



Philosophy: The Ideologies to life

Joseph Arre  
Class of 2008, University of Baguio,  
B.S in Nursing

Most of us have problems in dealing with philosophy and with life. To many, philosophy is an intellectual study of problems connected to reason, mind, knowledge and values. It is a systematic way of thinking which is based on rational arguments. However, to philosophers such as Aristotle and Confucius philosophy is considered as a state of mind. Philosophy is based on love and wisdom, which can be traced back to the word philosophia.

In reality, philosophy can answer our problems in love, in life and in our other emotions. Philosophy teaches us a profound yet realistic concept that through understanding its ideologies we can ultimately achieve true happiness.

Epicurus, a Greek philosopher (341-270 BC), considered that the concept of happiness can be traced back to several ideologies. For instance, he considered that being with friends and not wanting unnecessary items enables us to have a meaningful life. By spending time with friends, we feel their happiness and we share with their emotions. His theories were derived to both pain and pleasure. He considered that overindulgence or wanting too much of various things can eventually lead to pain. He advocated the belief that if we no longer need pleasure and we do not suffer from pain then we are in a perfect state of mental equilibrium and we can fully achieve a peaceful state of mind.

Several other philosophers who have pointed out the importance of emotions and their significance to everyday living are Socrates, Aristotle and Seneca. Socrates pointed out that we must "Know thyself." By assessing ourselves we can actually gain the ability to know our true wants, desires and we will be able to improve our communication with others. Aristotle also pointed out the relevance of controlling one's emotions especially during times of hardships and war. Such teachings were applied by Alexander the Great, conqueror of Persia and Egypt (356-323 BC), and due to this way of thinking he was able to conquer almost all of the ancient world. For Seneca, he believed that anger is stemmed from man's high expectations, therefore by having realistic expectations we will prevent anger in our lives.

In Taoist religion, a key concept to peace can be expressed through the belief of Wei Wu. Wei Wu is a concept wherein an action can be done through inaction, control through abdicating rule. If we constantly struggling in life we actually move backwards, creating more turbulence in our way. Wei Wu teaches us that through waiting and being patient with life we can gain more. If we wait for the storm to pass, eventually we will be able to collect our strength and move towards the future.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Who is the Philosopher who mentioned the saying "Know thyself"?
2. How do we control anger according to Seneca?
3. What is the name of the Taoist belief which concerns the concept of action through inaction?
4. Who conquered Persia and Egypt?
5. What can philosophy answer?