

Pascal's Wager

Pascal's Wager (or Pascal's Gambit) is a suggestion posed by the French philosopher Blaise Pascal that even though the existence of God cannot be determined through reason, a person should "wager" as though God exists, because so living has everything to gain, and nothing to lose. He wrote, "If you erroneously believe in God, you lose nothing, whereas if you believe in God, you gain everything. But if you correctly disbelieve in God, you gain nothing, whereas if you erroneously disbelieve in God, you lose everything."

Although Pascal pointed himself in the right direction, he ultimately came short of absolute certainty in the belief of God. Again, he wrote, "If I saw no signs of a divinity, I would fix myself in denial. If I saw everywhere the marks of a Creator, I would repose peacefully in faith. But seeing too much to deny Him, and too little to assure me, I am in a pitiful state, and I would wish a hundred times that if a God sustains nature it would reveal Him without ambiguity." However, God has assured us that He has revealed Himself in nature (Psalm 19:1-4). In fact, that revelation was so complete that Paul said the Gentiles were "*without excuse*" (Romans 1:20).

Pascal was correct in the sense that one should believe in God. If one ends up being wrong, what have they lost? A few pleasures of this world which do not satisfy (Hebrews 11:24-25)? More importantly, if you are wrong, you have given up an opportunity to dwell with God in heaven, a reward far beyond any reward on earth. What will you decide? Contact us if you would like to study further.

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