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How can I change the way I live? Kierkegaard's thoughts on the idea

The idea of becoming oneself is the most important leitmotiv of Kierkegaard's philosophy. Becoming oneself is strongly combined with the idea of overcoming oneself and changing the ways of life. In my speech I would like to show the conditions which should be fulfilled if the change of one's way of life is possible.

The method I chose is the transcendental reasoning; the first step would be to state the fact, that in our life we experience such a change of one's way of life. The second step would be to ask what must be true for that type of experience to be possible, so in that case - which qualifications should a man and the world have.

Kierkegaard states that a human being has a triple-relational structure. A man is called to become the self (individualised being) but he is also called to be the self (because everyone has the same formal structure). The self is a composition of various, contradictorious aspects; it relates to itself and relates to the other. First of all, due to this structure, change of one's way of life is possible - this structure and its dynamics enables the movement of becoming oneself (becoming the self). Kierkegaard says, that the self is always interested in choosing and change.

The second condition which the self should meet is the experience of existential untruth - despair understood as the dysharmony within the relational structure. This experience of despair (which is not a psychological, but ontological state) opens two possibilities: either the escape from oneself or the chose of changing this unsatisfying way of life.

The third condition is the ability to be in distance from oneself, in distance from what a man is used to think about himself. There must be space for a change to be possible. This distance might also be understood as existential freedom, which is necessary to make any change.

The fourth condition is, I think, the most important one and it is different from these three that I discussed already. It's not about how we should understand a man, but about something, that is independent from him. Another man must enter into the world of the self – a man whose way of life is different and he must show this different way of life. This is the method of Kierkegaard's philosophy: to show another ways of life and make us change our way of life. And it is all about showing the way of life, not just talking about it; it must be an experience, which can move not only man's reason, but also the will and emotions.

In my speech I will discuss those four conditions referring to Kierkegaard's philosophy.

Bibliography:

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