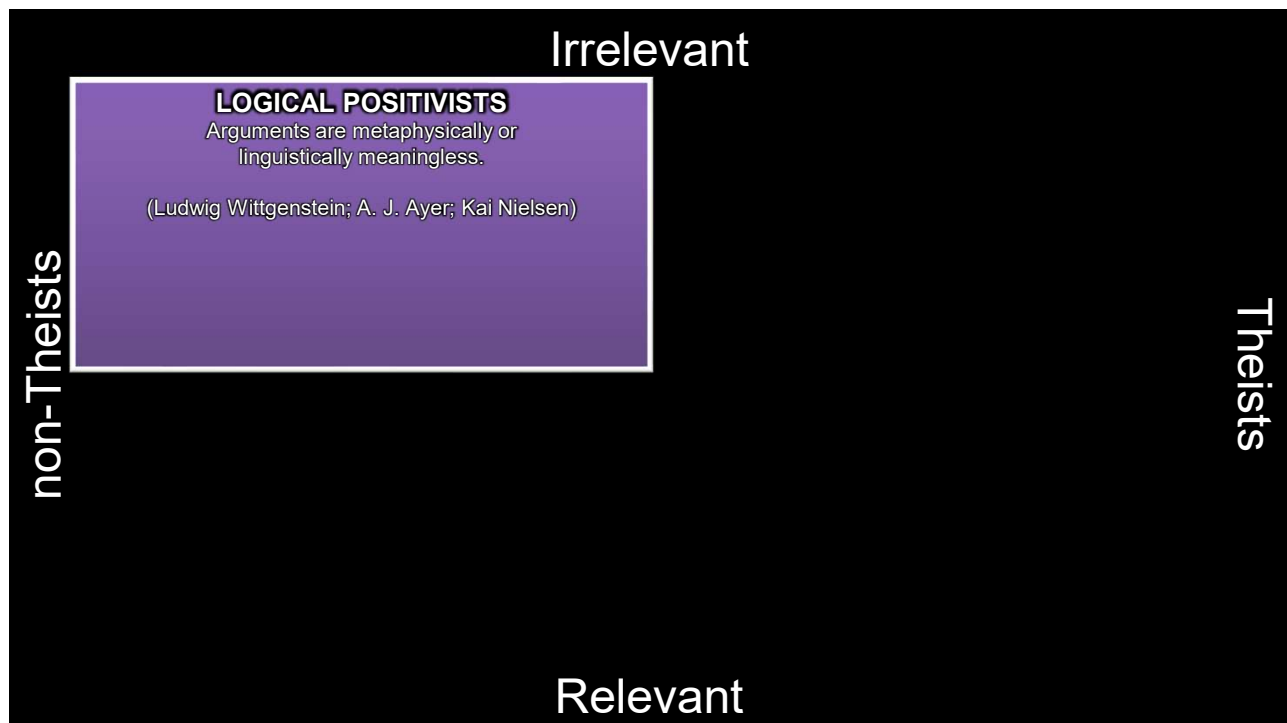
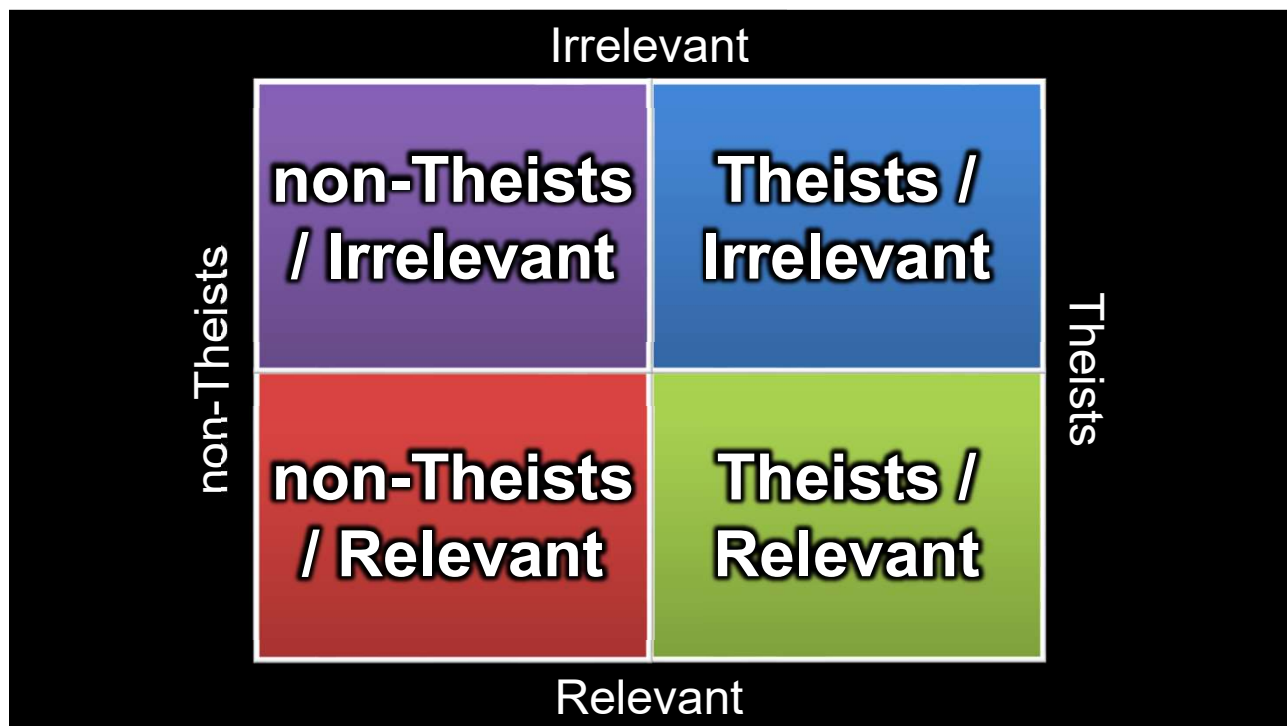


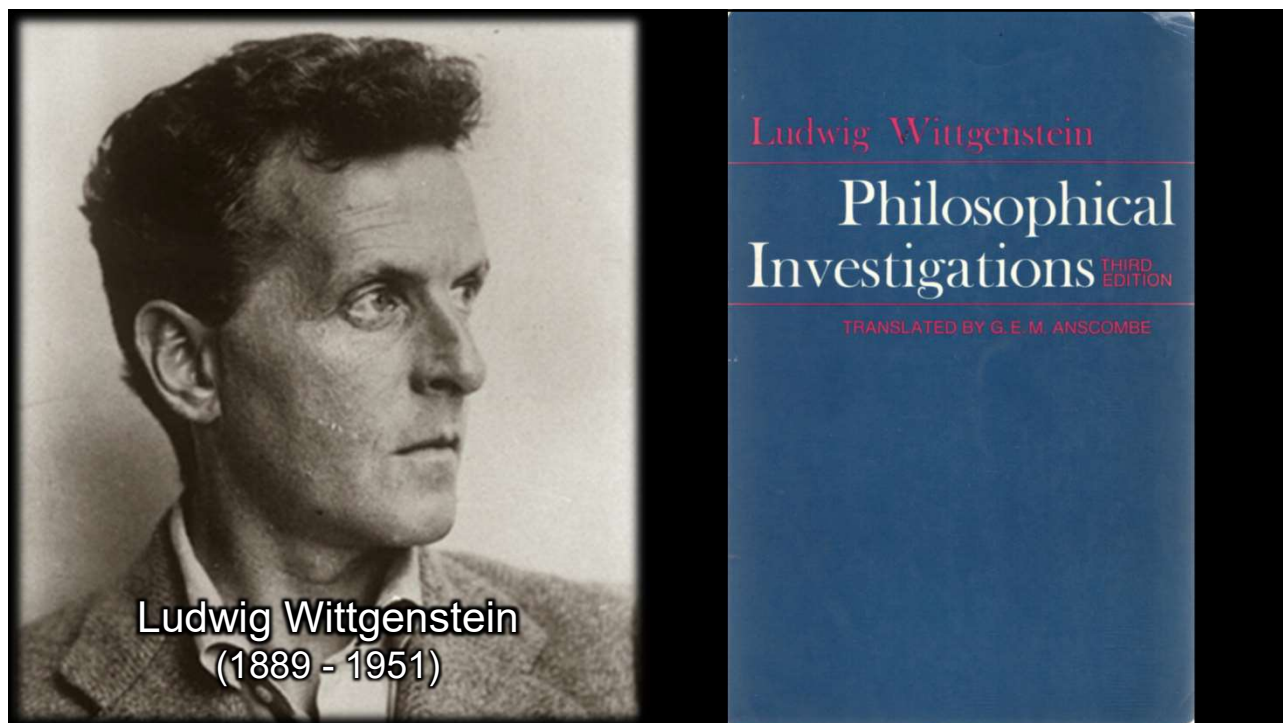
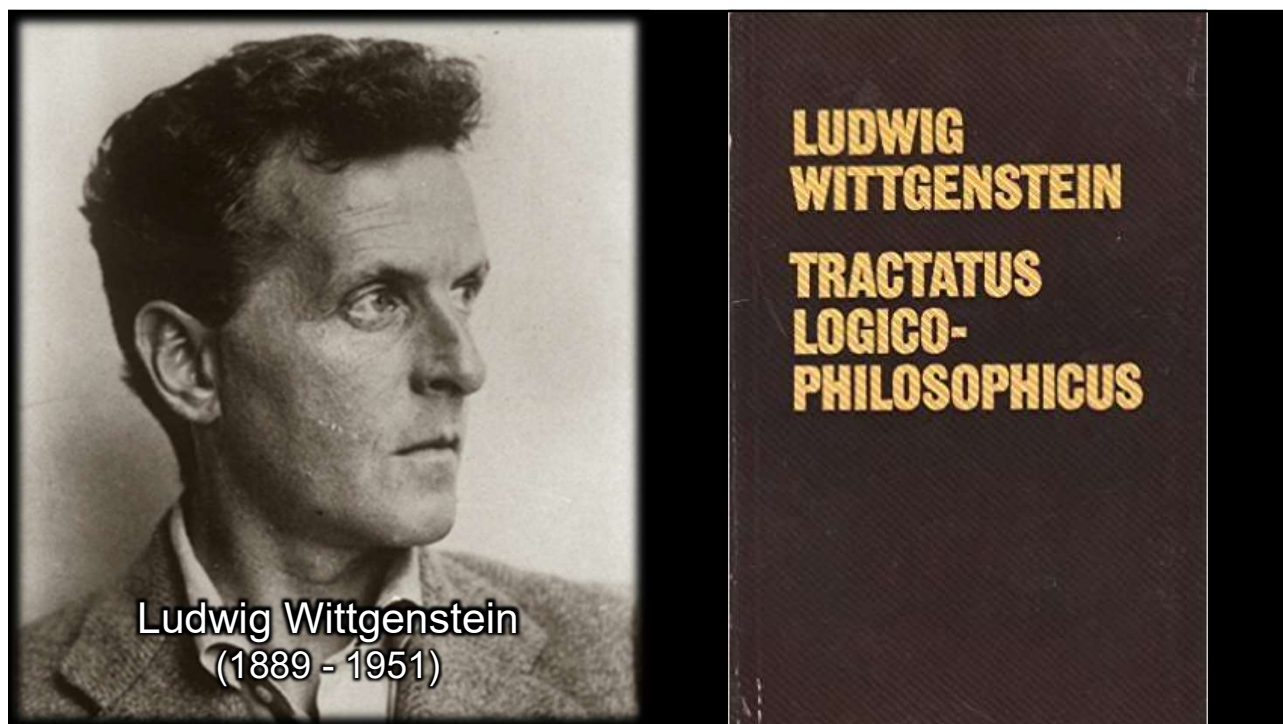
Perhaps it is not surprising that there are different views on whether or how there is any relevance for the arguments for the existence of God.

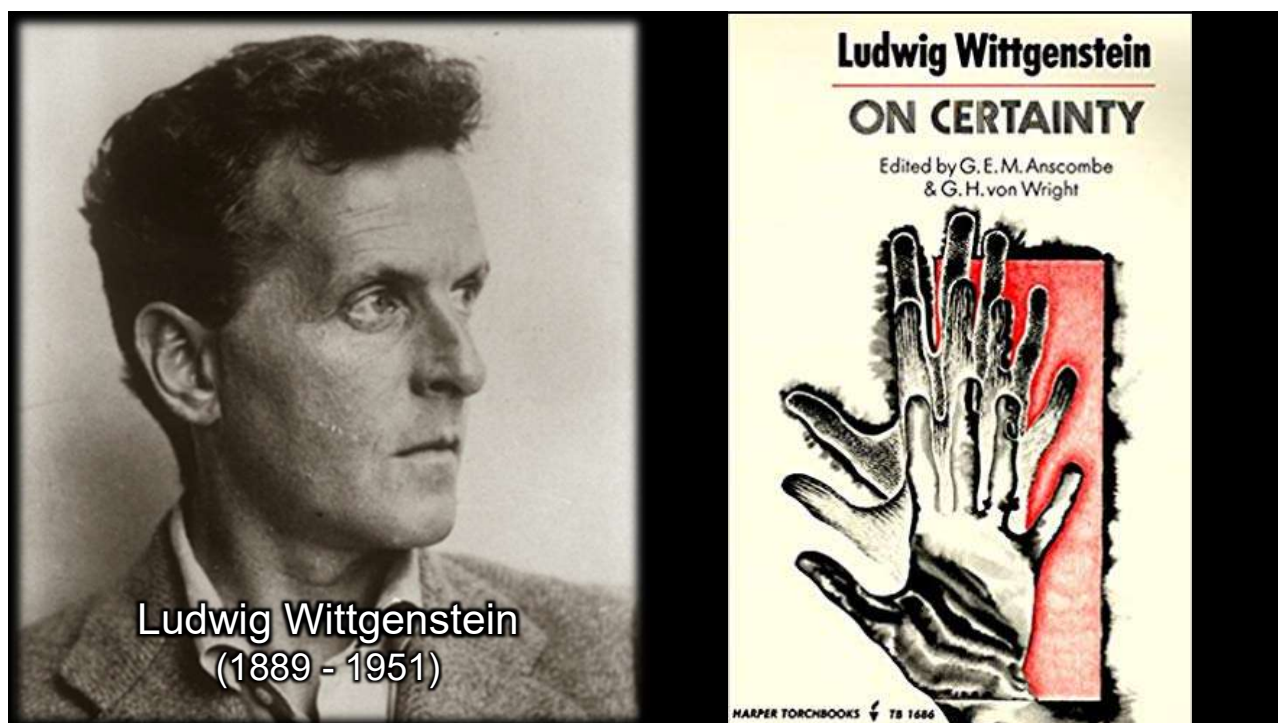
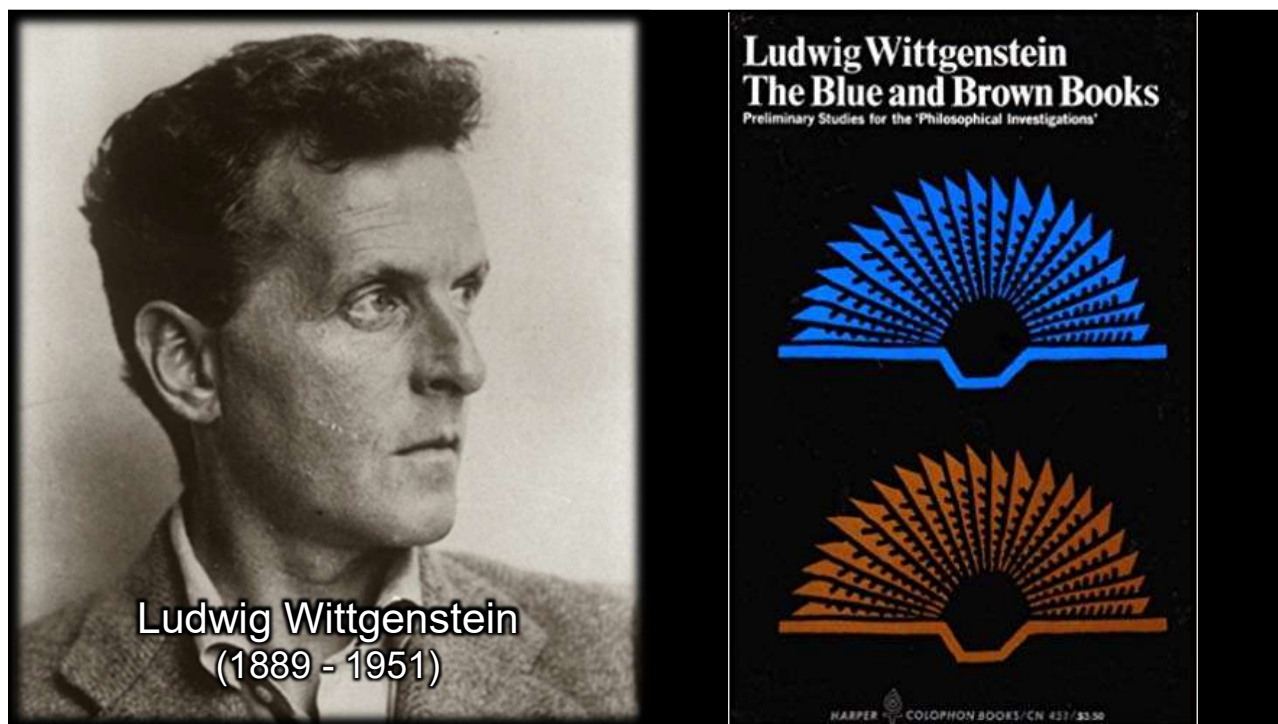
It might be surprising to some, however, that the different views do not fall along the lines of theists and non-theists.

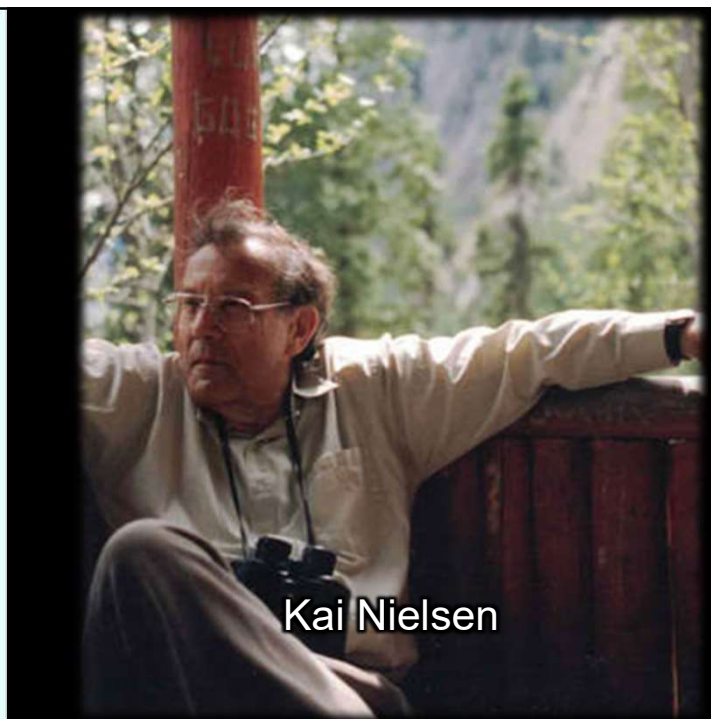
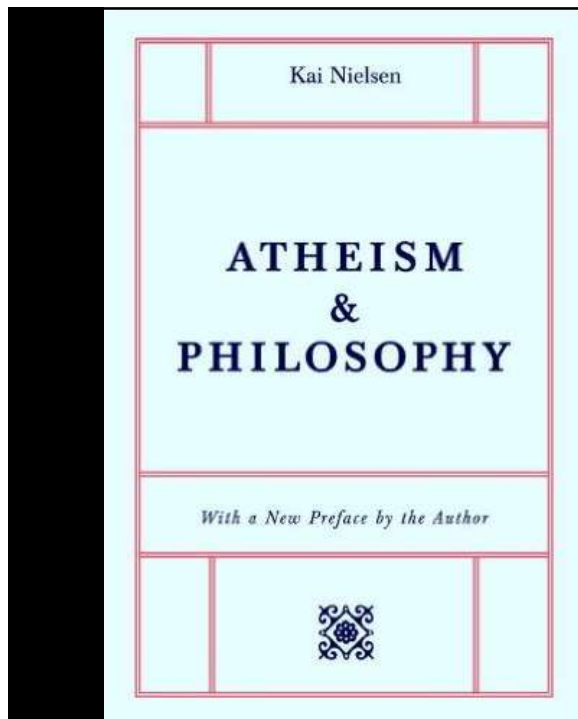
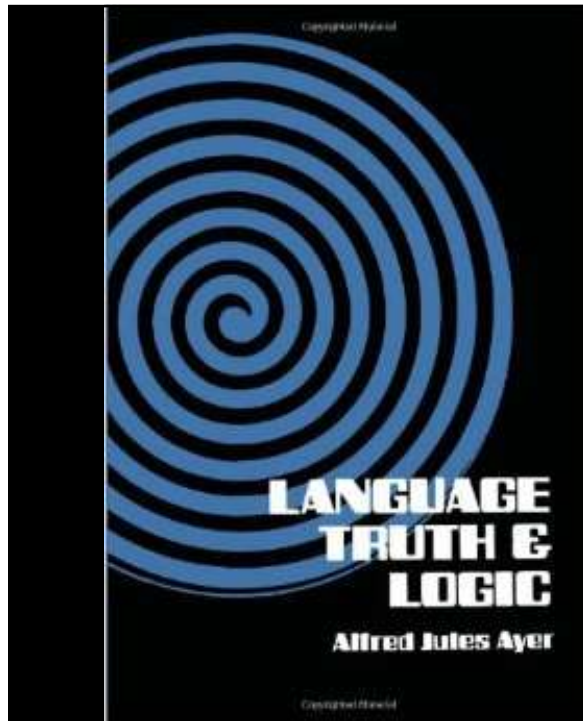
***In combining the options of
theists and non-theists together
with the options of relevant and
irrelevant we get these results.***

