OCR H573 | INDEPENDENT REVISION

A* Model Essay

Negative, Analogy & Symbol

Philosophy of Religion

Does analogy explain meaningful religious language better than negation or symbol?

1,497 response words | Complete annotated PDF | Individual topic edition

What is included

A complete original response, an argument plan, paragraph-level AO1/AO2 annotations and source works for further reading.

A* describes the intended style of this teaching model. This is independently written, not an OCR-marked script or a guaranteed grade.

Use this model to study argument and evaluation, then write your own answer. Do not submit it as your own assessed work.

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Argument plan

Does analogy explain meaningful religious language better than negation or symbol?

Thesis: Analogy offers the strongest account of positive claims about God because it preserves both a connection with human understanding and a distinction from finite creaturely qualities. However, it depends on a defensible relation between God and the world and needs the corrective restraint of negation. Symbol contributes dimensions of religious practice that analogy alone does not capture, so analogy is preferable for theological assertion rather than an exhaustive replacement for other forms of speech.

1. The via negativa protects transcendence by excluding creaturely limitations.

Counter-argument: Negation alone supplies too little positive content to identify God or sustain worship.

Interim judgement: It disciplines religious language more successfully than it provides a complete account of it.

2. Aquinas's analogy preserves continuity of meaning without univocal description.

Counter-argument: The creator-creature relation and the selected resemblances need independent justification.

Interim judgement: Analogy best explains positive predication if its metaphysical and moral constraints are defended.

3. Tillich's symbols convey participatory and existential religious meaning.

Counter-argument: Participation and criteria for correction can remain unclear without some positive assertions.

Interim judgement: Symbol enriches religious expression while analogy better supports accountable theological claims.