

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

Pascal's Wager

Either we believe in God or we do not.

If we believe in God and he exists, we will be rewarded with infinite bliss.

If we believe in God but he does not exist, then the worst that has happened is that we have given up a few sinful pleasures that we might otherwise have enjoyed. But even if God doesn't exist, the edifying feeling of having faith in him is rewarding in itself.

If we do not believe, however, and God does exist, we may enjoy a few pleasurable sins, but we will be punished with eternal damnation.

If we do not believe and God does not exist, then there is of course no problem.

Any rational person will therefore believe in God: Why risk eternal damnation in return for a few sinful earthly pleasures?

	If God Exists, then	If God does not exist, then
Believe	Eternal Reward	Missed a few pleasures but edified ourselves through prayer
Do not believe	Eternal Damnation	We're OK, and we've had some good times