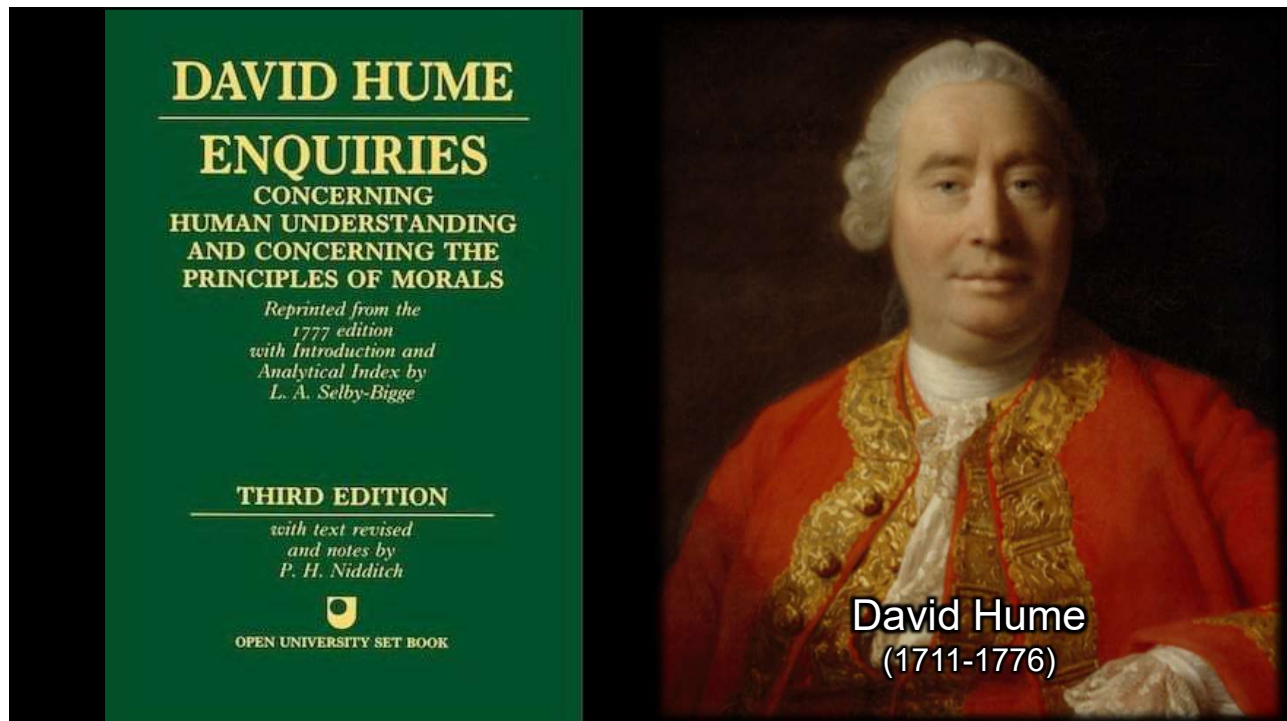
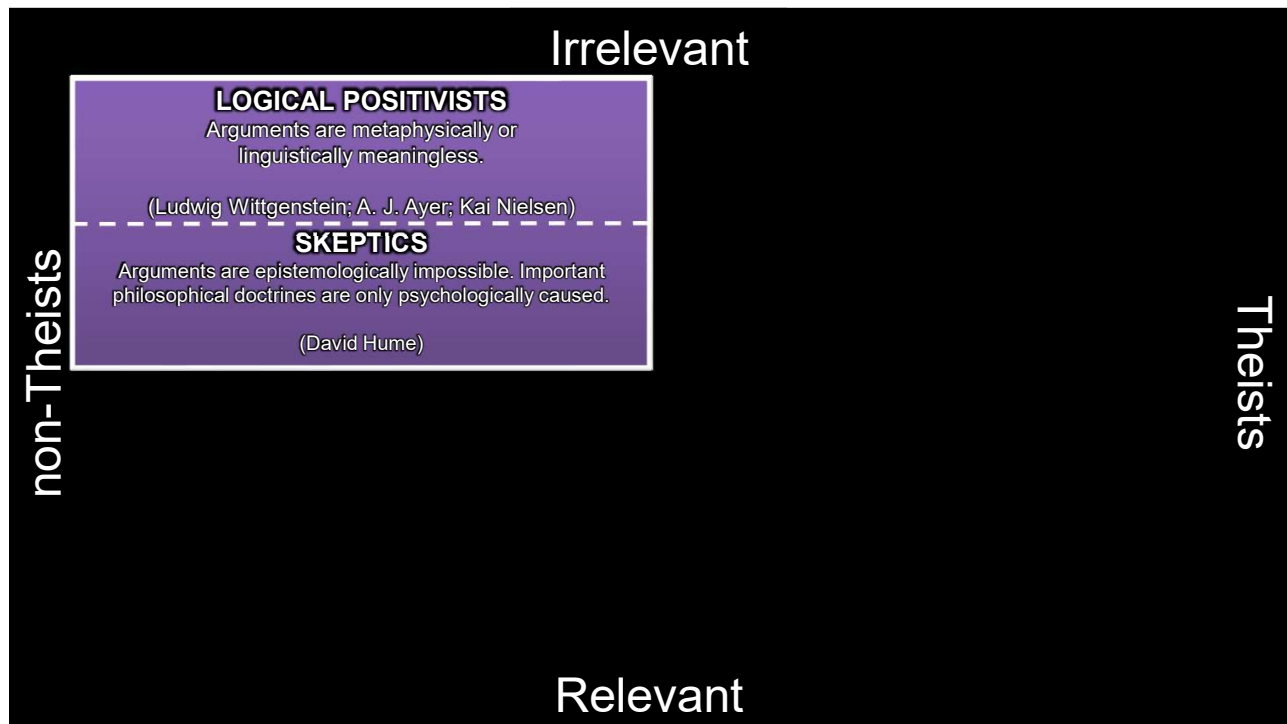
***Non-theists - irrelevant
Non-theists - relevant
Theists - relevant
Theists - irrelevant***

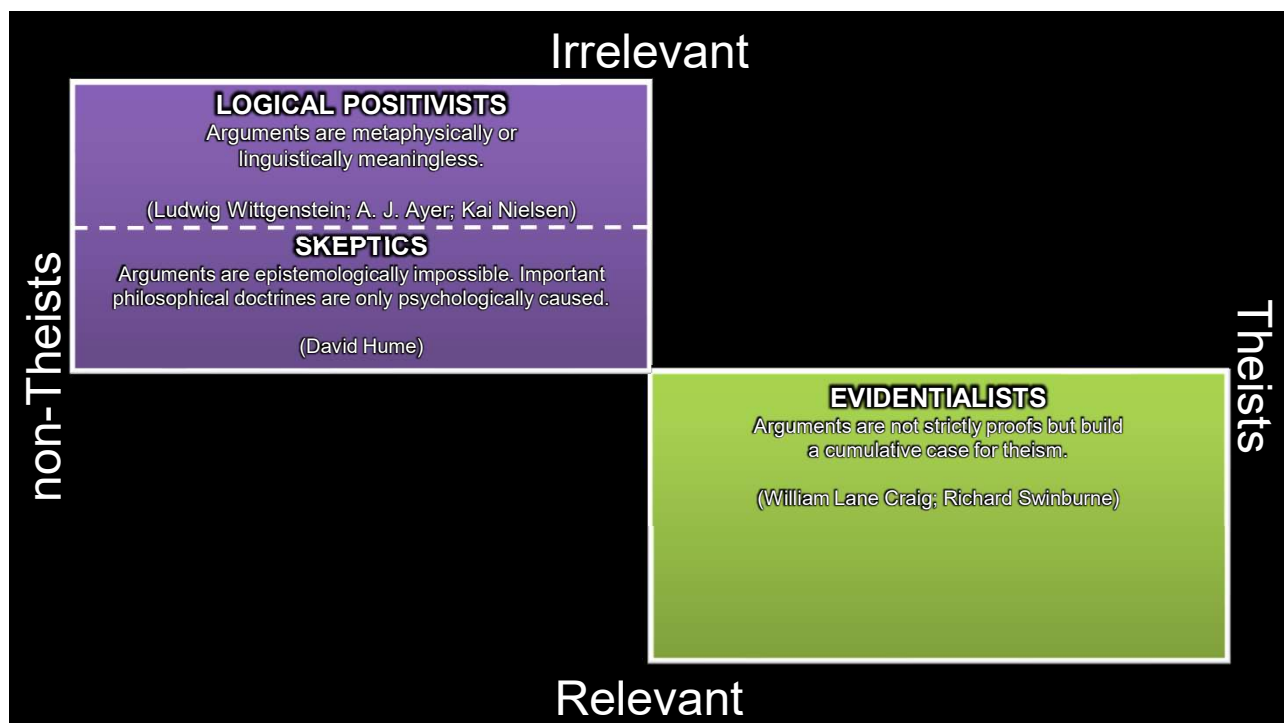
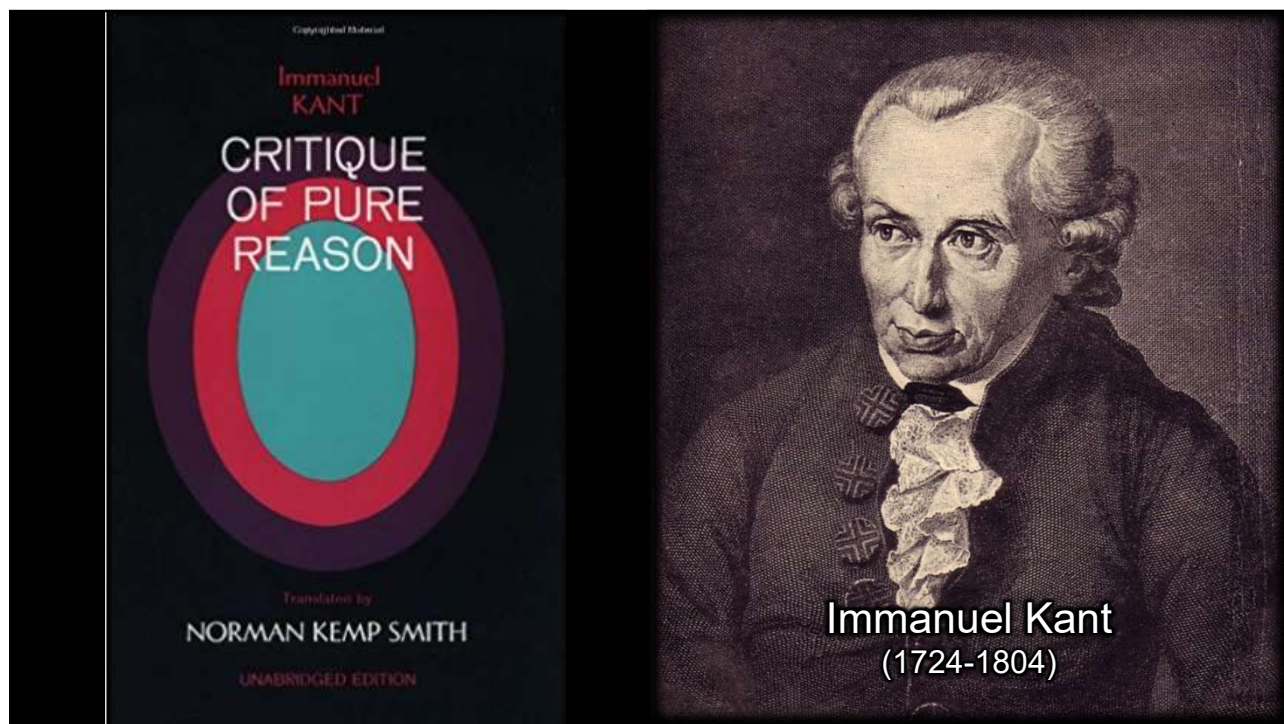


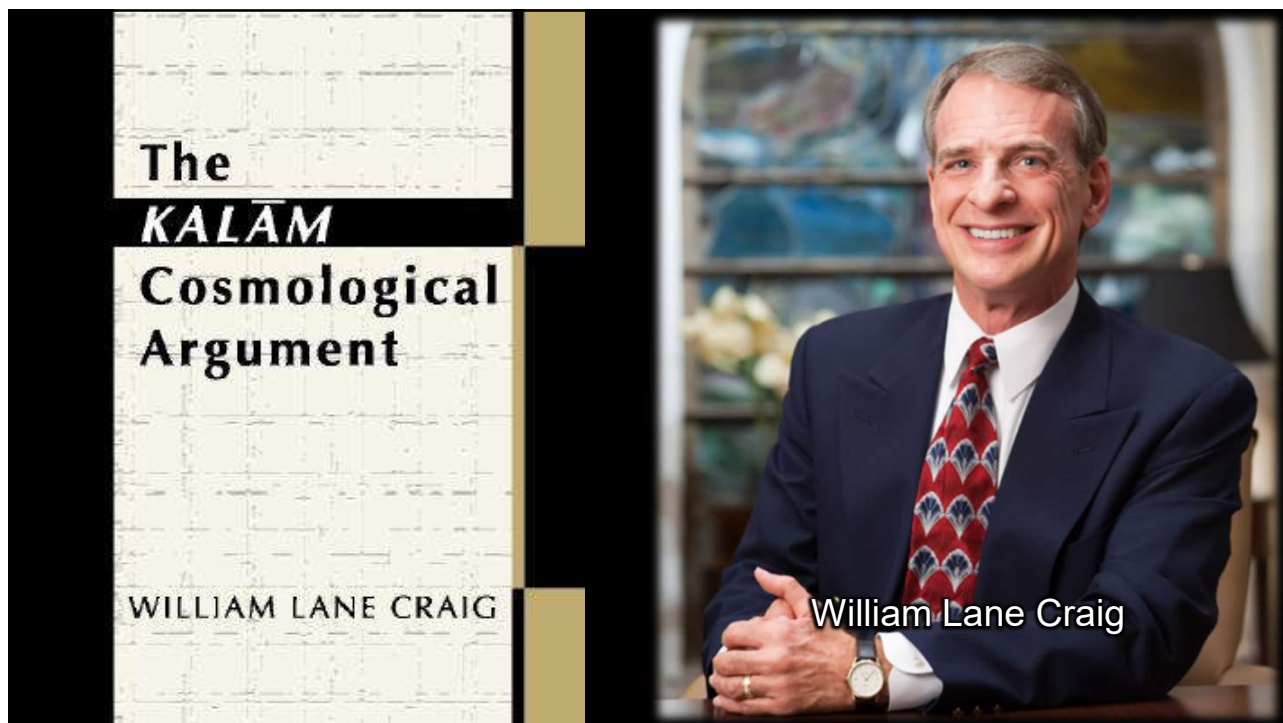
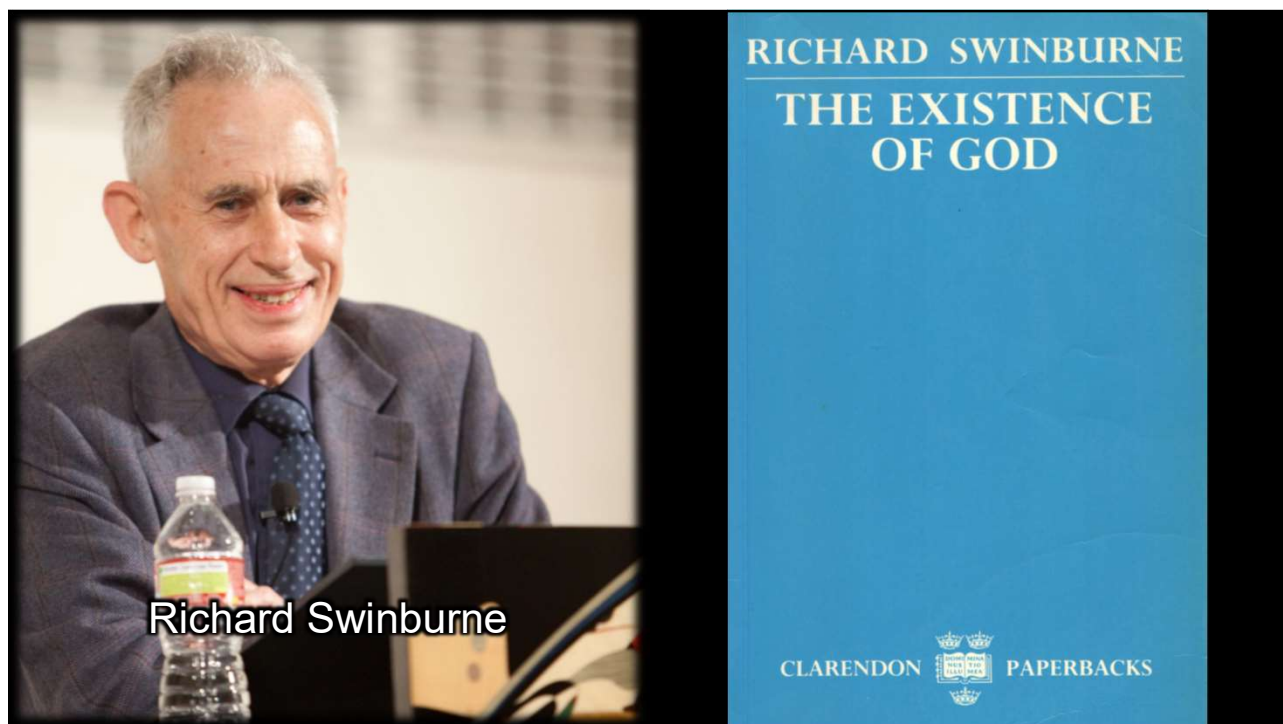


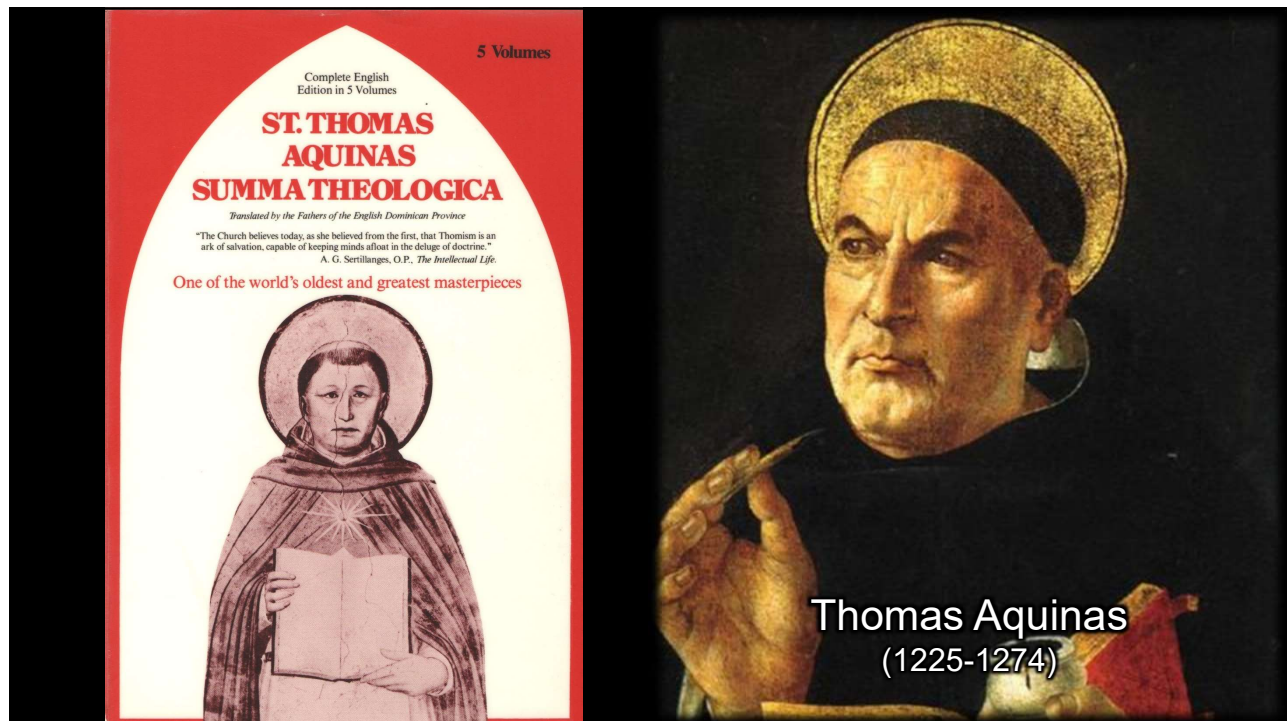
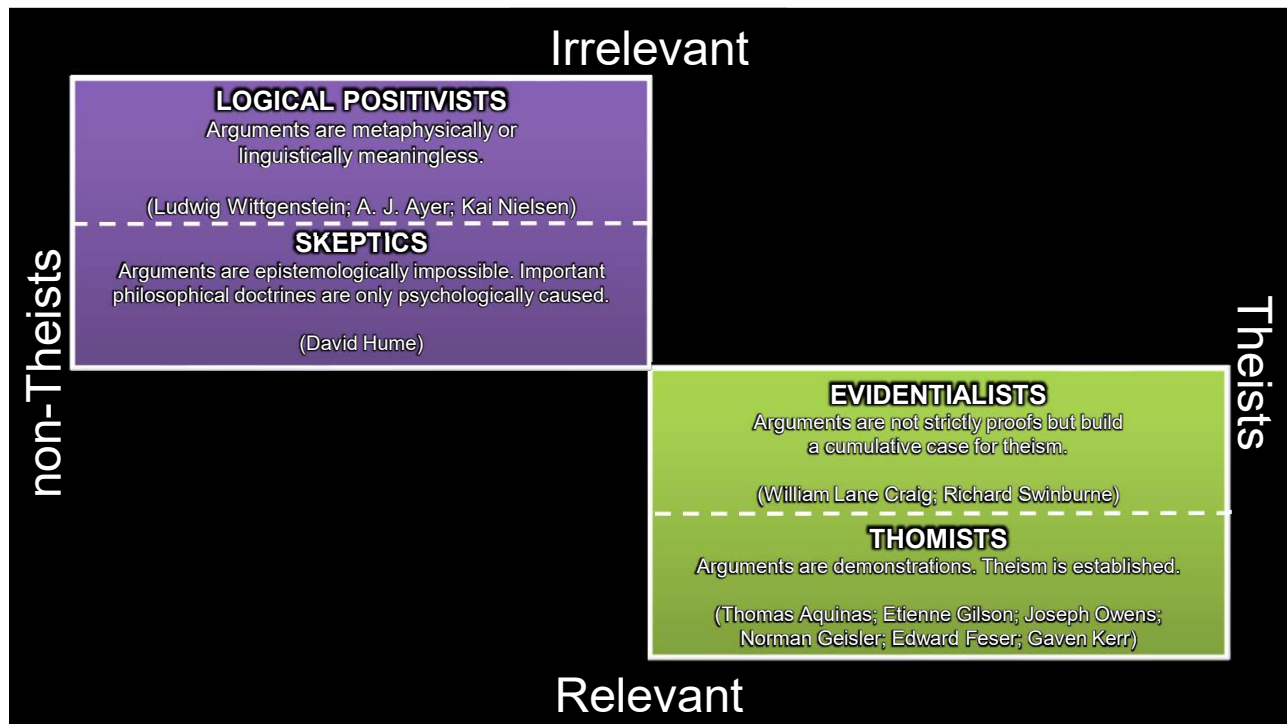




