never know for certain objectively, one will not overcome distress in this life, particularly infinite distress, and be truly happy in this life. Although he knew these things, he was not able to submit to faith in God, most probably primarily because of his ideal of being an honest religious thinker with emphasis on being an honest thinker, that is, wanting to preserve his intellectual integrity. As a result, his life was full of despair. This is the danger of putting more emphasis on reason in our faith, but worst is putting absolute emphasis on reason in our faith. Because of this, it is very important to highlight the importance of passion in Kierkegaard's notion of faith. To do this, we need to emphasize being an "honest religious thinker" in the negative sense, that is, putting more emphasis on being an honest thinker rather than on being religious, and being an "honest religious thinker" in the positive sense, that is, putting more emphasis on being religious rather than on being an honest thinker.

Being an "honest religious thinker" in the negative sense is the case of Wittgenstein. True enough, using our reason understood as logical ability, the existence of God will be very unreasonable. Although there is no conclusive proof that God does not exist but since the existence of God is very unreasonable, an honest thinker will choose the more reasonable path, that is either not believing in the existence of God or knowing the importance of believing in God but not having faith. Wittgenstein was the latter, and because of that, we can describe him as a sick soul. As stated in this paper, reason, although it is important, is just a small part of our humanity. Making big decisions in life, like in one's spiritual life, using reason understood as a logical ability that is just a small part of our humanity, is a big risk. Again, although reason is important in our life, it is just a small part. There is so much more than reason, which leads to being an "honest religious thinker" in the positive sense.

In the positive sense, being an "honest religious thinker" is putting more emphasis on being religious rather than being an honest thinker. Being an honest thinker is definitely important, and reason has its proper place in spiritual matters, although being religious is more important in spiritual matters. Using our reason, understood not just as logical ability but more importantly the whole mental process, which includes making sense of our human experiences, particularly spiritual experiences, the existence of God is not very unreasonable. For example, some experiences make us feel that there is something more either in this world or in the world to come. Randy Alcorn (2006, 67) articulated, "When we see a roaring waterfall, beautiful flowers, a wild animal in its native habitat, or the joy in the eyes

of our pets when they see us, we sense that this world is – or at least was *meant* to be – our home.”

Experiences like these make us feel that there was a place or there will be a place where there is true happiness where God resides when the world was or will not be tainted by sins. In our experience, although we have never known a world without suffering, corruption, and sin, we have never known a world of perfection, but there is a deep longing in our hearts for such a world. This deepest longing in our hearts is expressed by St. Augustine in his famous statement, “My heart is restless until it rests in Thee oh God.” In his book *The Three Heavens*, John Hagee (2015, 259) quoted C.S. Lewis, “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was meant for another world.” These statements, which are interpretations of human experiences, tell us that there should be much more than what we experience in this life. Of course, these interpretations of human experiences do not prove God’s existence. They just make God’s existence more probable using reason understood as the whole mental process, which includes making sense of our human experiences. We can call these interpretations of our human experiences as Kierkegaard’s “passion of the infinite.” It seems that this is natural in our humanity, that is, to have a deep longing for the infinite, for a place where God resides. Based on Wittgenstein’s personal remarks on religion in his work entitled “Culture and Value,” we can infer that he also had the “passion of the infinite.” As he (1998, 53) stated in his diary, “Go on, believe! It does no harm.” But then, because of the importance that he put on reason in his life, that is, reason being more important than passion, he was not able to believe. As a result, his life was full of despair. He was an example of a sick soul. He was an “honest religious thinker” in the negative sense. Hopefully, we can be “honest religious thinkers” in the positive sense, that is, putting more importance on passion, particularly our passion of the infinite in our faith rather than on reason but without negating the important role that reason plays in our lives.

CONCLUSION

Where is there more truth? Is it in the subjective truth or in the objective truth? For Kierkegaard, there is more truth in the subjective truth. The subjective truth is the passion of the infinite and not in the truth of the object. This kind of truth for Kierkegaard is faith. It is the contradiction between the subjective certainty and objective uncertainty. What is important here is the authenticity of one’s relation to the object, although the object may turn out to be false. With this understanding of truth, Kierkegaard’s notion of faith tends to be irrational, like what happened in his discussion of the story of Abraham in his work *Fear and Trembling*. Since Abraham received a command from God to sacrifice his son Isaac although that act is considered irrational in his society since that is unethical in his culture, he needs to obey it. However, as argued in this paper, that act of Abraham is not irrational since child sacrifice was a common practice in his time; although it is from other cultures, he would have known those practices, which is considered ethical in other cultures.

Also, it is not irrational because the story turned out to be just a test of faith for Abraham. God (Christian God) would never command a child sacrifice. This means that faith is not irrational. It should never be irrational. God has given us a reason for a reason. Although reason only plays a small part, especially in spiritual matters, it should be used. God will not command us to do something that is totally beyond our comprehension. It should always make sense, even if it is just the possible littlest sense, but still, it is with sense.

On the other hand, for Wittgenstein, there is more truth in the objective truth. His ideal of the honest religious thinker tells us that it is still possible to make the act of faith but provided one should be conscious that one is not reasonable in one's religious beliefs. Because of this, since Wittgenstein cannot compromise his intellectual integrity, he could not make the act of faith, although he knew that faith could save him from his despair. However, as argued in this paper, reason is just a small part of dealing with spiritual matters. The limited nature of reason, especially in spiritual matters, is an insight provided by reason itself. In spiritual matters, as Kierkegaard argued, there is more truth in the passion of the infinite.

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