Introduction

Pascal’s Wager is named after ________________, a French mathematician, physicist, and philosopher. Pascal lived in the 17th century, which was a time of great skepticism (__________________) in Europe (this era is usually referred to as “The ______________”). Knowing that the classical arguments for God’s existence rarely ever worked with people so skeptical, Pascal decided to try a different tactic: ____________________.

The Wager

GOD

ME

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(Pray for me!)
Quadrants 2 & 3: If God doesn’t exist, then, as some atheists describe it, all you are is a “________________ bag of _______________” that will cease to exist after death. Without God, there is no real reward to gain or lose after death. Not only that, but without God life on earth becomes ________________.

Quadrant 1: If God exists and you choose to live your life in accordance with God, then you can win BIG: Eternal happiness in ______________ AND a life of purpose, peace, and joy on ______________ (“The saints went to ______________ before they went to Heaven.”)

Quadrant 4: If God exists and you choose NOT to live your life in accordance with God, then you could fail ______________.

3 Main Things Pascal’s Wager Does

1. It reminds skeptics/agnostics that they must, at some point, make a __________. And yes, deciding to not choose is, in fact, a __________. If Romeo proposes to Juliet and Juliet keeps responding, “I don’t know” or “Come back tomorrow” her answer will, in effect, become “______”.

2. It encourages people to give Christianity a __________. Similar to telling a picky eater to try a bite of ______________ food they’ve never experienced before, Pascal knows some people need to be double-dog __________ to give their lives to God. And of course, Pascal knows that once they try it, they’ll ______________! In other words, “Living the ______________ can be a way of getting the ______________” (Peter Kreeft).

3. It can stick with you and __________ you for the rest of your life (or at least until you finally make a choice for God): “Maybe I’m wrong. Maybe God does exist and I’m on my way to losing this bet…”

Conclusion

If you do not know whether God exists or not, then the most reasonable thing to do is to bet on __________. If you win, you win ______________. If you lose, you lose ______________.

*Note 1: Pascal would be the first to tell you that The Wager is not an argument that really __________ God’s existence. Instead, it is a creative tactic to shatter a person’s agnosticism and move them in the direction of belief.

*Note 2: The Catholic Church does NOT teach that all atheists and agnostics will go to __________. An atheist or agnostic (or Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, etc.) who has never had a chance to accept or reject Jesus but continues to seek the __________ and do what they know to be __________ (and avoid what they know to be wrong) may still end up in Heaven (see CCC 847). On the flip side, the Catholic Church also does not teach that all ______________ will go to Heaven. Just saying, “I believe in God” or going through the motions (Mass on Sunday, not killing anyone, etc.) doesn’t guarantee eternal life in Heaven, either. In short, we will be judged by what we __________ and how we tried to __________ our lives based on this knowledge.