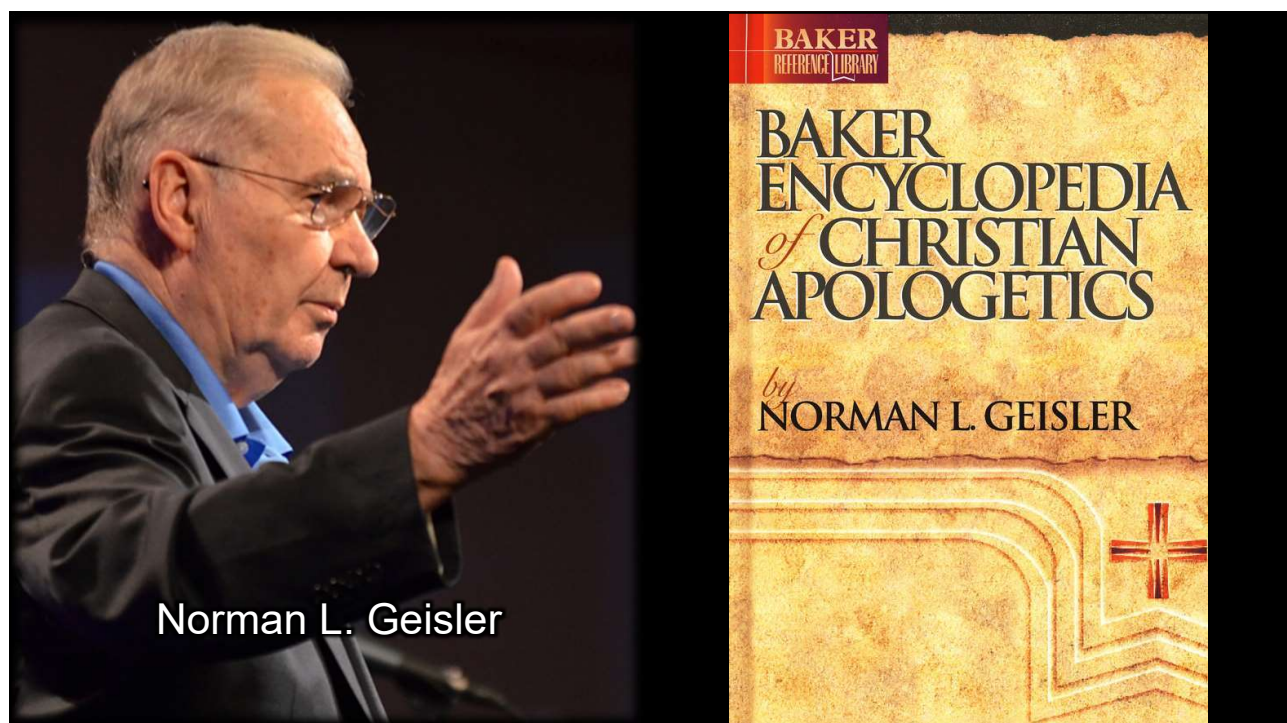
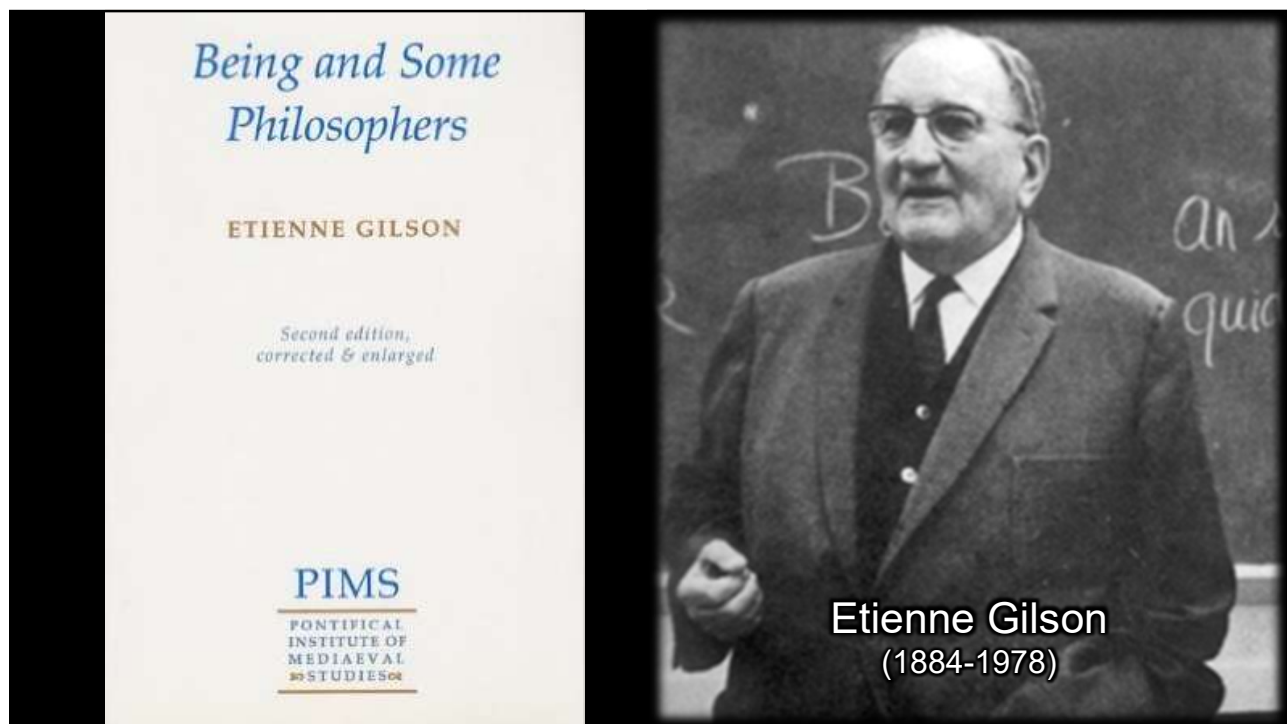


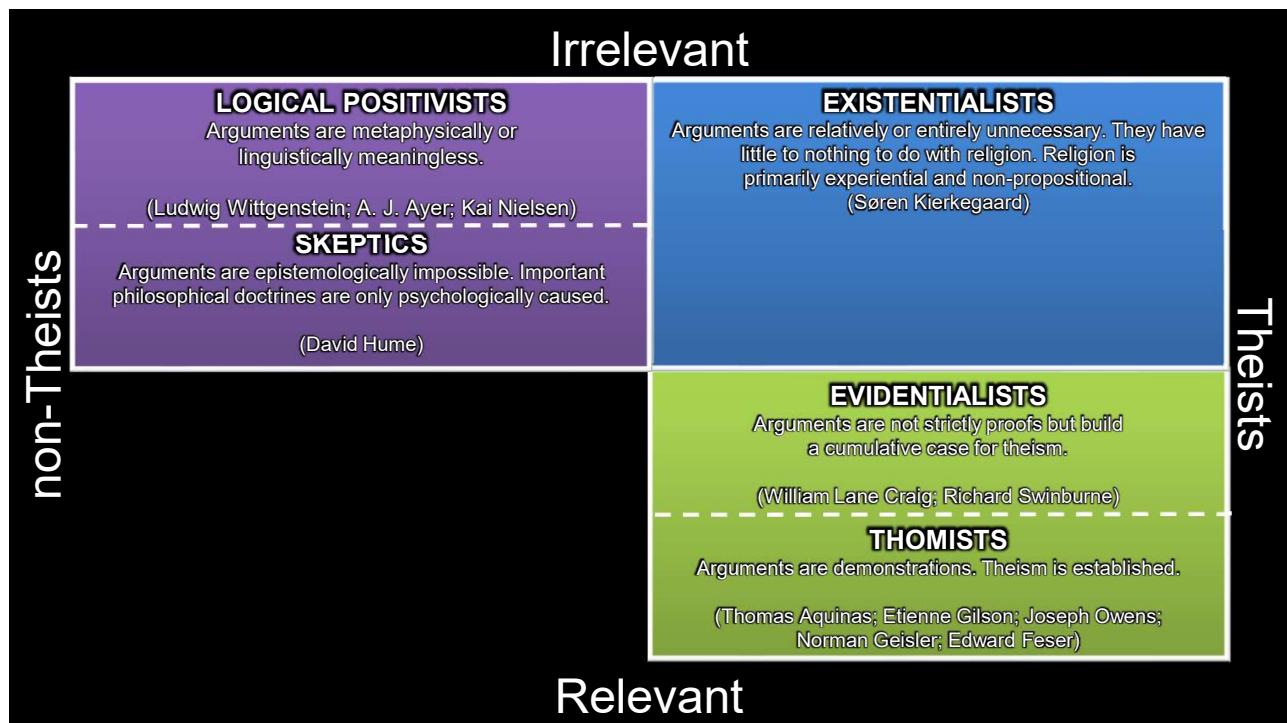
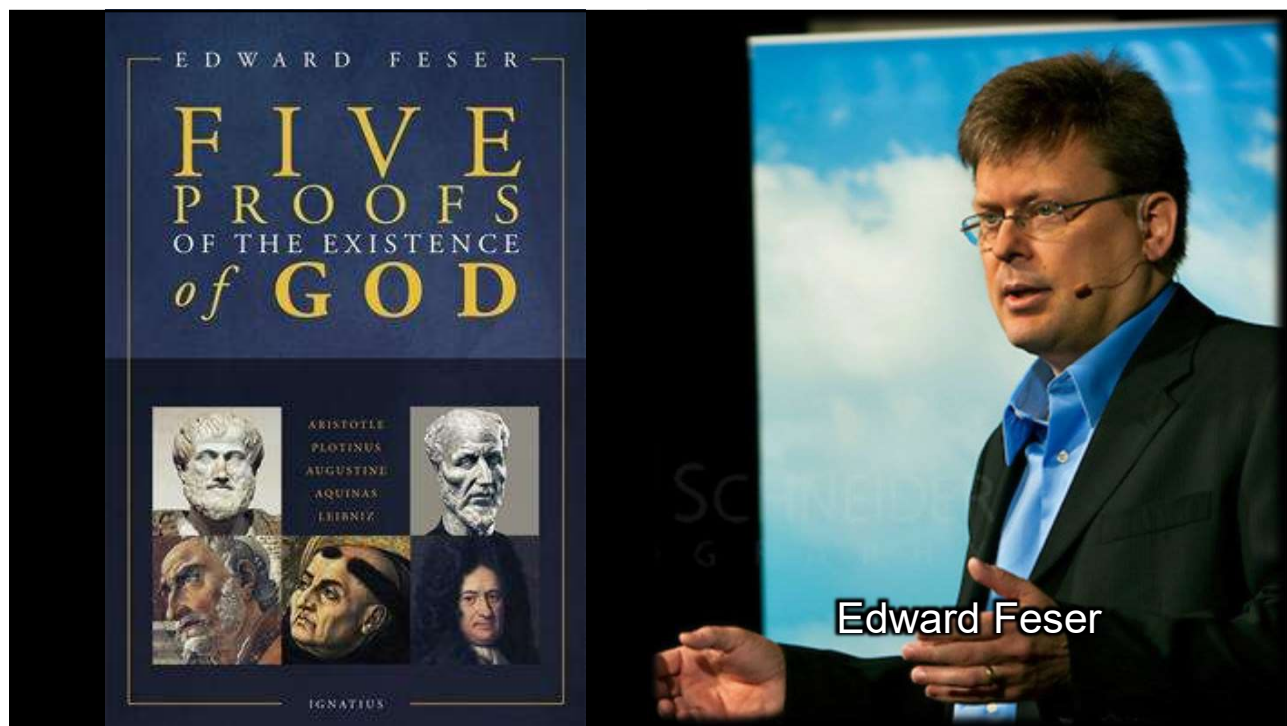


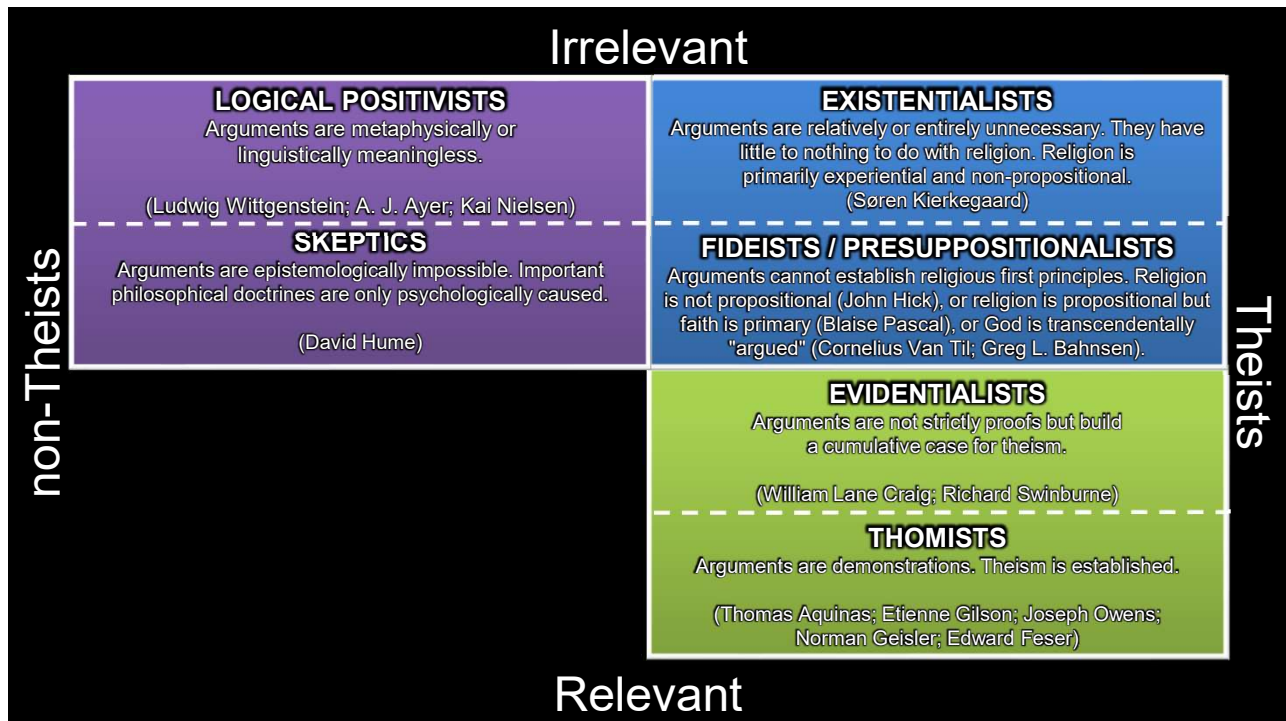
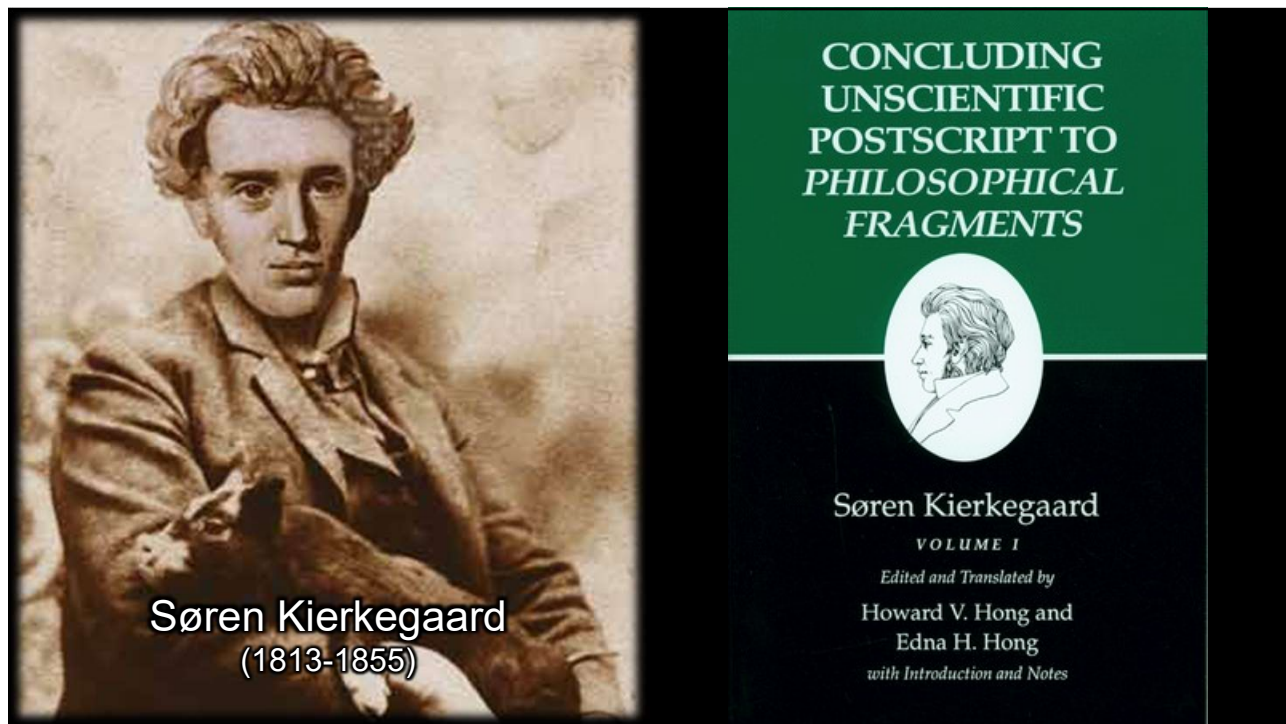


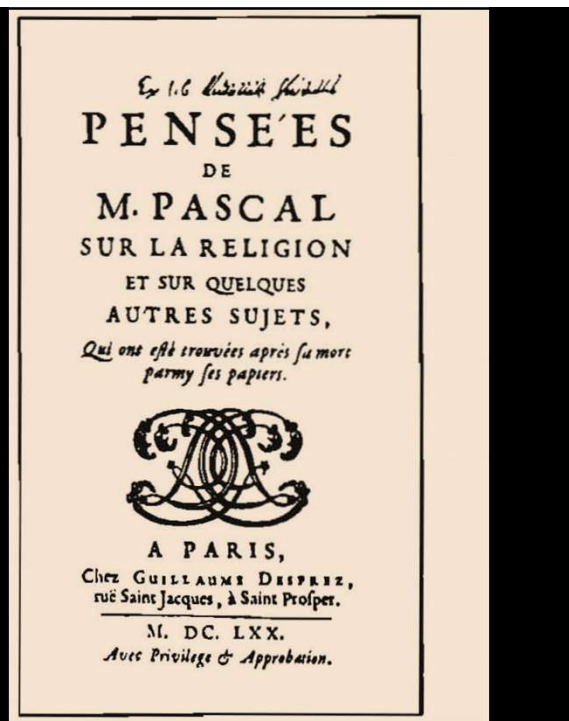
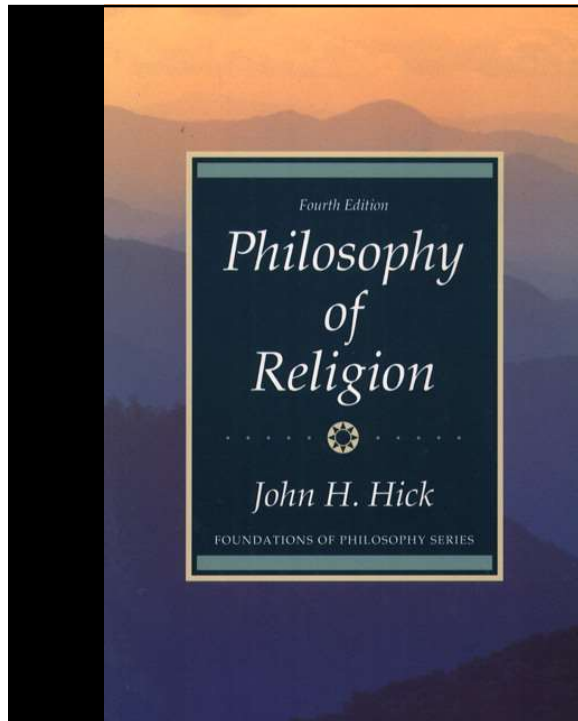


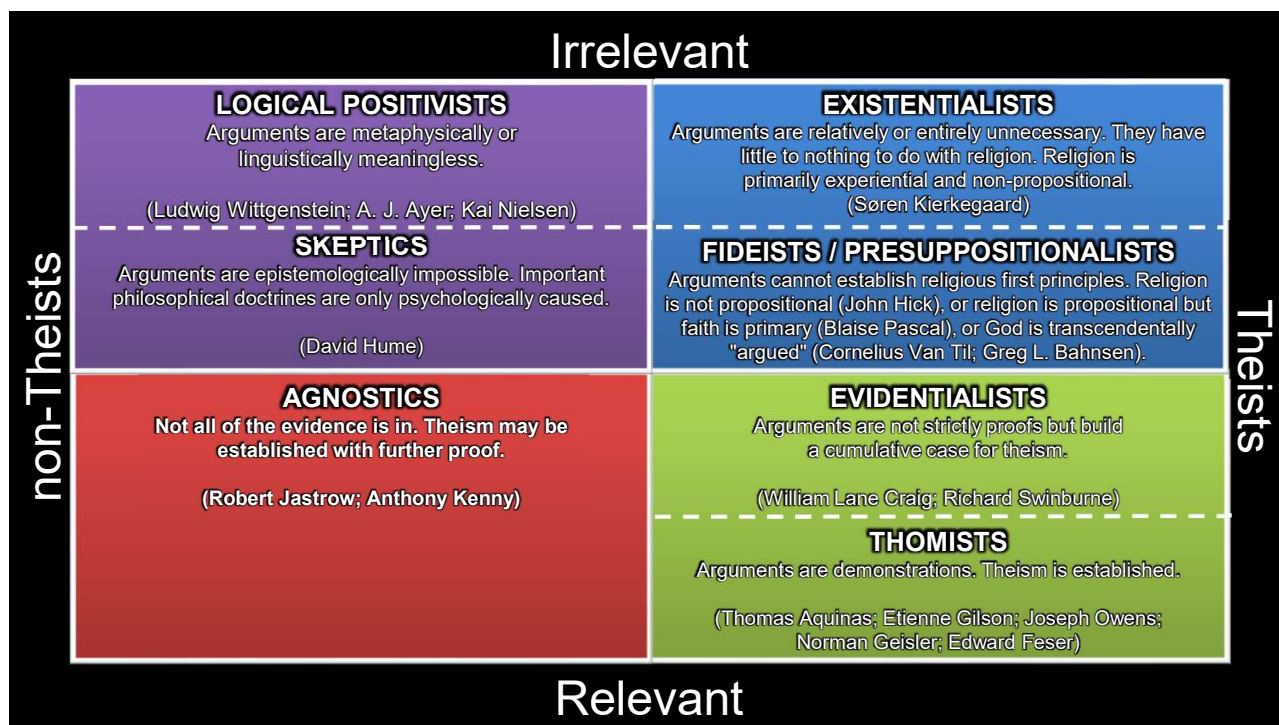
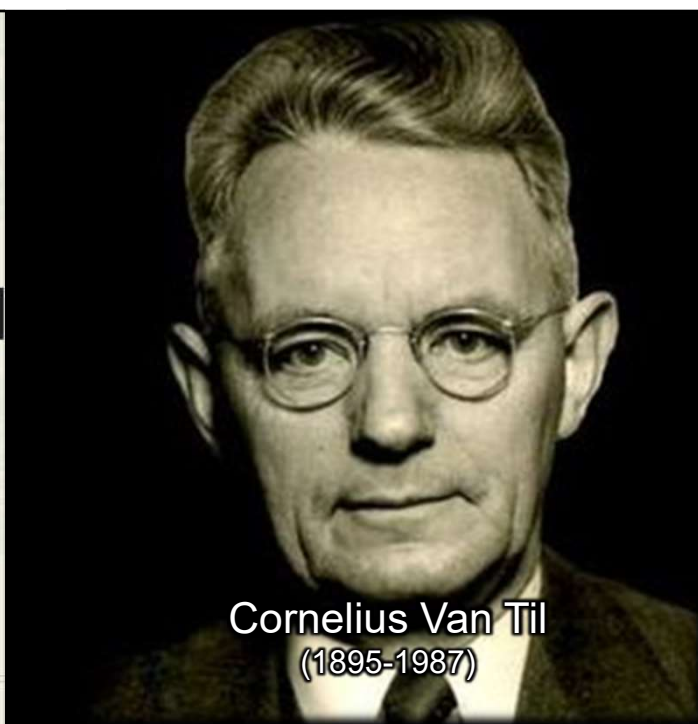
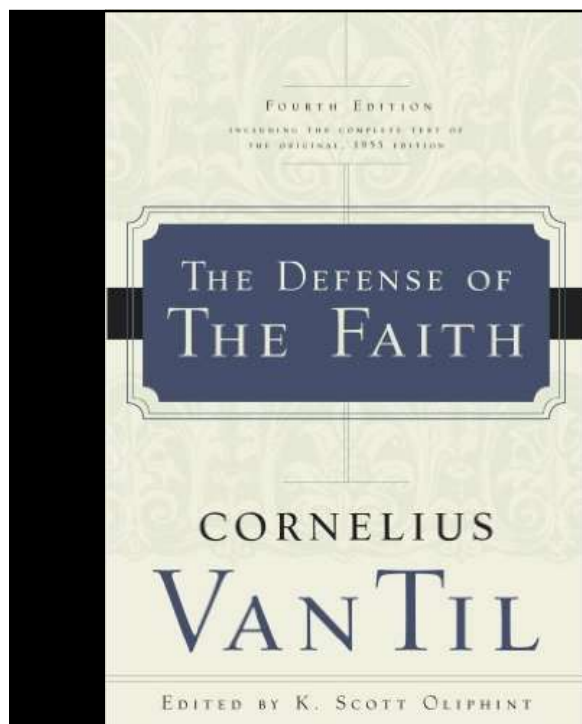
Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

