Dualism And Christianity: Comparative Analysis

The beliefs of Christianity and the framework of the theory, Dualism, are very similar. Both Christianity and Dualism focus on a nonmaterial soul and a material body. The framework of Dualism is that the mind and soul are no longer connected, they exist separately, but they also can interact (Shireav, 2015, pg. 78). The physical body is able to gain knowledge through perceptions and sensations(Shiraev, 2015, pg.78). For example, a baby is not born with the knowledge that alcohol is an ingredient in hand sanitizer. The baby will not know that if he/she puts the hand sanitizer on a cut, it will sting and essentially hurt or burn. The only way the baby can learn not to put hand sanitizer on a cut is to experience the pain it may cause. As babies, we are born with preexisting knowledge; this is another part of Dualism (Shiraev, 2015, pg. 78). For instance, babies are born with reflexes, such as blinking, grasping, stepping, and many more. Babies will perform these reflexes right out of the womb.

The philosopher, Plato, focused greatly on Dualism in his Dialogue, “Phaedo”. Plato theorized that death is what causes the material body and the nonmaterial soul to split (Hackett, 1981, 64c). He also believed that after death the soul is able to gain knowledge through the spiritual world (Hackett, 1981, 65b). He considered that knowledge to be “real” knowledge (Hackett, 1981, 65b). Just like the original definition of Dualism, Plato believed that body and mind were like physical versus non-physical (Hackett, 1981, 65c). However, Plato emphasized the importance of keeping the distractions of the physical away so you can focus on the non-physical world, which was considered as your mind and soul. He implies that the physical body was like imprisonment, and when you died, you were finally released from that “burden” (Hackett, 1981, 66b)

I was raised in a Christian home and taught that religion was very important in anything that I do or may do. Religions, not just Christianity, focus greatly on and depend on faith. In Christianity, there are two spiritual worlds, Heaven and Hell. When a person dies, their physical body has died with them, however, their soul continues to live on. The deceased person’s beliefs or faith determines if the person’s soul will live on in Heaven or Hell. According to Christianity, in order for someone’s soul to go to Heaven, the person must truly believe and have faith that God sent his son to die on the cross for all of his children’s sins. Every person put on this earth is considered God’s child. They also must allow the Holy Spirit to enter their hearts. Anyone who does not believe or accept the Lord will be damned to hell, where their soul will burn forever. This part of Christianity coincides with the soul being separated from the body. The body after death is stationed in the physical world, wherever it may be. However, the soul is able to roam freely in the spiritual world, whether it is roaming through Heaven or through Hell.

The Bible talks a lot about life after death, but it also talks a lot about how followers of the Lord should act. Some people believe that if you act correctly, that will give you a one-way ticket to Heaven. That’s a good first step, unfortunately, that is not the only step. My pastor would always say, “Just because you come to church every day does not mean you are going to Heaven.” We can use our bodies, however, to worship God. We can do this through song and singing, going to church weekly, reading the word God has provided for us in the Bible, and telling others about him. This part of Christianity coincides with the physical body being separated from the soul. Although these actions may not be a straight path to Heaven, we are

able to use our bodies and our perceptions to worship and learn about the Lord.

The body and soul work separately in Christianity, but they also work together to help you reach the end goal, everlasting life with our Lord, God. In a way, Christianity and Dualism are one and the same. I was drawn to Dualism because it is so similar to my beliefs. Religion is not the only thing similar to the theory. There are many things that share the same framework, such as a machine. Each part of the machine serves a specific and separate purpose. However, all of the parts end up working together to make the finishing product. Another example could be a clock. The minute hands are used to count the specific minutes and the sweep hand is used to count the seconds in a minute. Although they have separate jobs, they work together to give time. I can see the framework of Dualism in my everyday life, especially with my religious views.