

The Submission of Reason in Faith in Pascal and Kierkegaard

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Blaise Pascal and Søren Kierkegaard are two thinkers who exhibit interesting affinities, in their thoughts as well as in their lives. Both thinkers are fighting against an overly rationalistic age in similar ways. Pascal designs the *Pensées* as an apologetical work, aiming at converting the libertines and the skeptics. On the other hand, the polemical writings of Kierkegaard have in mind the citizens of Christendom, trying to make clear to them what Christianity really is. Yet they have come to the same insight in seeing the limits of reason in facing up to the most fundamental metaphysical and religious questions. Eventually, it is not the proofs that bring people to belief. It is only when people submit themselves in faith would they experience the grace of God and enjoy authentic religiosity. In the following pages, we would examine their thoughts along these lines.

I. Pascal

1. The Uses of Reason and Its Limits in Approaching Faith

As mentioned above, Pascal designs his *Pensées* basically as an apology for the Christian faith. Contrary to the view of some readers who regard Pascal as a fideist, Pascal