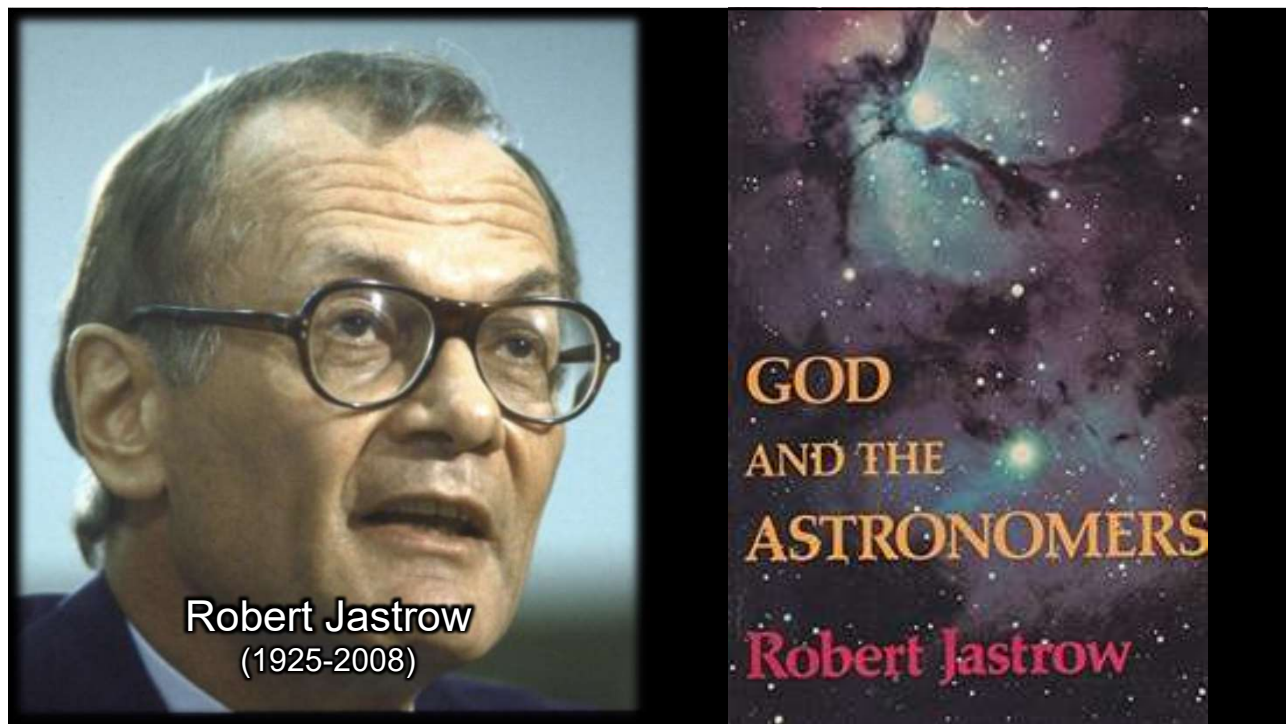












Robert Jastrow
(1925-2008)

Irrelevant	
non-Theists	<p>LOGICAL POSITIVISTS Arguments are metaphysically or linguistically meaningless. (Ludwig Wittgenstein; A. J. Ayer; Kai Nielsen)</p> <p>SKEPTICS Arguments are epistemologically impossible. Important philosophical doctrines are only psychologically caused. (David Hume)</p>
	<p>EXISTENTIALISTS Arguments are relatively or entirely unnecessary. They have little to nothing to do with religion. Religion is primarily experiential and non-propositional. (Søren Kierkegaard)</p> <p>FIDEISTS / PRESUPPOSITIONALISTS Arguments cannot establish religious first principles. Religion is not propositional (John Hick), or religion is propositional but faith is primary (Blaise Pascal), or God is transcendently "argued" (Cornelius Van Til; Greg L. Bahnsen).</p>
	<p>AGNOSTICS Not all of the evidence is in. Theism may be established with further proof. (Robert Jastrow; Anthony Kenny)</p> <p>EVIDENTIALISTS Arguments are not strictly proofs but build a cumulative case for theism. (William Lane Craig; Richard Swinburne)</p>
	<p>ATHEISTS Arguments surface important philosophical issues. The evidence proves atheism. (J. L. Mackie; early Antony Flew; Theodore Drange; Michael Martin)</p> <p>THOMISTS Arguments are demonstrations. Theism is established. (Thomas Aquinas; Etienne Gilson; Joseph Owens; Norman Geisler; Edward Feser)</p>
Relevant	
Theists	

J.L. Mackie

THE MIRACLE OF THEISM

Arguments for
and against the
Existence of
God



J. L. Mackie
(1917-1981)



ETHICS

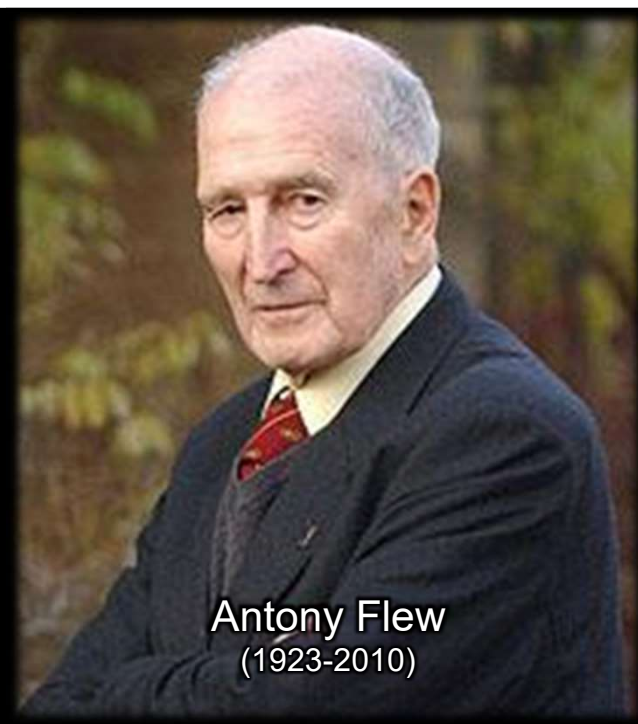
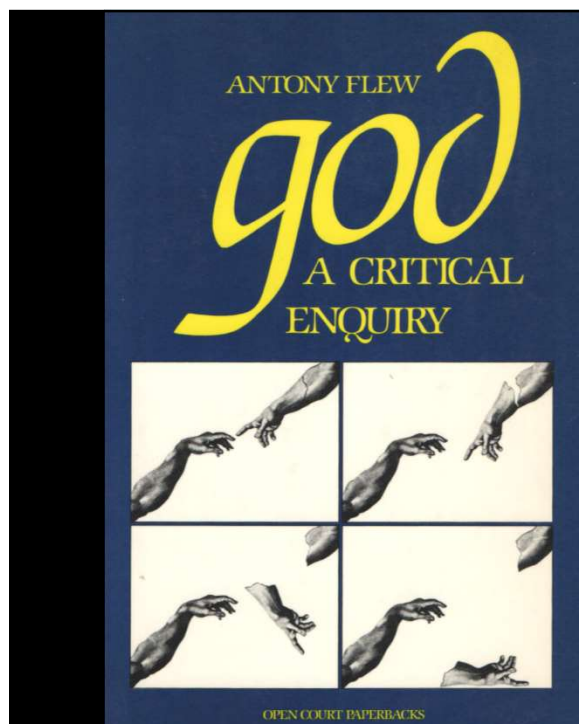
INVENTING
RIGHT AND WRONG



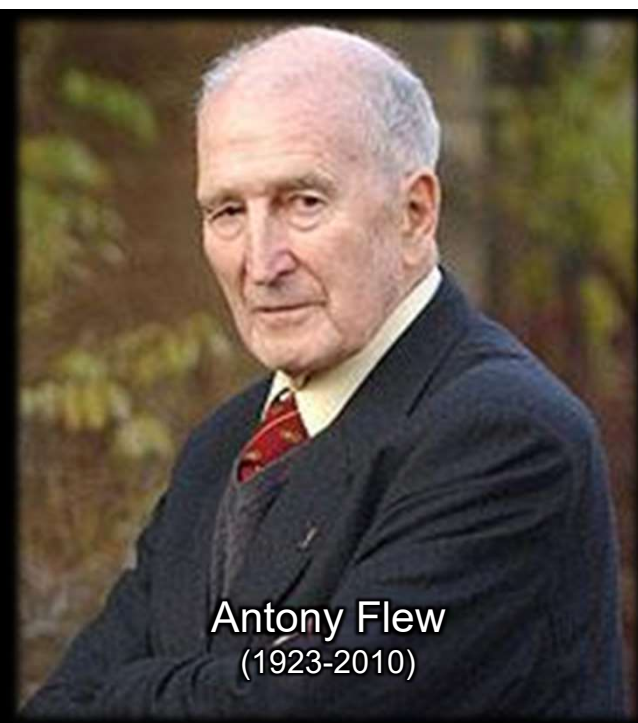
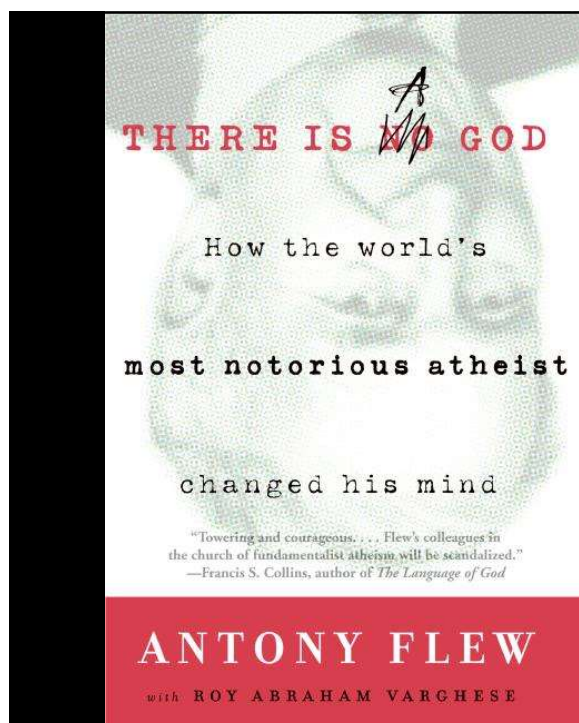
J. L. MACKIE



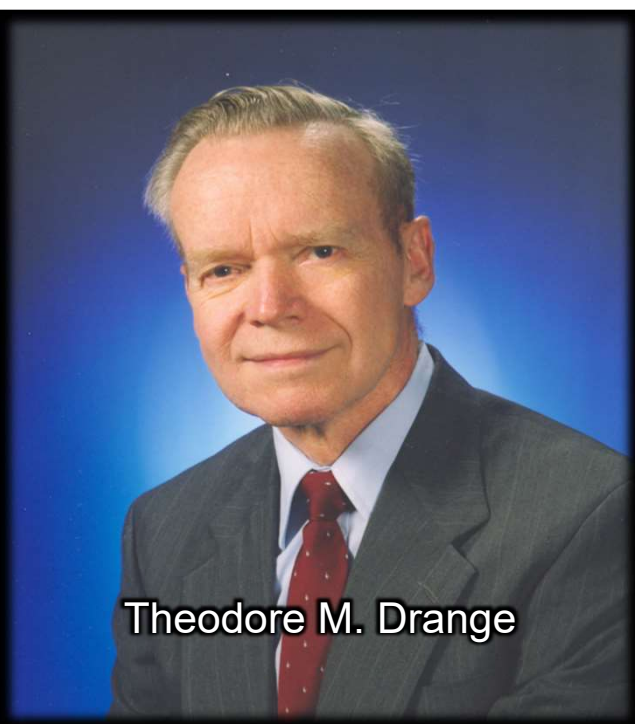
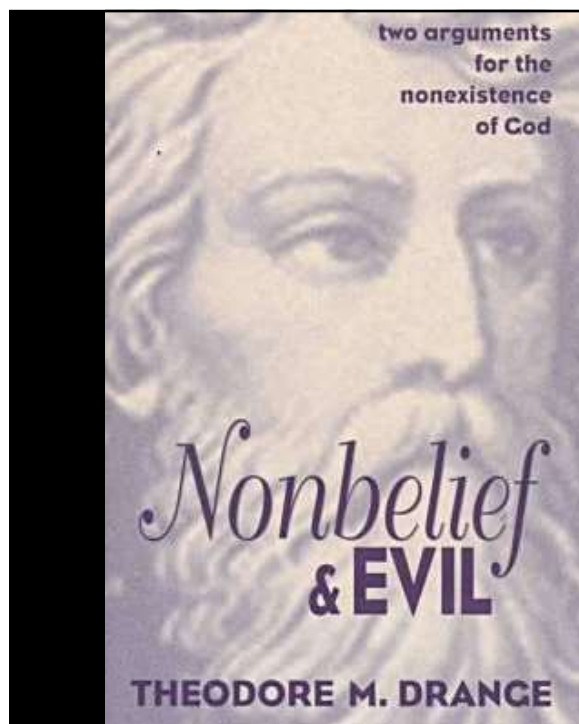
J. L. Mackie
(1917-1981)



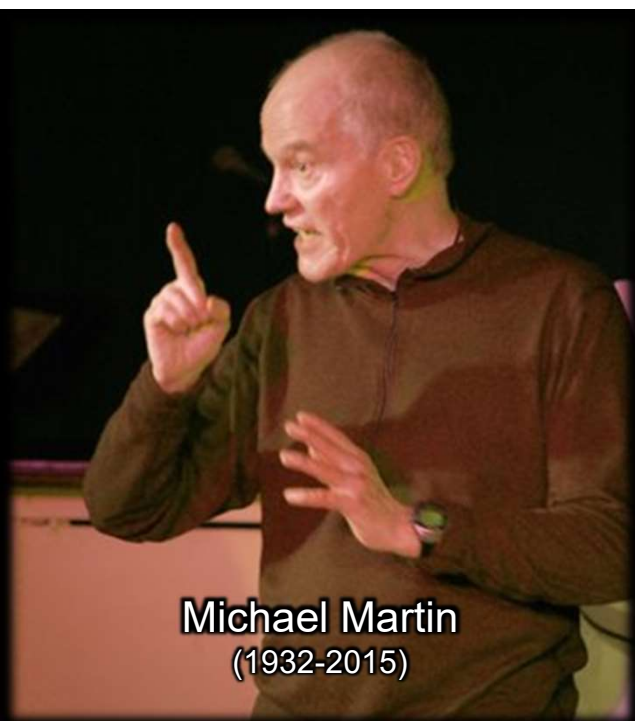
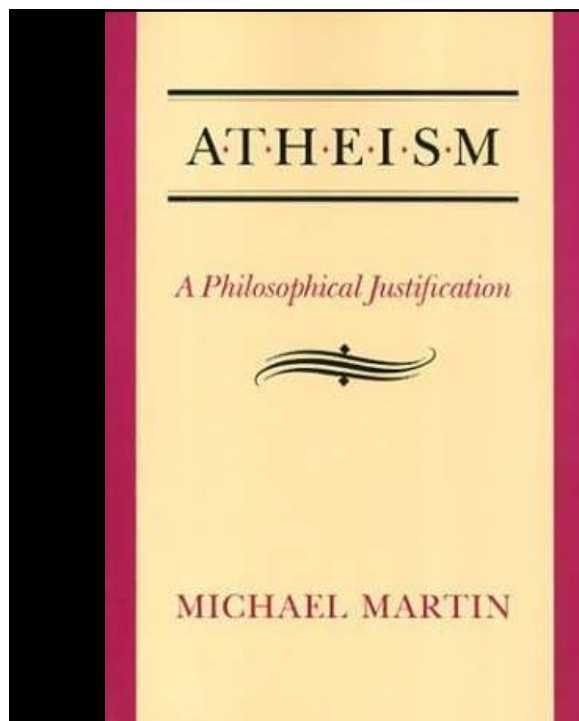
Antony Flew
(1923-2010)



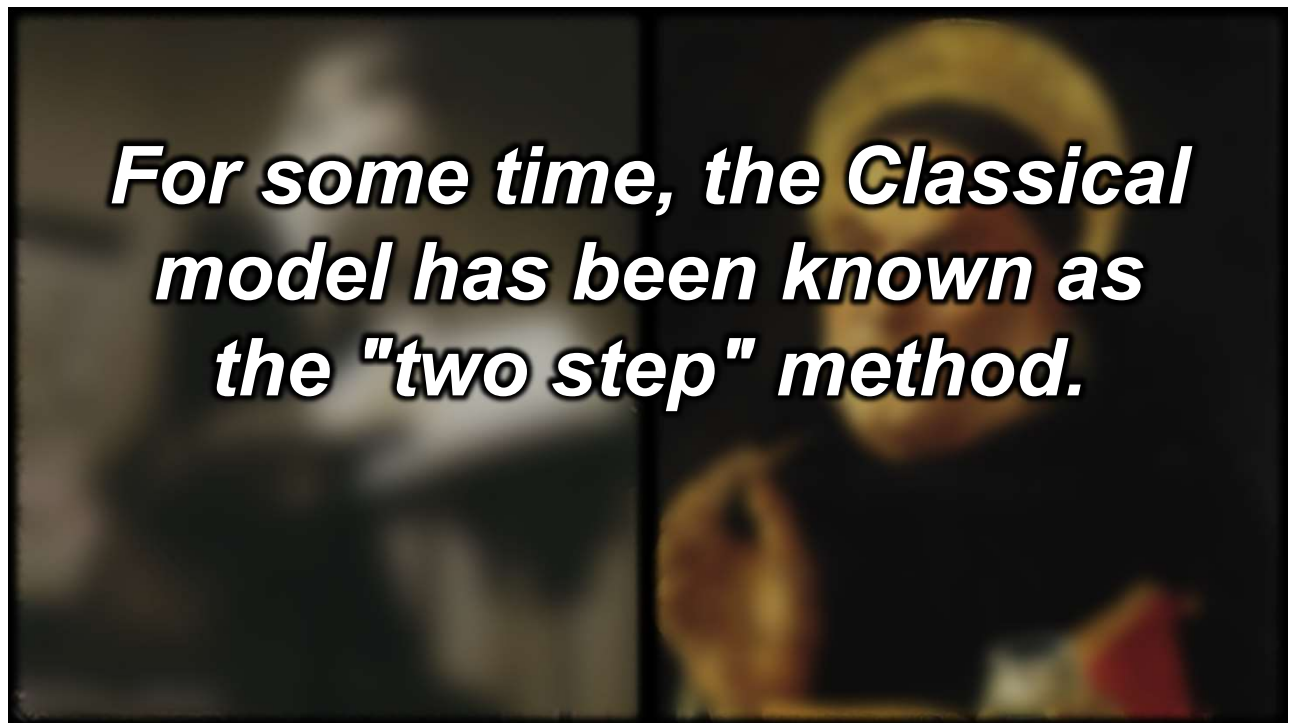
Antony Flew
(1923-2010)

