

In this piece, Nick challenges his reader to think beyond the literal definitions of words and consider the deeper meanings they hold. Nick uses a unique and powerful voice to persuade his reader in this well-crafted essay.

~Kate Worzala, Master Tutor

Infinity

By Nicholas Igl

Words are symbols which represent ideas. They carry power; they can inspire invigorating feelings. Bliss, exhilaration, and ecstasy all resonate happiness. Misery, disgust, and hate all proclaim pain. Stare at one of these words. Move beyond the literal meaning in your mind; hone the state of being that they attempt to describe.

Pick a happy one, close your eyes, and attempt to grasp its entire significance. Hold that rush. Now, juxtapose it with pain; tolerate that idea for a moment. Feel the difference?

Words are an assortment of letters we have created to fit our speech and language. Written language is a remarkably beautiful human innovation which allows us to create a word for everything, including ideas that we cannot fully grasp. The essence of joy is limitless, but often when we hear about joy we constrain it to our experiences and therefore may limit the idea of the word. True joy is boundless.

An endless progression can only be contained by pinning it with a word; infinity. We may understand the definition of infinity, but to grasp the fundamental nature of an eternal flow is impossible to do. Doing so only makes your head spin. Go ahead; try containing infinity in your thoughts.

Now, to exemplify God's infiniteness. Realize I did not come here to expand the ontological argument but rather illustrate the idea behind the symbol God.

God is immeasurably great by definition. Chew on *that* word for awhile and try to find its core. God is infinity, endlessly present, forever knowing, and permanently good. What does absolute perfection mean? It is impossible for God not to fit this definition; He fulfills these credentials through existence.

Man is not immeasurably great by definition. Man has potential for many things, potential for great success, and potential for fully experiencing some of these created symbols. Man, however, has not and will never obtain perfection, since it goes against our very definition. We are dependent, imperfect beings who can love and hate, who both build and destroy.

This is what separates man from God. We cannot measure up against limitless perfection, yet we strive for a perfect world, life, or day all of the time.

It is mathematically arbitrary in drawing any type of distinction between any finite number and infinity. Whether you match up the number one or a trillion with infinity there is no comparison.

God has infinite goodness, but man has only limited goodness. Now, this isn't to say that man isn't capable of unseen peace and prosperity, but rather, our goodness will always be finite. Man can do good deeds in a loving, altruistic matter for his fellow life, both human and not. However, these actions can't compare with infinity, no number does.

Now I have one final symbol for you to envision, death. Imagine your own death, what happens then? It is a disturbing thought for many, so it may be hard to hold death's being once you've found it.

Many say that perhaps, if good deeds sufficed, God will grant heaven. However, the number, intention, and significance of your good deeds only go so far when compared to infinity. Even one speck of dirt will alter the essence of heaven's forever cleanliness. Why would God grant anyone salvation who has even the slightest, minuscule amount of evil in them, requiring Him to sacrifice perfection?

Perhaps the incompatibility of this argument is an eternally good God not granting paradise to everyone. However, His refusal is based on our imperfection since He created us to be perfect, but through free will we chose sin.

Bridging that gap cannot be done alone and, therefore, one is in need of a Savior, a holy perfect God to wash the dirtiness. "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:17). "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (Romans 10:9-10). It is this way we return to God, eternally perfect.

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