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Philosophical Essay on Apology by Plato

Socrates is regarded as the greatest philosopher of all times as well as one of the founders of western philosophy. He was also the first moral philosopher who didn't compromise on ethics when it came to expressing philosophical thoughts. He was charged with a trial of exploiting the minds of youth and his disagreement to multiple gods as he was in favor of one God. He was sentenced to death as a punishment. Plato wrote “The Apology” as a compilation of Socrates’s speech which he gave during his trial and in his entire speech, he referred to one God multiple times instead of serving multiple Greek gods. His philosophical thoughts in this regard raised many objections from the jury side to which he strongly defended himself by saying that the unexamined life is not worth living. He said this in an attempt to make people realize that life with ignorance is hard to live and is of no use. He meant that it is very important for ourselves to come to know about many things through investigation and make us understand about our own existence.

Life has no value if you spend your entire life in ignorance and not asking about anything and this is why it is better to die than to live in darkness. If we do not question everything we see, then we will never be able to differentiate between good and bad acts. Goodness is associated with wisdom and without wisdom, there is no life. It is very important to live a good life where people can be made happy through the positivity of one's actions which can only come from wisdom. Socrates also said that he never harmed anyone in his entire life because he was a philosopher who was focused on wisdom so that he makes others happy. So, if he is asked to abandon his philosophical life then it will be better for him to die than to live this unexamined life given by others. The main difference between people and animals is the ability to think for oneself and question the things but if as a human you do not uses this ability then your life is of no worth. Socrates is precisely saying that people should not object his role of a philosopher rather they should become philosophers as they are all humans who must think act rationally.

The two of the exceptional examples from the Apology about Socrates examined life is that, in his final speech where he is in discussion with the jury, he is order sentenced to death. So, he applies his philosophies into practicality by asking questions about death in a way that forces one to think about this aspect. Socrates adds on by stating that life is like a disease and death is far better than life. This is why he said “There is good hope that death is a blessing, for it is one of two things: either the dead are nothing and have no perception, or it is, as we are told, a change and a relocating of the soul from here to another place” (Apology 40c). This determination and examination of his life on death in front of the jury makes it clear that he indeed lived an examined life. He devalued life and argued that wisdom and knowledge are more essential for survival than the life itself as they will bring the person close to True being.

“Make your first and chief concern not for your bodies or for your possessions, but for the highest welfare of your souls” (Apology 30b). He urges everyone to improve their souls by finding the good within themselves through wisdom and then act according to them. This also makes it clear that he is one of the first to know the real condition of soul that is why he is informing others to take care of their souls and not the body. Therefore, it is assured that he lived his life to the fullest before dying, an examined life.

Works Cited

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