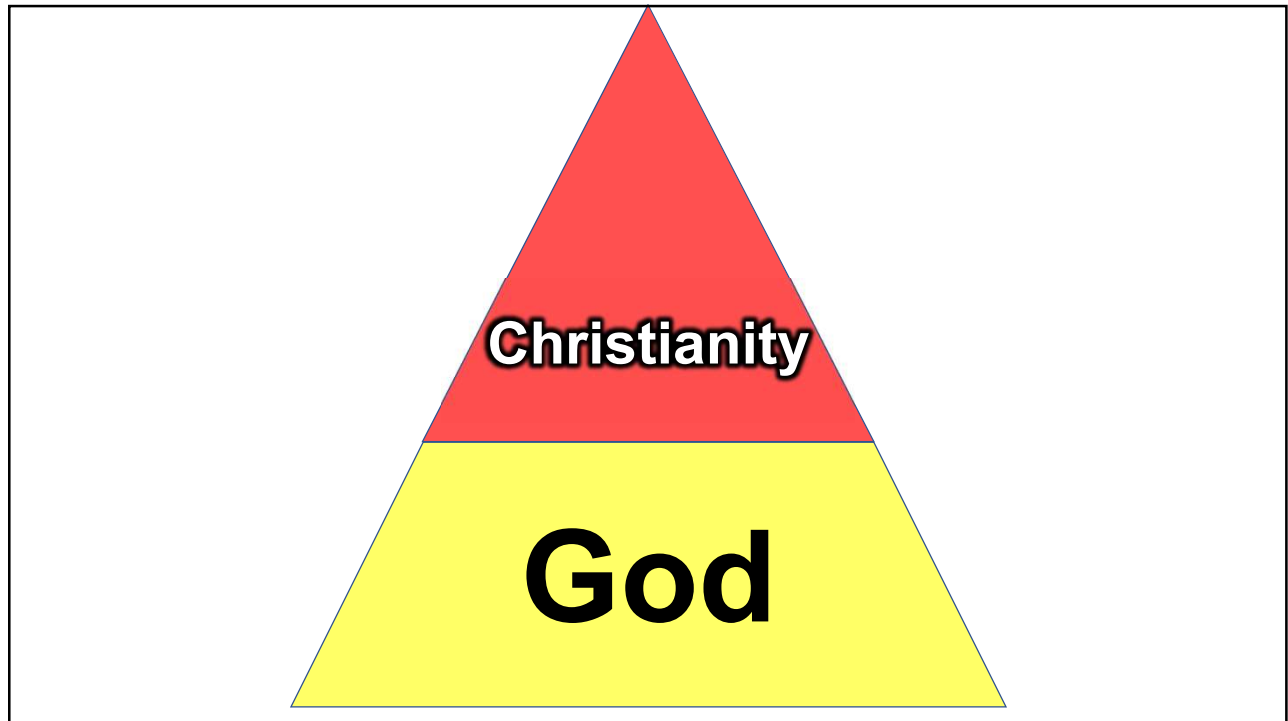


Theodore M. Drange

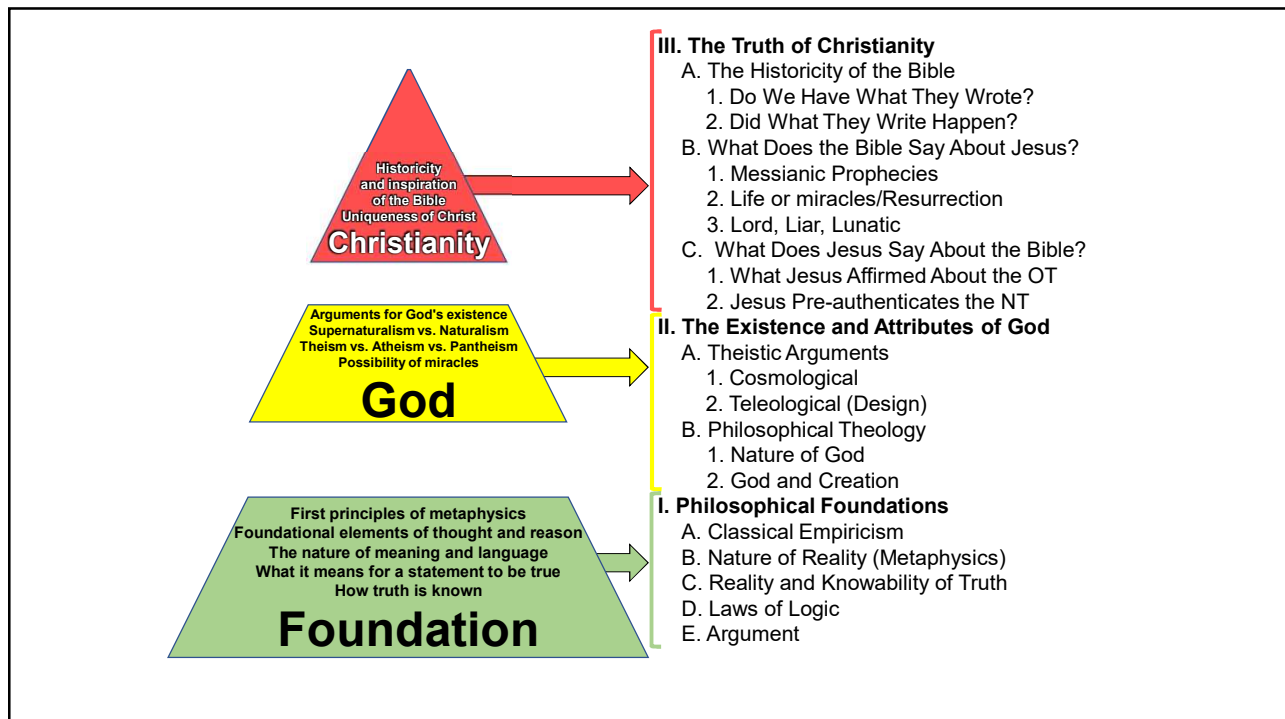
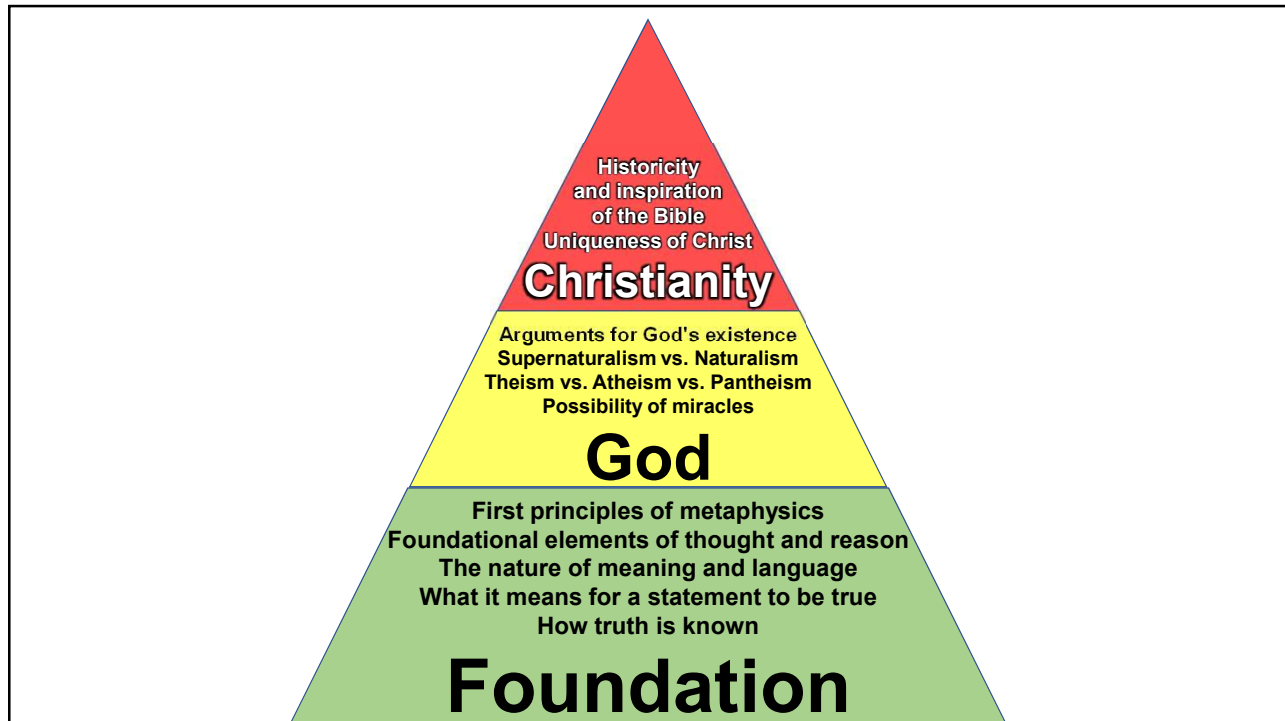


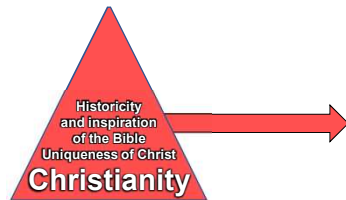
Michael Martin
(1932-2015)





With the increasing influence of bad philosophy, it has become necessary to add an additional step at the beginning.





III. The Truth of Christianity

A. The Historicity of the Bible

1. Do We Have What They Wrote?
2. Did What They Write Happen?

B. What Does the Bible Say About Jesus?

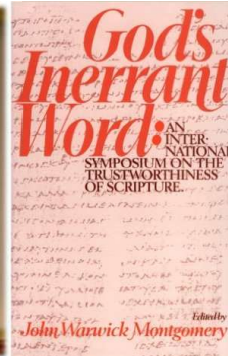
1. Messianic Prophecies
2. Life or miracles/Resurrection
3. Lord, Liar, Lunatic

C. What Does Jesus Say About the Bible?

1. What Jesus Affirmed About the OT
2. Jesus Pre-authenticates the NT



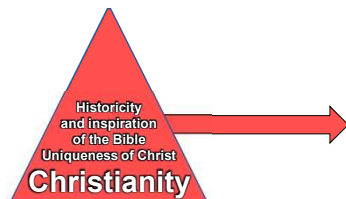
John Warwick Montgomery



"The Case for Inerrancy: A Methodological Analysis"



R. C. Sproul
(1939-2017)



III. The Truth of Christianity

A. The Historicity of the Bible

1. Do We Have What They Wrote?
2. Did What They Write Happen?

B. What Does the Bible Say About Jesus?

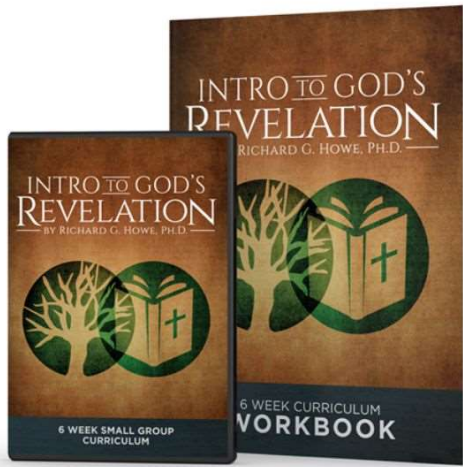
1. Messianic Prophecies
2. Life or miracles/Resurrection
3. Lord, Liar, Lunatic

C. What Does Jesus Say About the Bible?

1. What Jesus Affirmed About the OT
2. Jesus Pre-authenticates the NT

It should be observed that this third step in the Classical Model is hardly distinguishable from the Evidentialist Model.





Intro to God's Revelation 6-Week Curriculum by Dr. Richard Howe

What does it mean for God to speak to mankind? In this six-week video study, respected philosopher and apologist Richard G. Howe teaches Christians the fundamentals of how to approach and understand their Bible in an age of skepticism. Each session contains a lecture from Dr. Howe and a short wrap-up with interview contributions from other Christian thinkers.

Perfect for Sunday school classes, small groups or individual study!

Session 1: General Revelation
Session 2: Special Revelation
Session 3: Inspiration
Session 4: Inerrancy & Canonicity
Session 5: Transmission & Translation
Session 6: Interpretation & Application

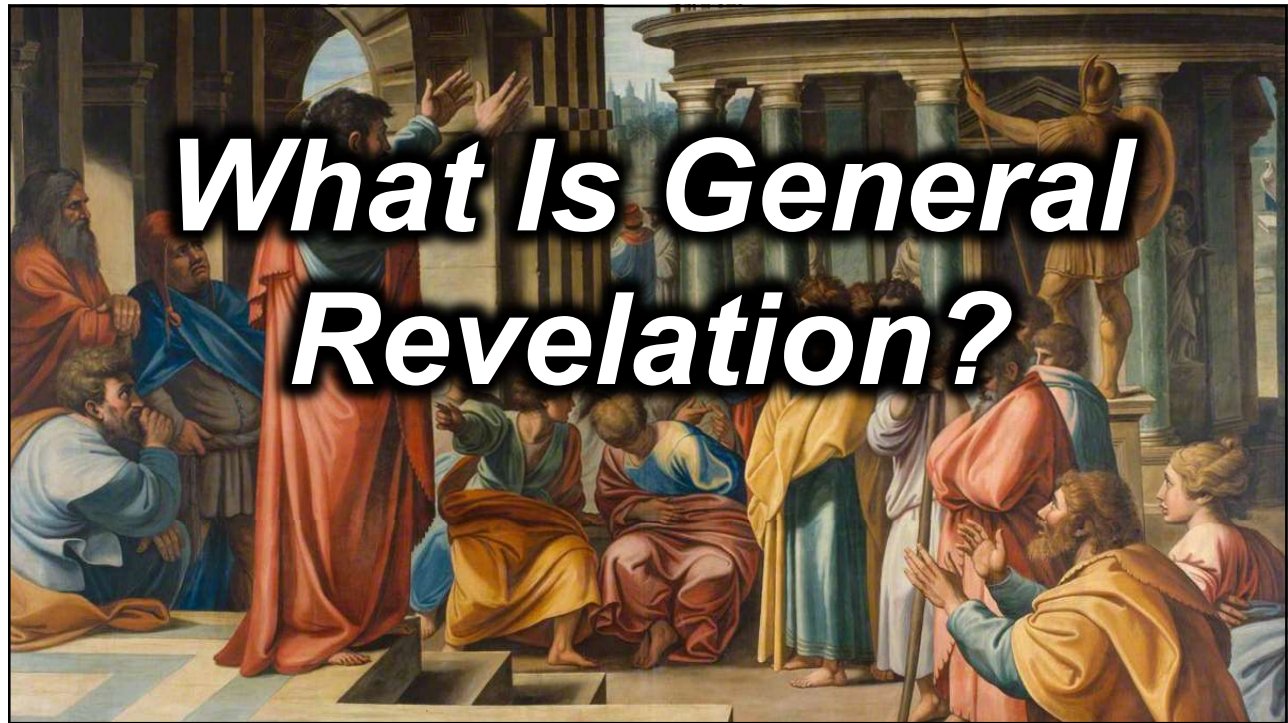
∞ Revelation ∞

***God making known to mankind
His divine person and divine
truths that would otherwise be
unknown; to unveil***



How Do Revelation and Inspiration Differ?

Revelation	Inspiration
<i>God making known to mankind His divine Person and divine truths that would otherwise be unknown</i>	<i>God transferring to mankind His divine Person and divine truths through human agency into written language form for mankind to understand</i>
<i>Giving of the truth</i>	<i>Recording of the truth</i>



∞ General Revelation ∞

*God making known to mankind
through His creation His
existence, attributes,
and goodness.*

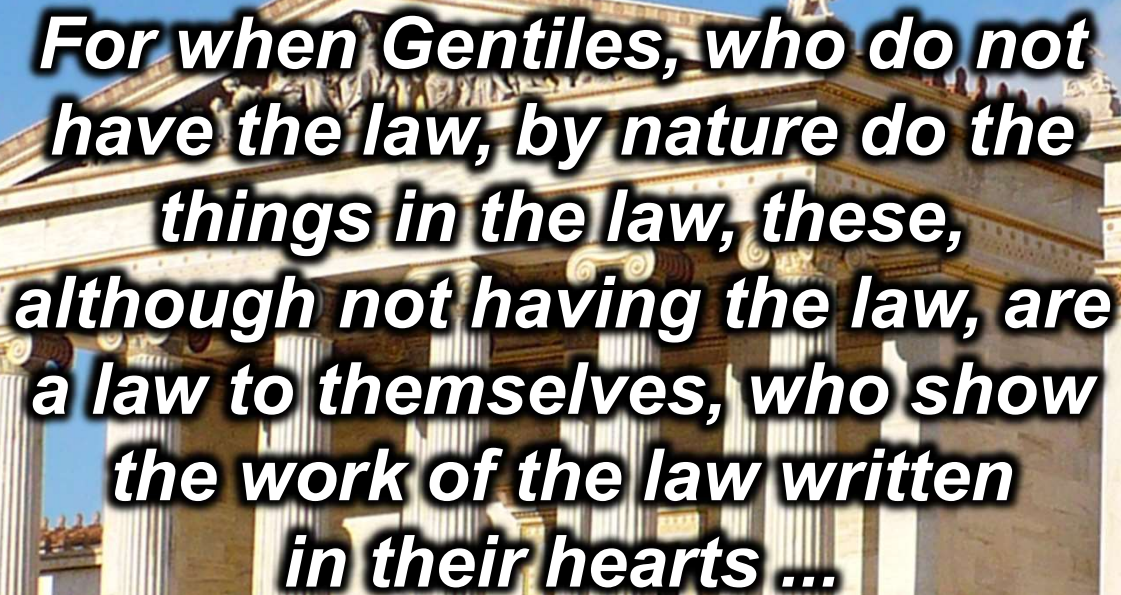
***The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament shows His
handiwork. Day unto day utters speech,
and night unto night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech nor language where
their voice is not heard. Their line has
gone out through all the earth, and their
words to the end of the world.***

Psalm 19:1

***For since the creation of the world His
invisible attributes are clearly seen, being***

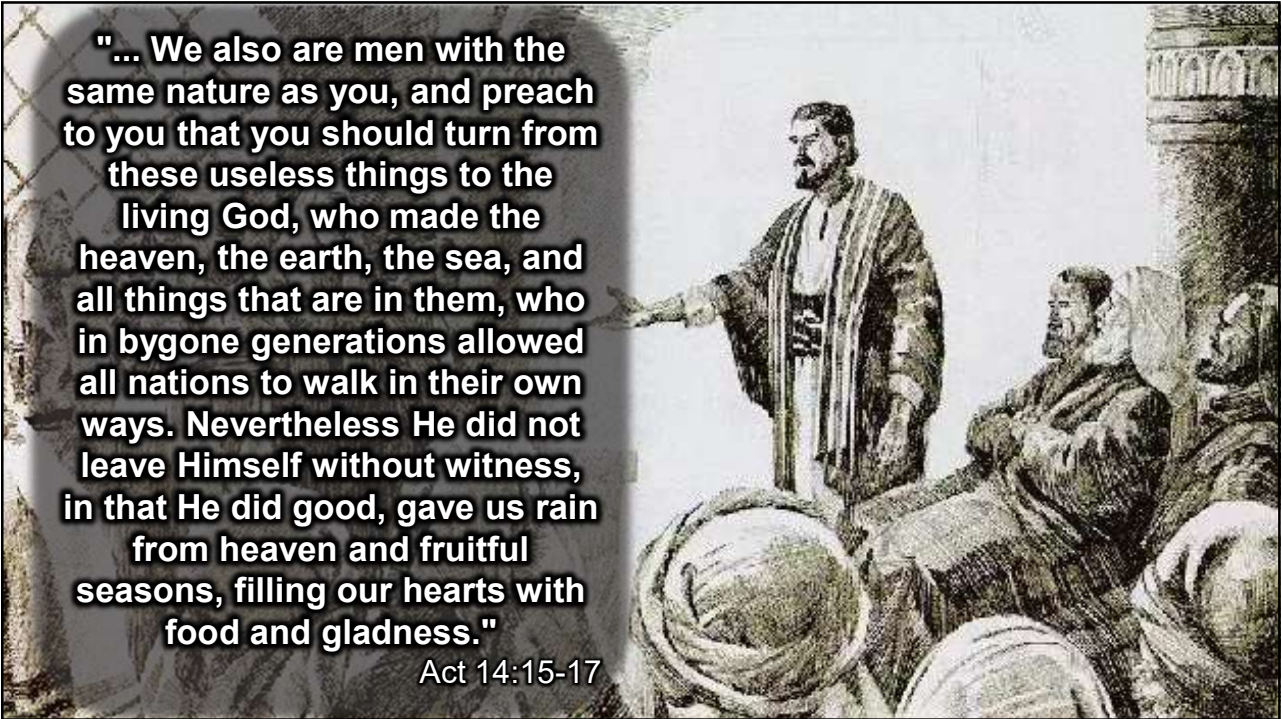
***understood by the things that are made, even
His eternal power and Godhead ...***

Rom. 1:20a



For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts ...

Rom. 2:14-15a



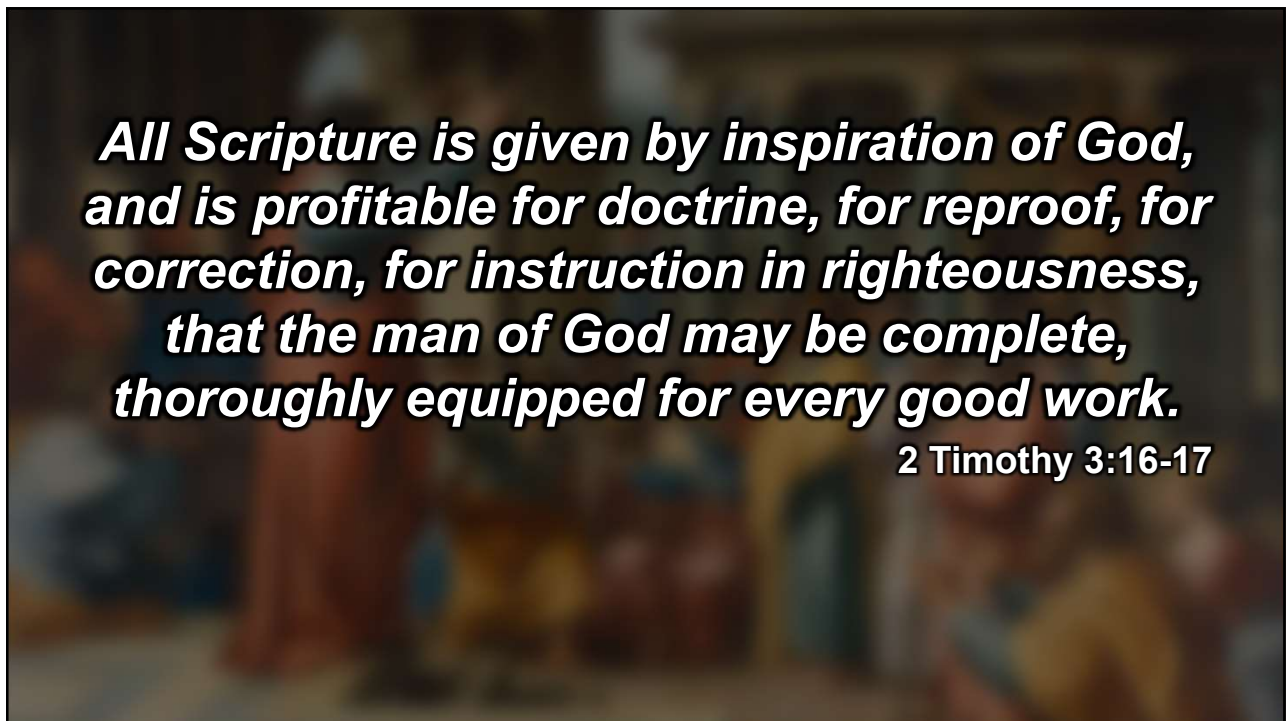
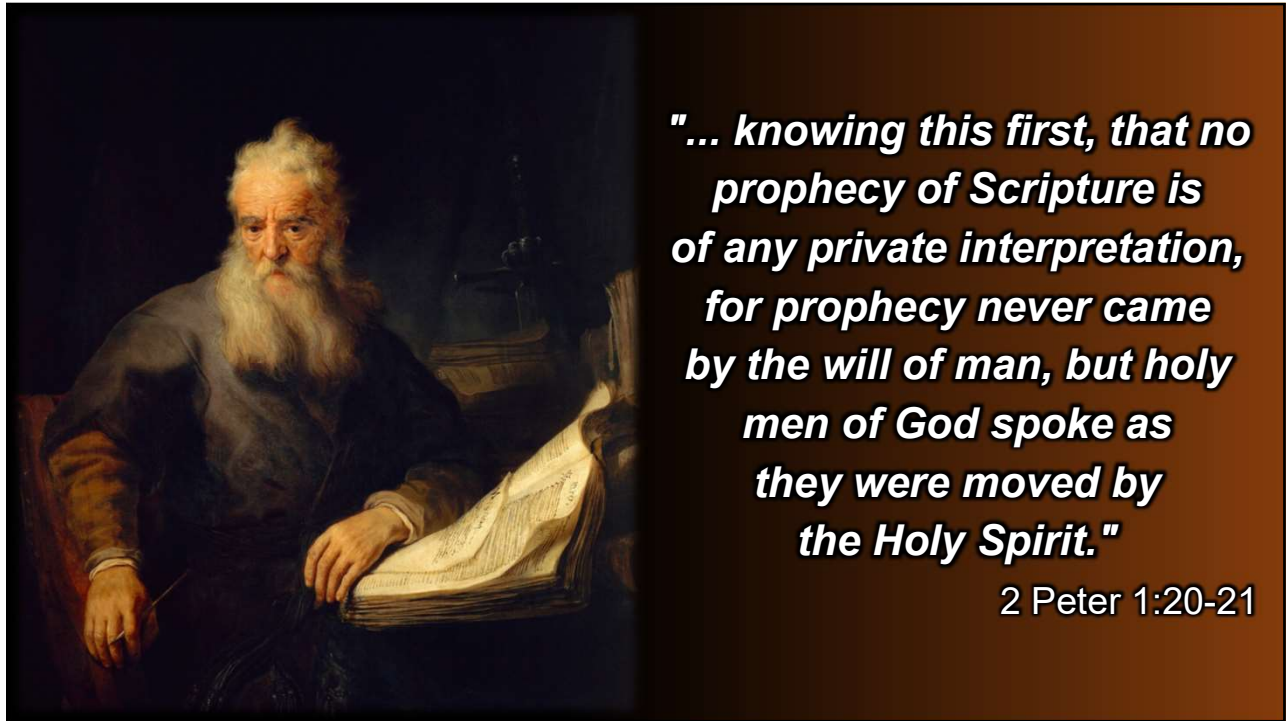
"... We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Act 14:15-17



∞ Special Revelation ∞

***God making known to mankind
through His prophets, apostles, and
His Son His nature and will that
could not necessarily be known
through General Revelation.***



**All Scripture is *given by inspiration of God*,
and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for
correction, for instruction in righteousness,
that the man of God may be complete,
thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

2 Timothy 3:16-17

← **θεόπνευστος (theopneustos) = God breathed**

θεός (theos) - God

πνέω, πνεῦμα (pneo, pneuma) - I breathe, breath, spirit



A Popular Misconception of Faith and Reason

~~"Faith is believing in something when
common sense tells you not to."~~



"I really wasn't sure where to turn. Where science offered exciting proofs of its claims, whether it was photos, equations, visible evidence, religion was a lot more demanding. It constantly wanted me to **accept everything on faith**. As I'm sure you're aware, faith takes a fair amount of effort."



