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PHILOSOPHY

What is Philosophy?

Philosophy has its roots in two Greek words: *Philo* (love) and *Sophos* (wisdom). Etymologically, philosophy means the love or the pursuit of wisdom. It is the organized system of knowledge resulting from the persistent attempt of man's intellect to understand and describe the world in which we live. It involves an effort to solve fundamental problems, to gain a comprehensive view of the universe, and to find answers to questions on the origin, nature, and destiny of matter, energy, life, mind, good, and evil.

W. T. Jones has given the following definition of philosophy:

Philosophy is the eternal search for truth, a search which inevitably fails and yet is never defeated, which continually eludes us, but which always guides us. The free, intellectual life of the mind is the noblest inheritance of the Western World; it is also the hope of our future" (Kirkcaldy, 1986, p. 11).

Philosophy is that careful, critical, systematic work of the intellect in the formulation of beliefs with the aim of making them represent the highest of probability, in the face of the fact that adequate data are not obtainable for demonstrable conclusion.

Philosophy is the love of wisdom and the relentless inquiry after truth. As such, it attempts to enable humans to seek consistently and coherently after the highest and integrated wholeness of self, society, and the world in a meaningful pattern. Philosophy is an activity that involves three aspects: synthesizing, speculating, perceiving, and analyzing.

Philosophy is also an attitude that involves self-awareness, comprehensiveness, generativity, and flexibility. Philosophy is a body of content which deals with the nature of reality (the metaphysical question), the nature, origin, methods, and limits of human intelligence (the epistemological question), the beliefs about values (the axiological question).

The Aims and Tasks of Philosophy

The aims of philosophy are:

1. The critical scrutiny of our beliefs and convictions. We should be willing to examine and appraise critically our most cherished beliefs and convictions.
2. The bringing to light of our hidden assumptions and presuppositions. As long as we are unaware of our assumptions, we are not intellectually free. We are enslaved to them and to all of the consequences they entail.
3. The quest for a genuinely worthwhile life. For Socrates the only worthwhile life for a human being is what he called the examined life. The unexamined life is not worth living.
4. The effort to keep alive our sense of wonder about the world. This sense of wonder and desire to learn, to know, to contemplate the mysteries of life and the universe has given rise to philosophy, science, religion, art, and culture.
5. The posing of certain questions which are not dealt with by other disciplines. Some of these questions cannot be answered by observation, experimental procedures, or by formal or linguistic determinations. Some of these questions are general and have very little

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