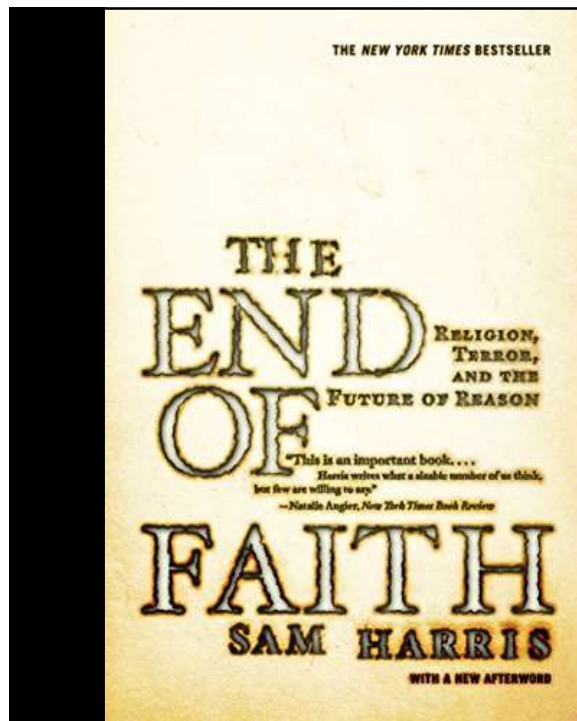
Faith

opinion
values
inner
private
emotional
feelings
subjective
religion
true for me

Reason

truth
facts
outer
public
rational
thoughts
objective
science
true for all

The New Atheism's Misconception of Faith and Reason



Sam Harris

**"Religious faith
is the belief in
historical and
metaphysical
propositions
without sufficient
evidence."**

[Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 232]



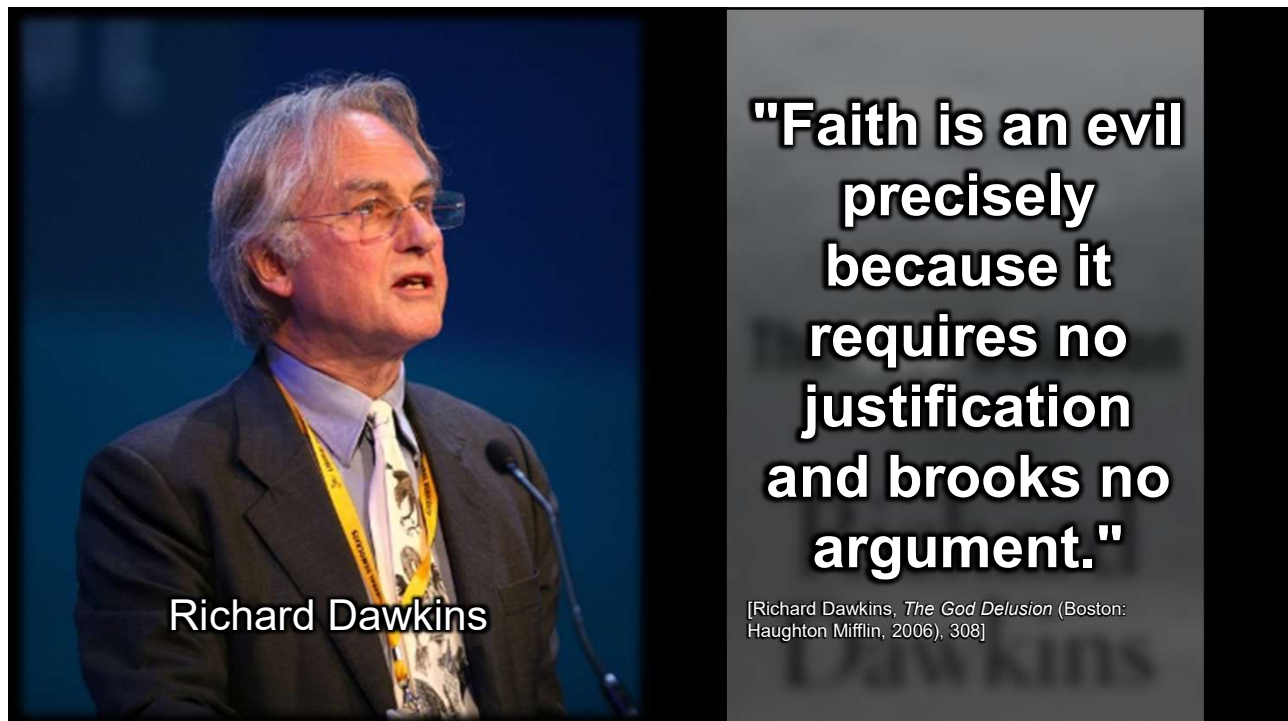
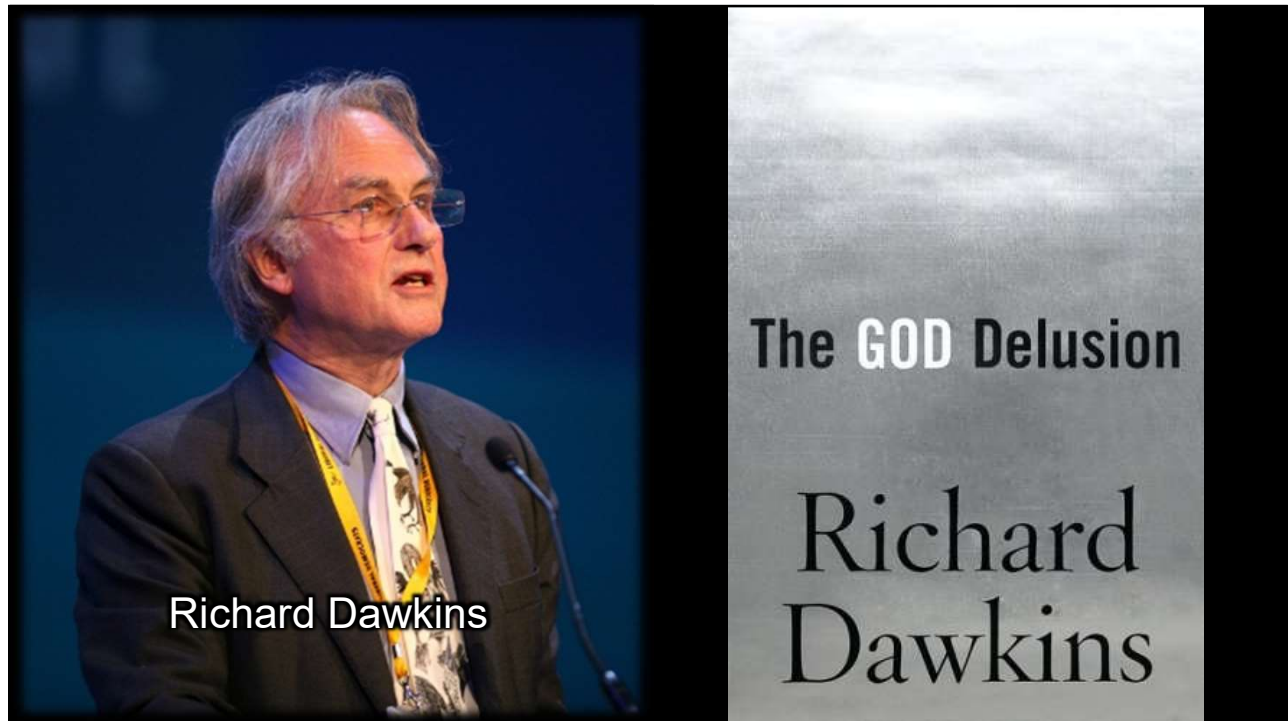
Sam Harris

**"Faith is the mortar
that fills the cracks in
the evidence and the
gaps in the logic, and
thus it is faith that
keeps the whole
terrible edifice of
religious certainty
still looming
dangerously over our
world."**

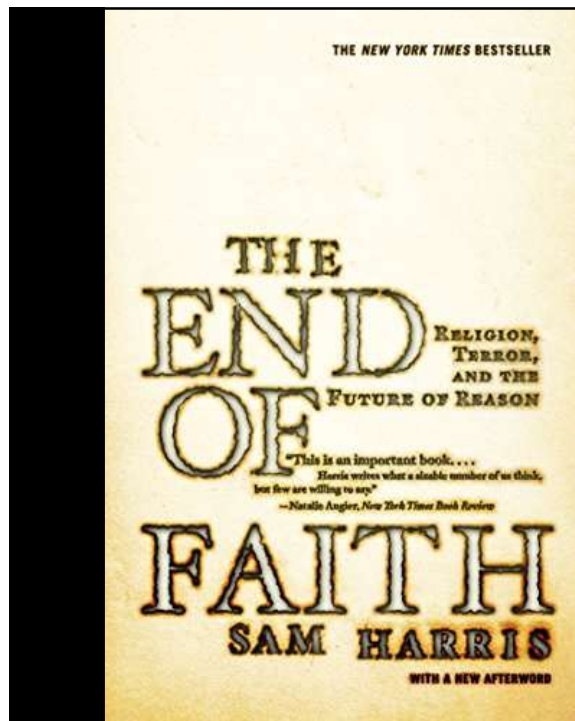
[Harris, *The End of Faith*, 233]



Sam Harris



The New Atheism's Misconception of Faith and Reason



Sam Harris

**"Religious faith
is the belief in
historical and
metaphysical
propositions
without sufficient
evidence."**

[Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 232]



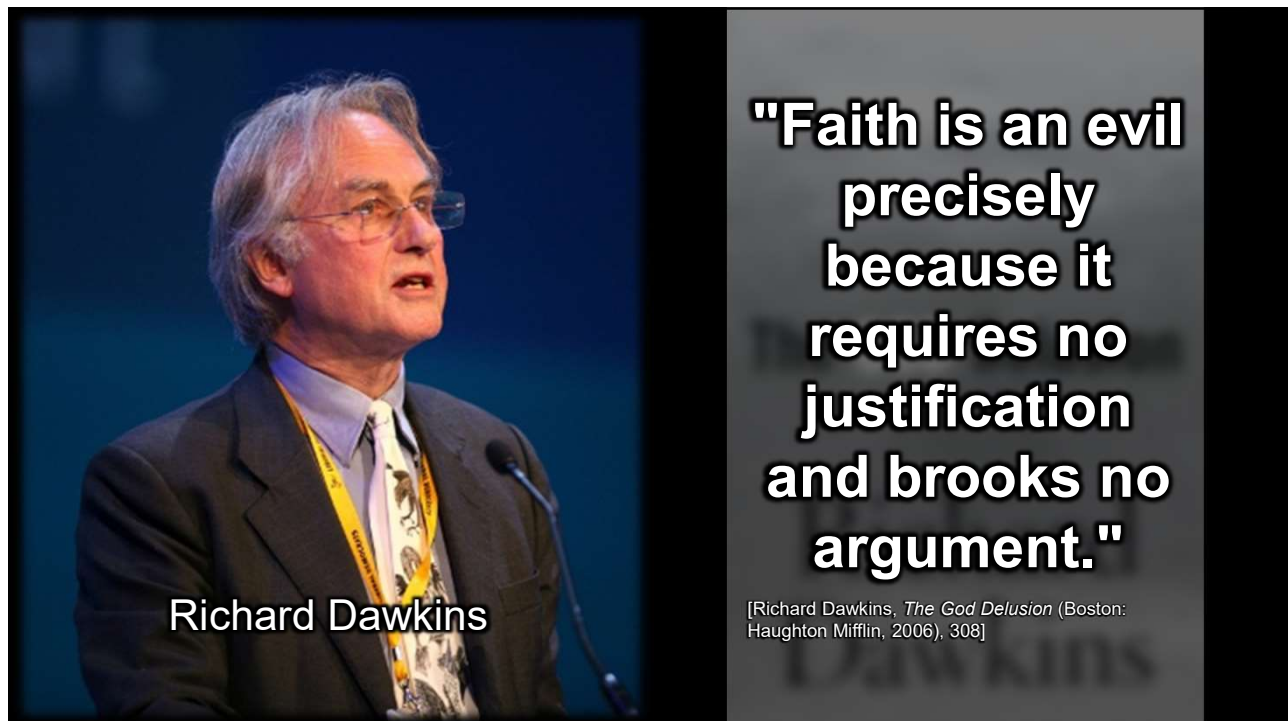
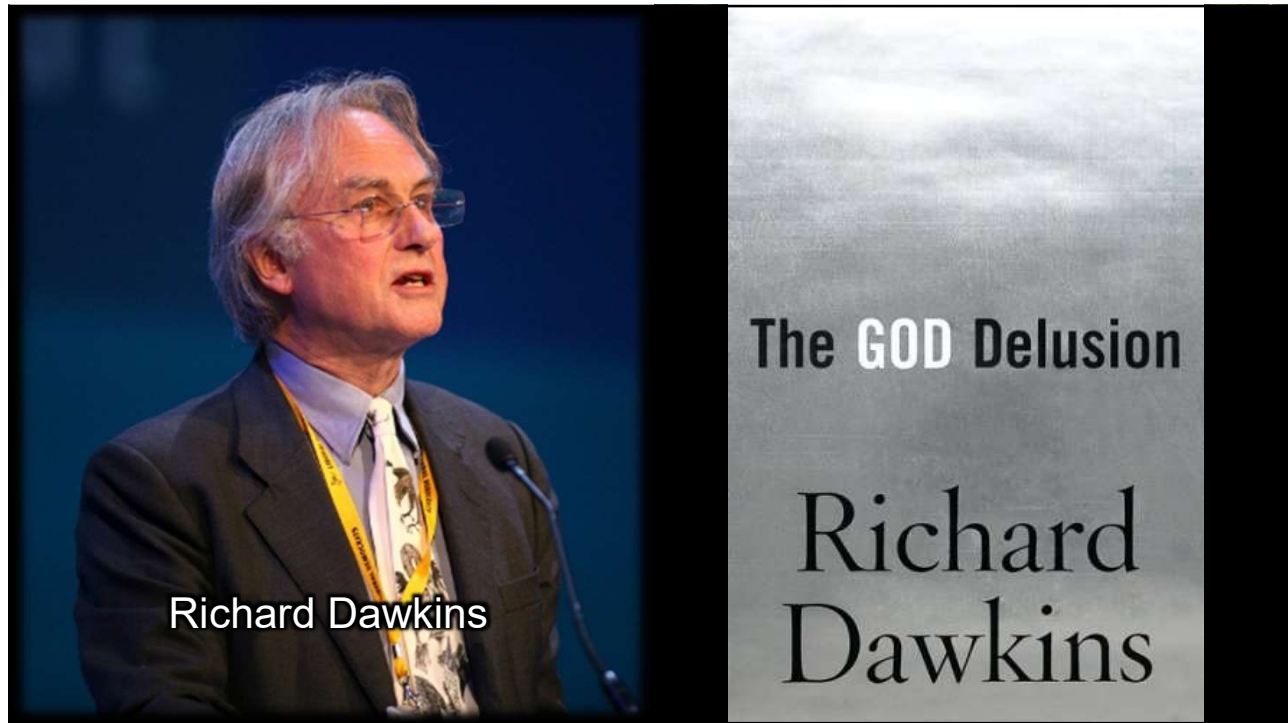
Sam Harris

**"Faith is the mortar
that fills the cracks in
the evidence and the
gaps in the logic, and
thus it is faith that
keeps the whole
terrible edifice of
religious certainty
still looming
dangerously over our
world."**

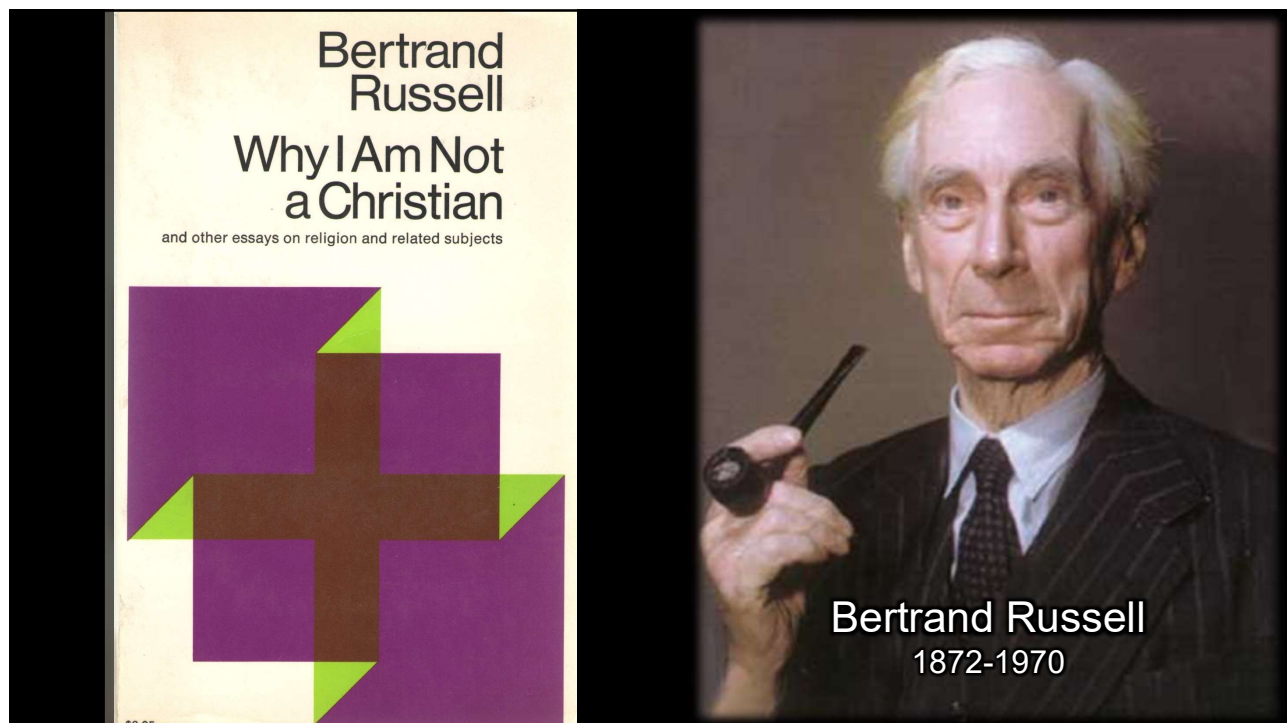
[Harris, *The End of Faith*, 233]



Sam Harris

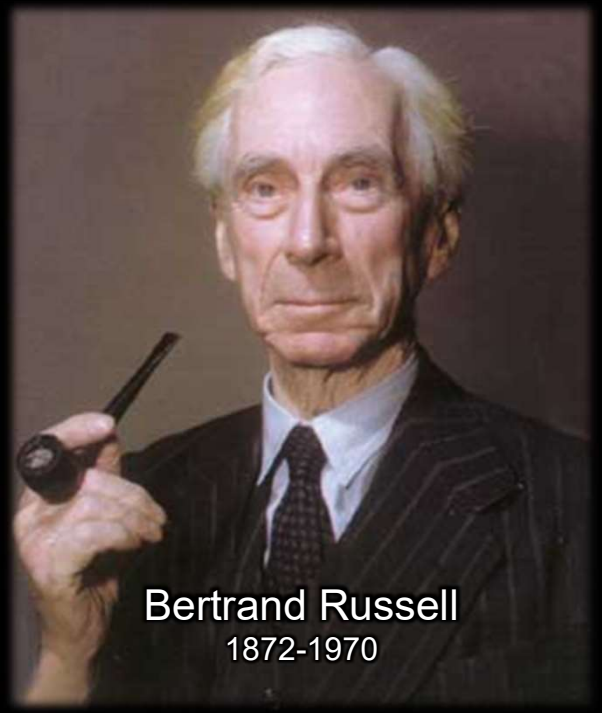


Other Atheists' Misconception of Faith and Reason



"As regards the kind of belief: it is thought virtuous to have Faith—that is to say, to have a conviction which cannot be shaken by contrary evidence. Or, if contrary evidence might induce doubt, it is held that contrary evidence must be suppressed."

[Bertrand Russell, *Why I Am Not a Christian and Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), from the preface, p. vi]



Bertrand Russell
1872-1970



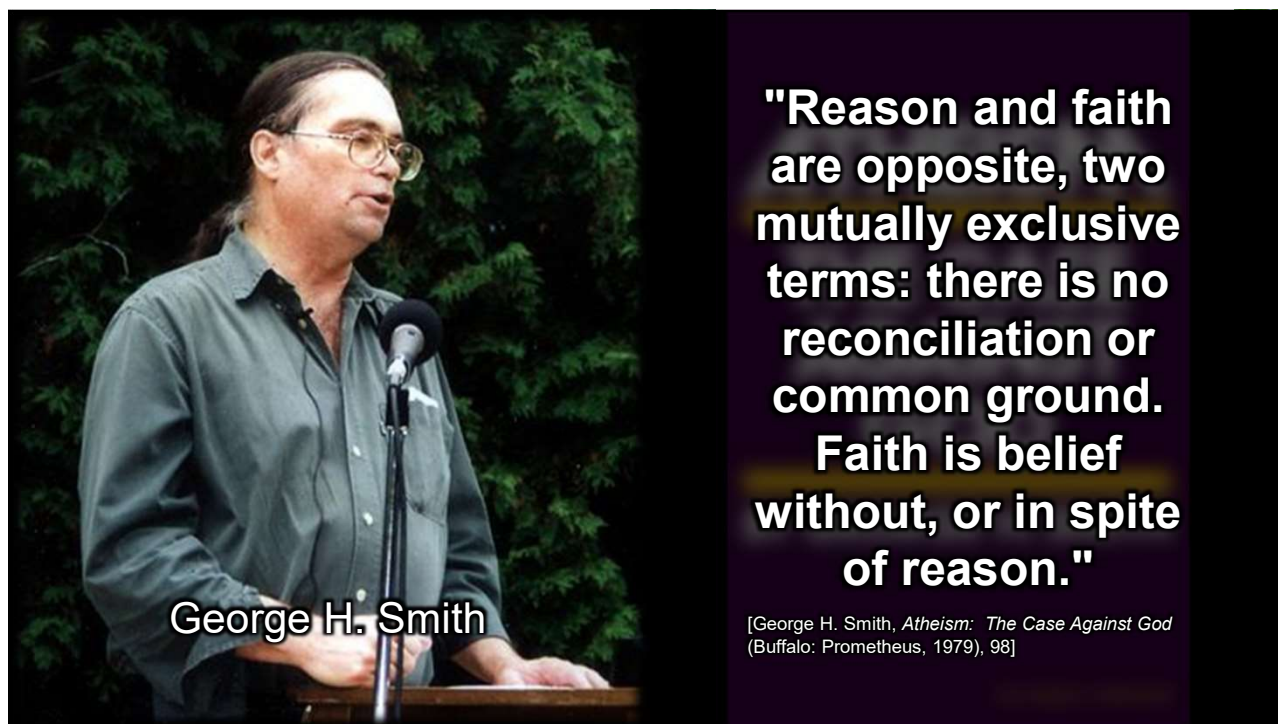
George H. Smith

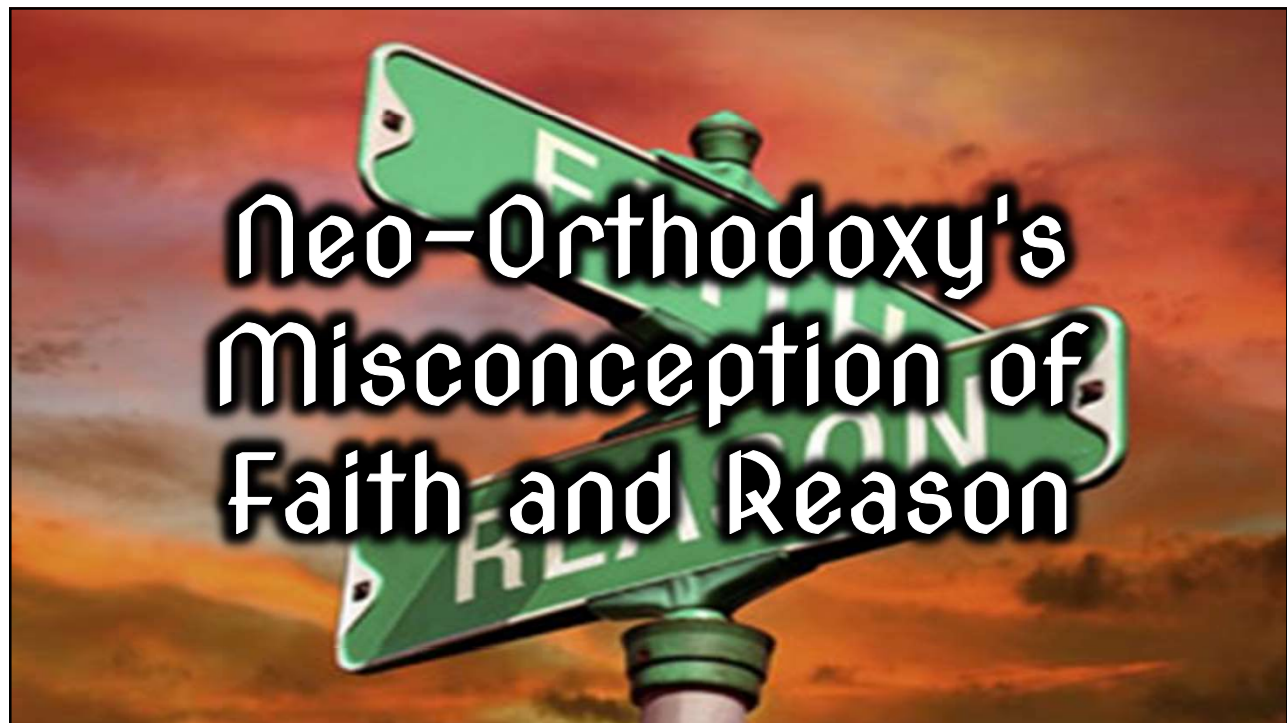
ATHEISM

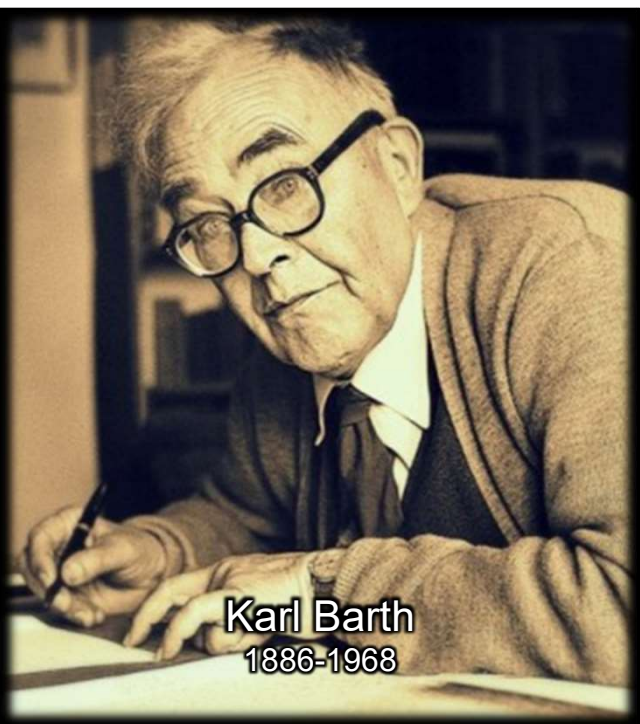
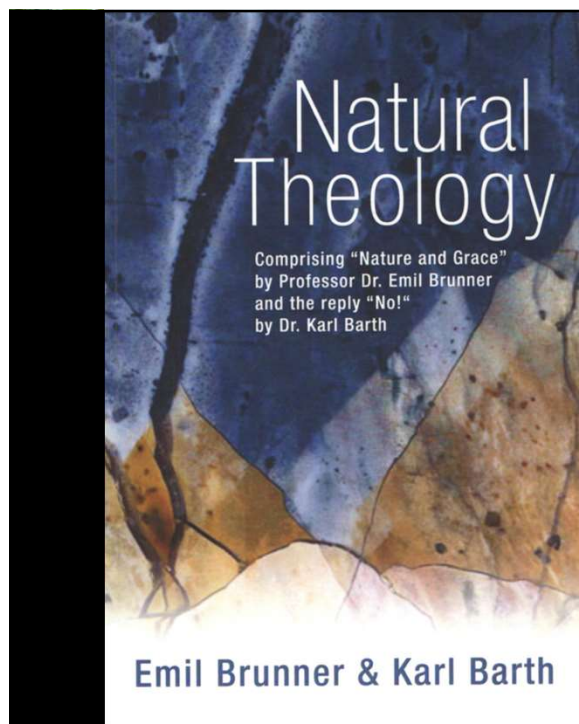
THE CASE AGAINST GOD

BY GEORGE H. SMITH

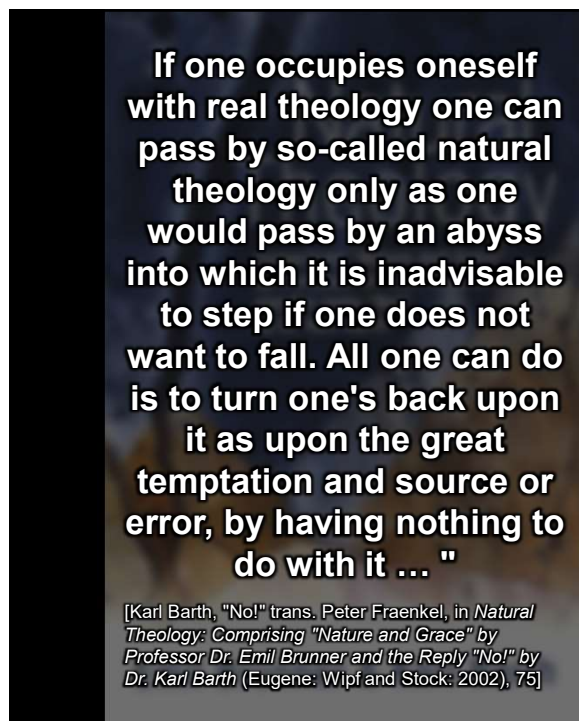
The Skeptic's Bookshelf





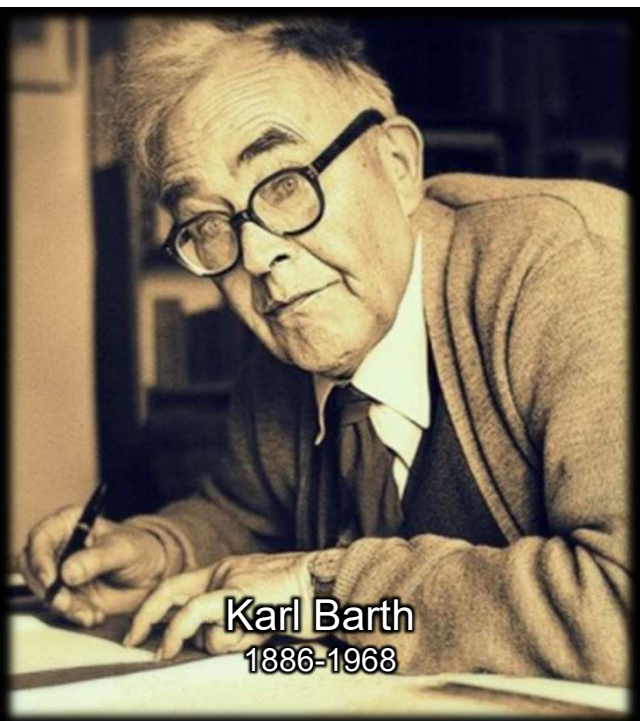


Karl Barth
1886-1968

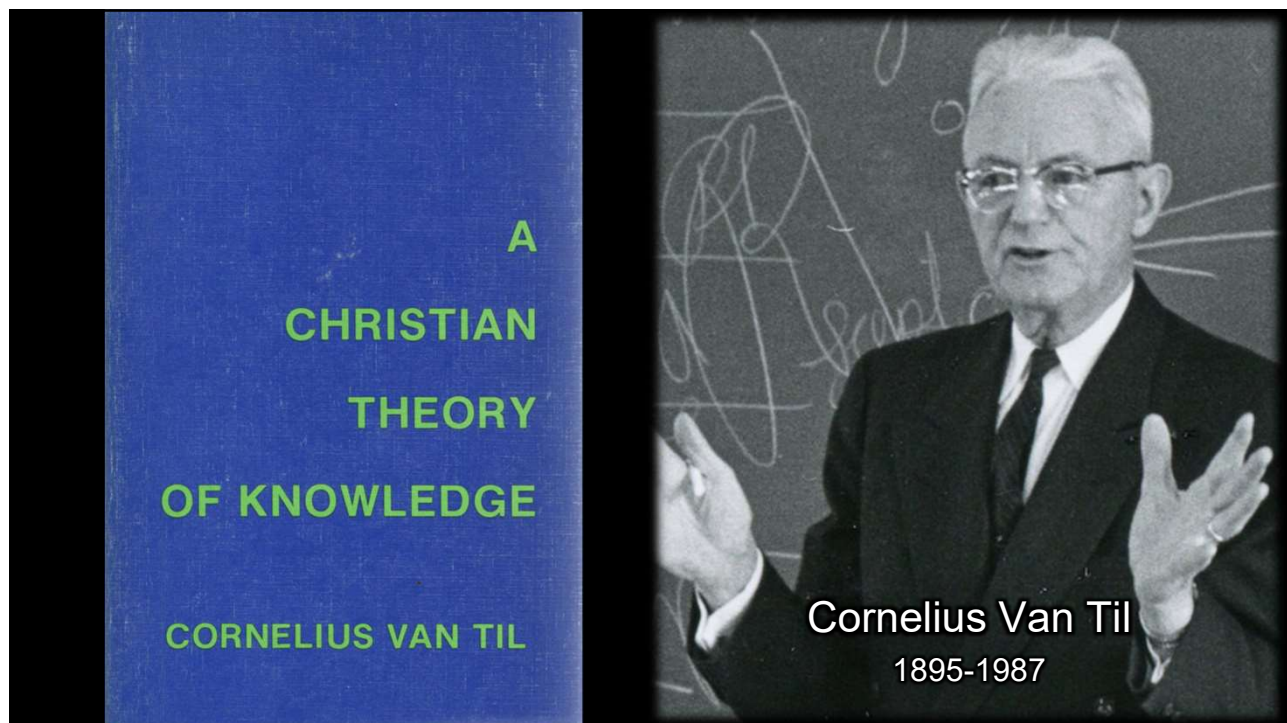


If one occupies oneself with real theology one can pass by so-called natural theology only as one would pass by an abyss into which it is inadvisable to step if one does not want to fall. All one can do is to turn one's back upon it as upon the great temptation and source of error, by having nothing to do with it ... "

[Karl Barth, "No!" trans. Peter Fraenkel, in *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace" by Professor Dr. Emil Brunner and the Reply "No!" by Dr. Karl Barth* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock: 2002), 75]

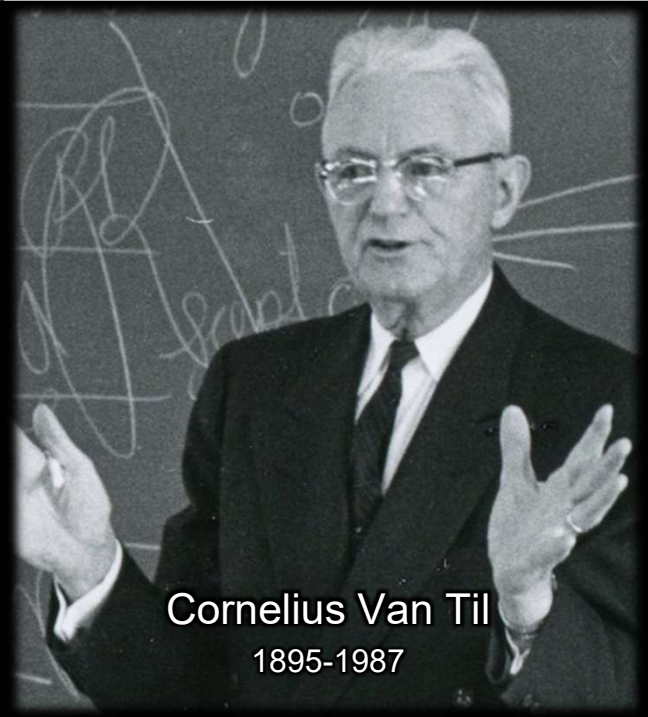


Karl Barth
1886-1968



**"Reason and fact
cannot be brought
into fruitful union
with one another
except upon the
presupposition of the
existence of God and
his control over the
universe."**

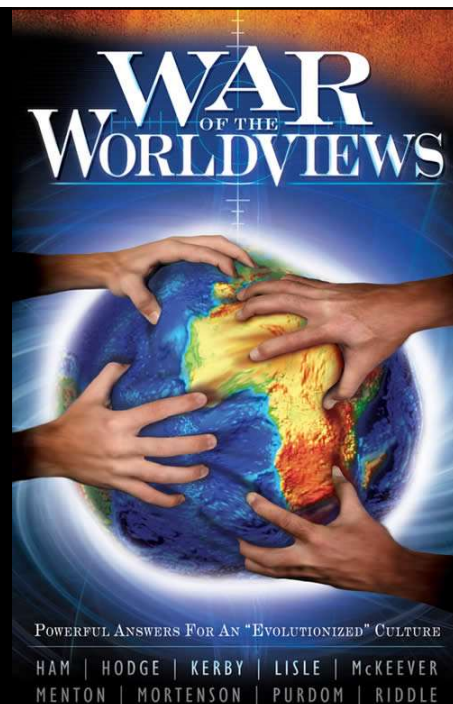
[Cornelius Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*
(Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing,
1975), 18]



Cornelius Van Til
1895-1987



Jason Lisle






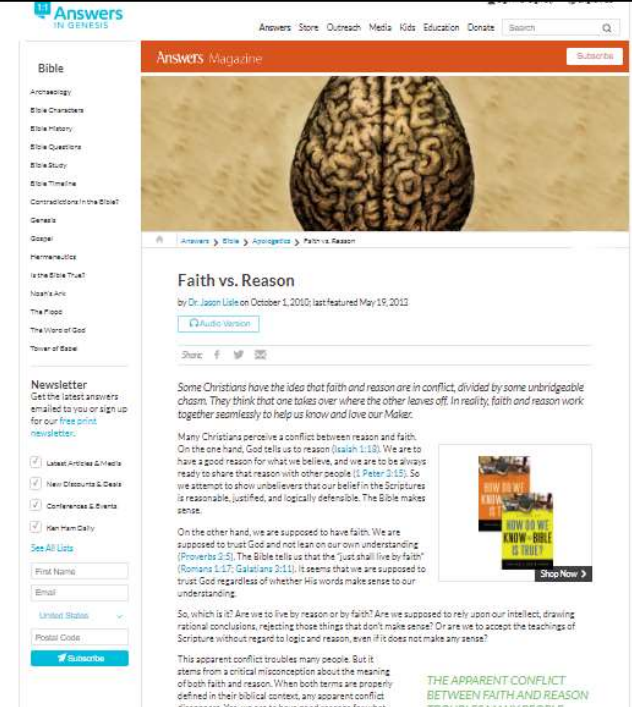
Jason Lisle

"We all have the same evidence; but in order to draw conclusions about what the evidence means we use our worldview—our most basic beliefs about the nature of reality. ... Ultimately, biblical creationists accept the recorded history of the Bible as their starting point."


[Jason Lisle, "Can Creationists Be 'Real' Scientists?" in Gary Vaterlaus, ed., *War of the Worldviews: Powerful Answers for an "Evolutionized" Culture* (Hebron: Answers in Genesis, 2005) , 124, 125]



Jason Lisle



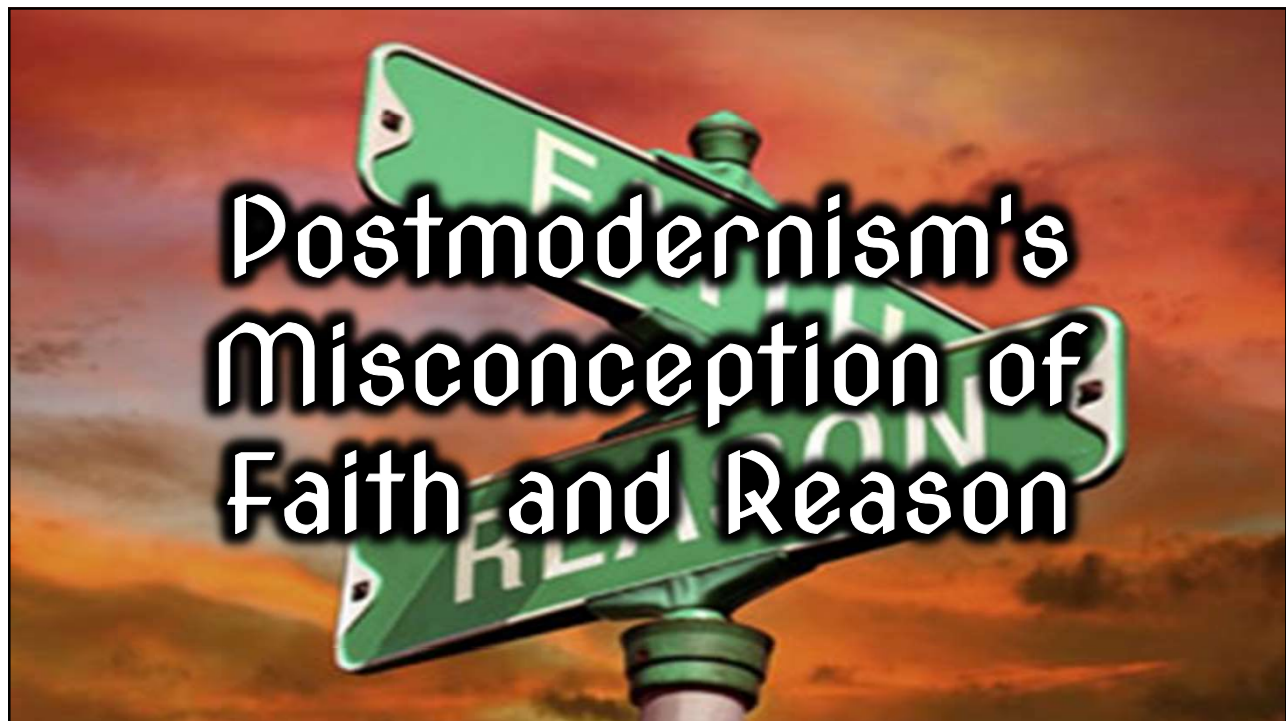
The screenshot shows the Answers in Genesis website. On the left is a navigation menu with categories like Bible, Archaeology, and Creation. The main content area features an article titled "Faith vs. Reason" by Dr. Jason Lisle, dated October 1, 2012. The article discusses the perceived conflict between faith and reason, citing biblical passages like Isaiah 1:18 and Romans 1:17. It argues that both faith and reason are necessary for understanding the world and that the Bible provides a rational foundation for faith. The article is accompanied by a thumbnail image of a brain with the word "FAITH" written on it.

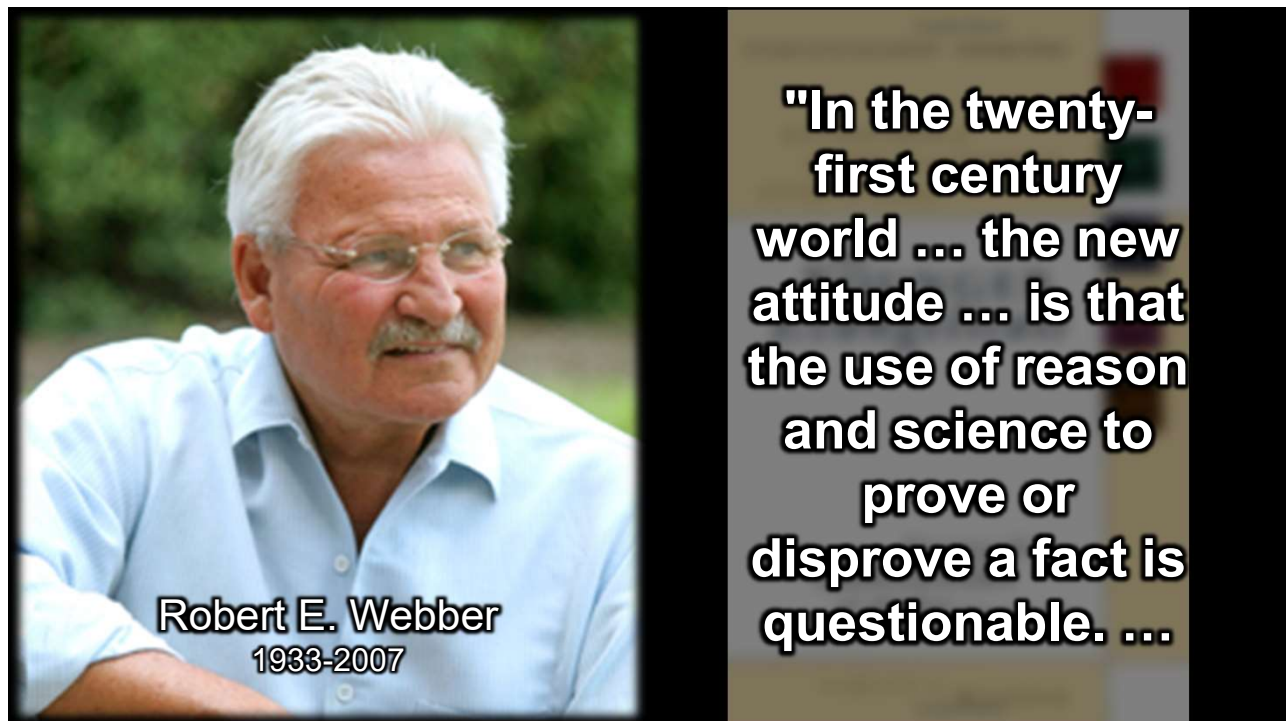
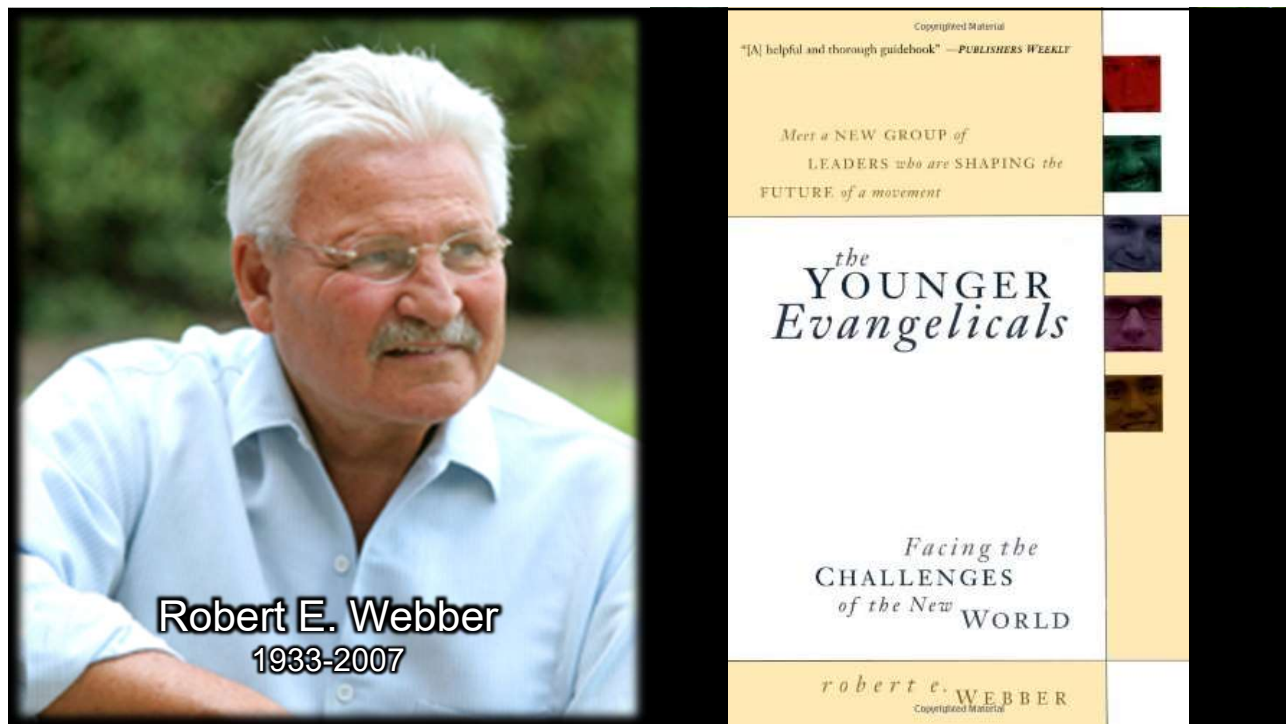
A portrait of Jason Lisle, a man with dark hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a patterned tie. He is smiling slightly.

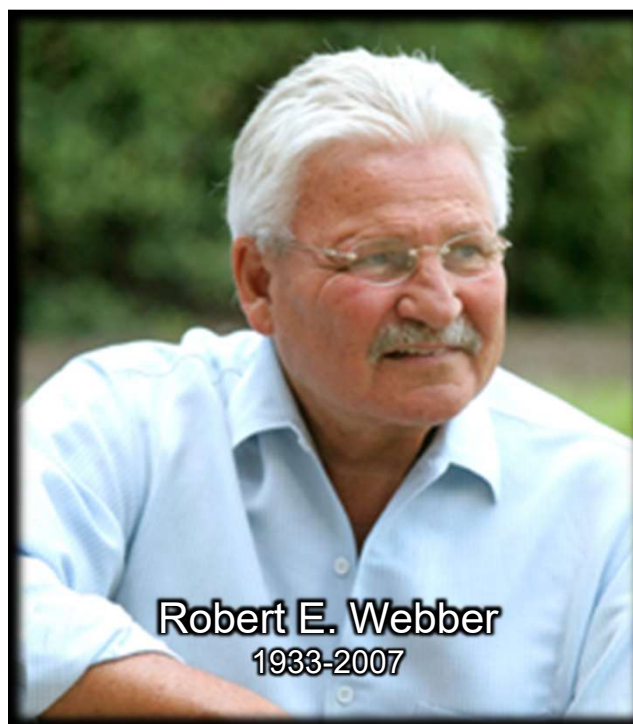
Jason Lisle

"Faith is a prerequisite for reason. In order to reason about anything we must have faith that there are laws of logic which correctly prescribe the correct chain of reasoning. Since laws of logic cannot be observed with the senses, our confidence in them is a type of faith."

[Jason Lisle, "Faith and Reason," <https://answersingenesis.org/apologetics/faith-vs-reason/>, accessed 09/22/17]

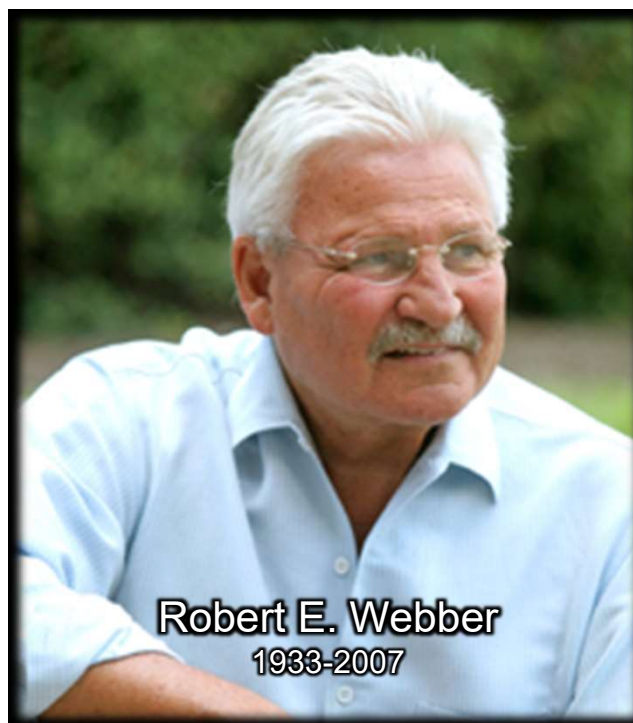






Robert E. Webber
1933-2007

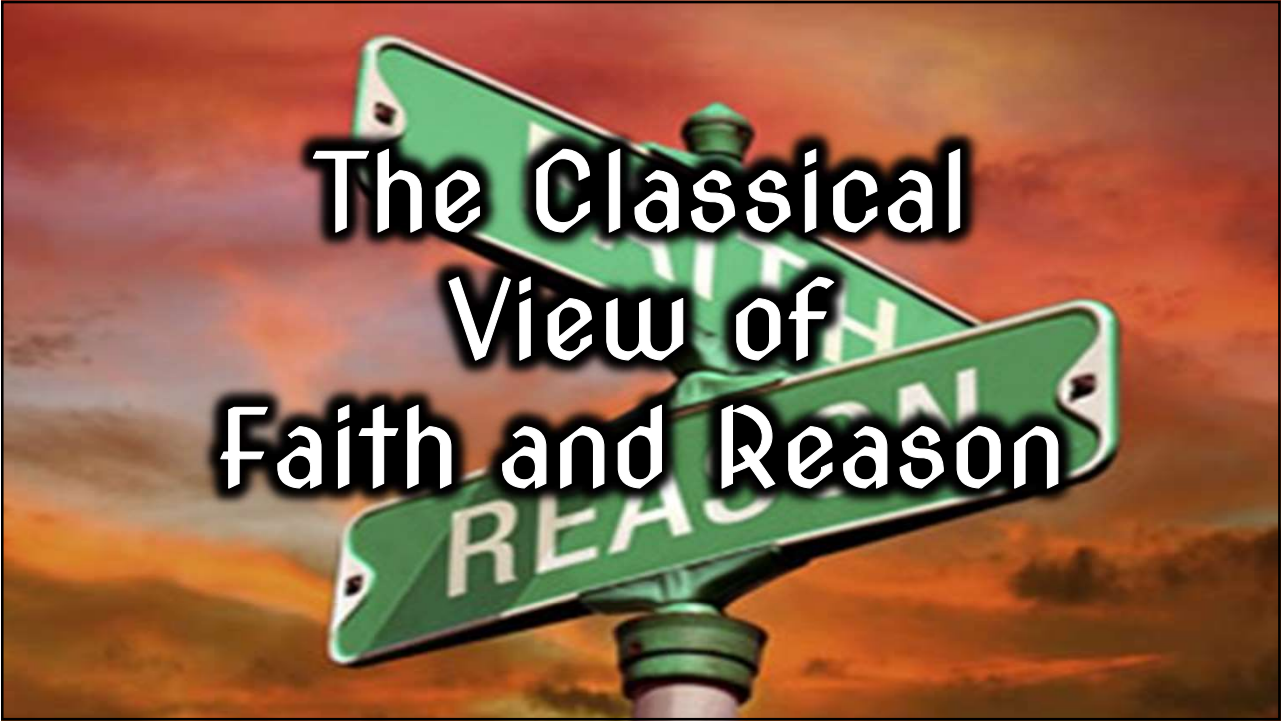
**"This ... points
... to the
postmodern
conclusion that
we deal with
'interpreted
facts.' ...**



Robert E. Webber
1933-2007

**"In the
postmodern
world, both
believers and
nonbelievers are
people of faith."**

[Robert E. Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 84]



The Classical View of Faith and Reason

Reason

*Believing
something on
the basis of
demonstration.*

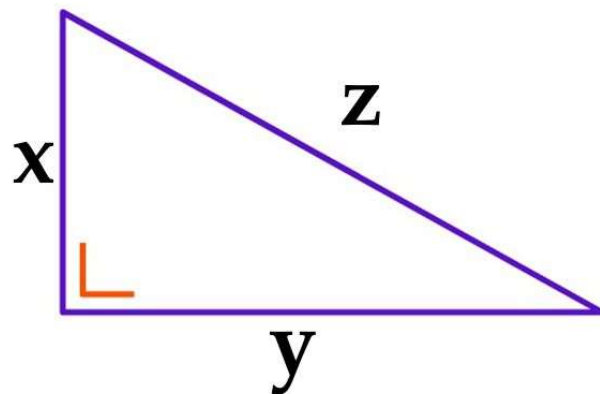
Faith

*Believing
something on
the basis of
authority.*

***Consider
Fermat's
Last Theorem.***

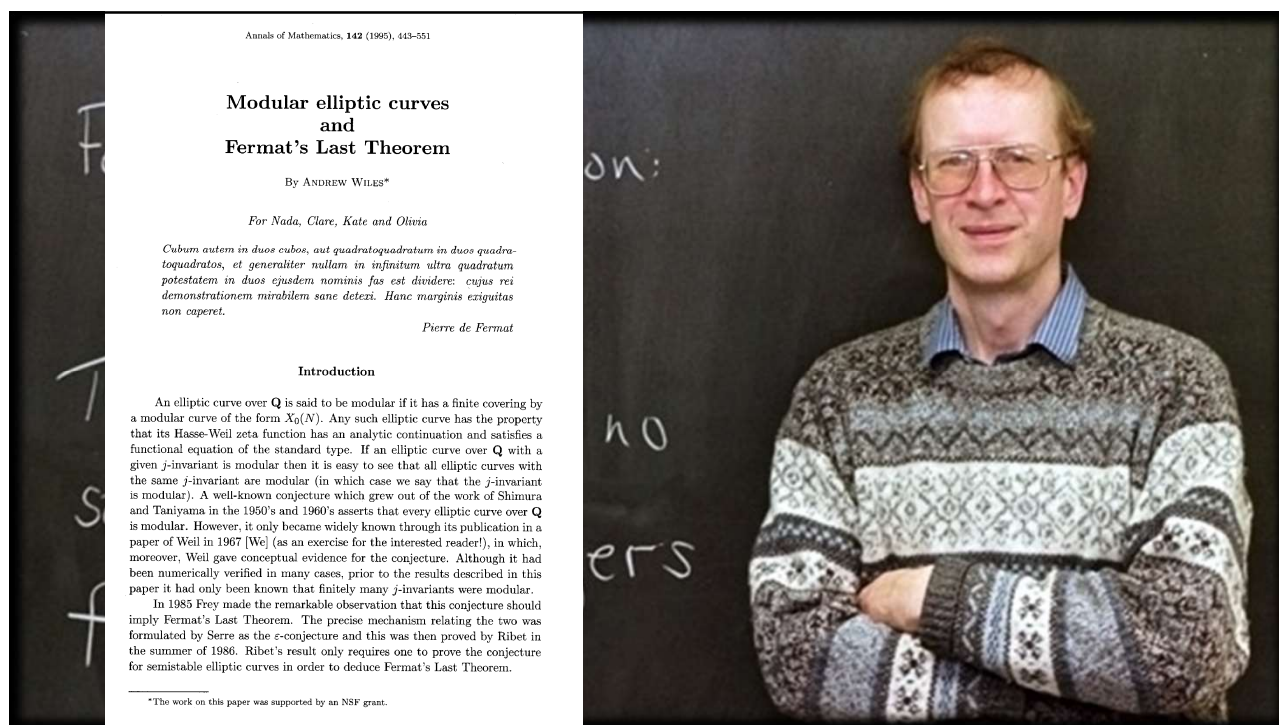
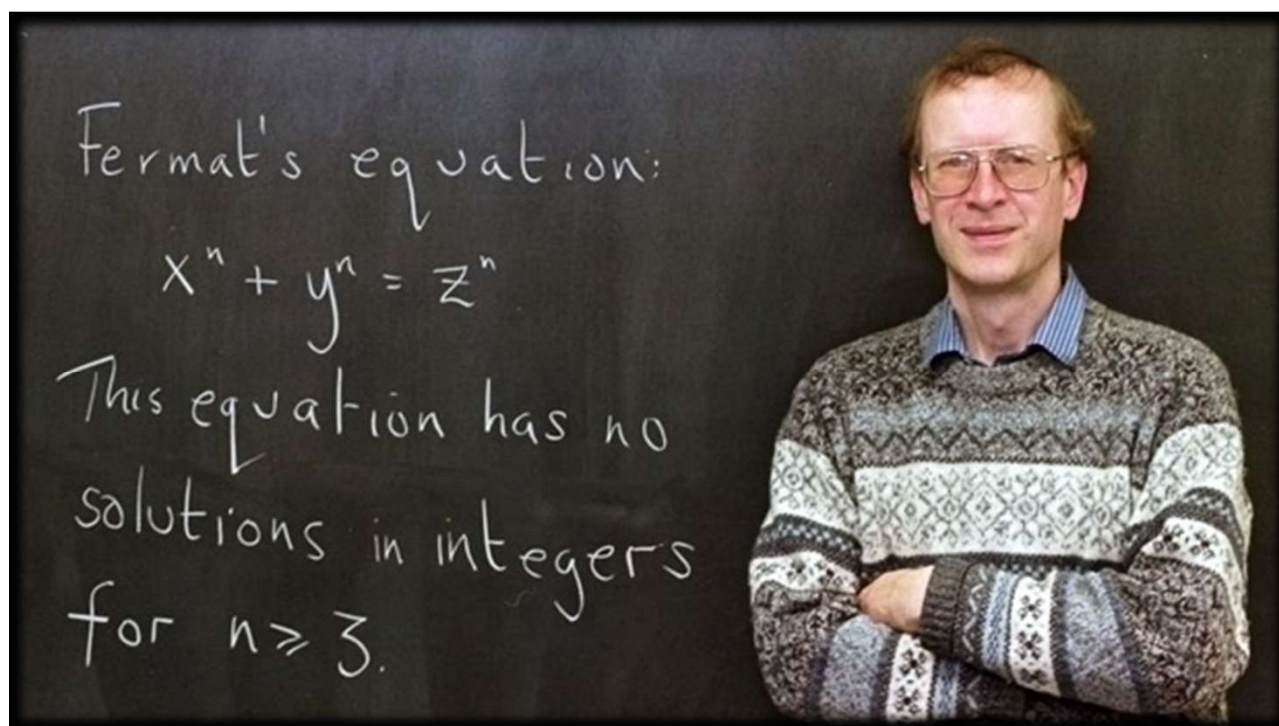


Pierre de Fermat
1601 - 1665



Pythagorean Theorem

$$x^2 + y^2 = z^2$$



Reason

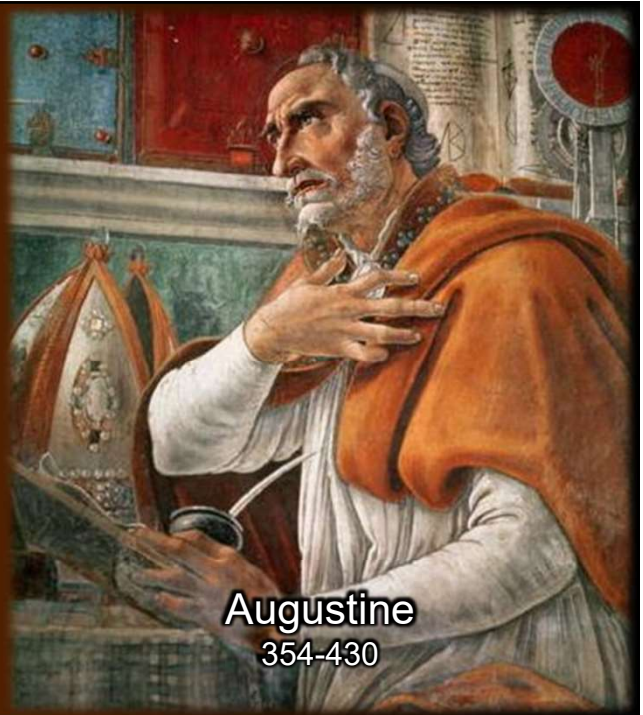
*Believing
something on
the basis of
demonstration.*

Faith

*Believing
something on
the basis of
divine authority.*

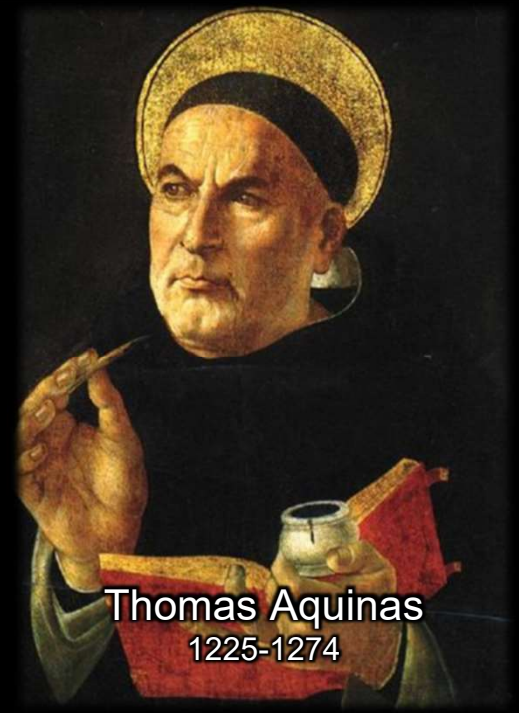
***"For who cannot see
that thinking [reason]
is prior to believing
[faith]? For no one
believes anything
unless he has first
thought that it is to be
believed.***

[On the Predestination of the Saints, 5, as cited in Norman L. Geisler, ed.
What Augustine Says (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982), 13]



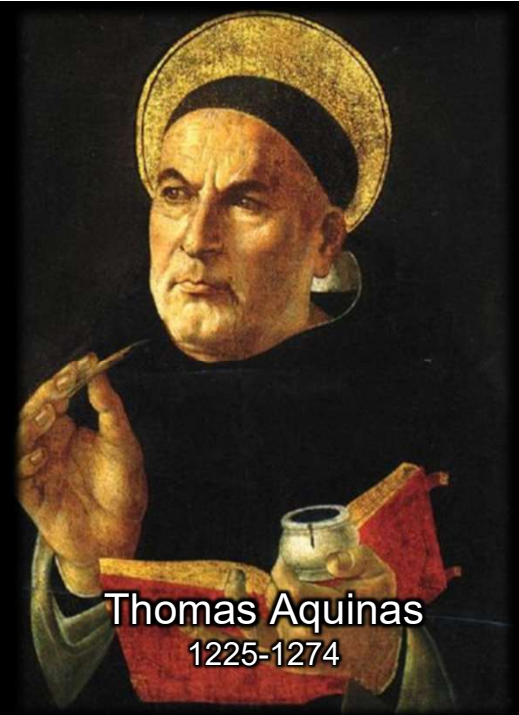
Augustine
354-430

"Those things are said to be present to the understanding which do not exceed its capacity so that the gaze of understanding may be fixed on them. For a person gives assent to such things because of the witness of his own understanding and not because of someone else's testimony."



Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

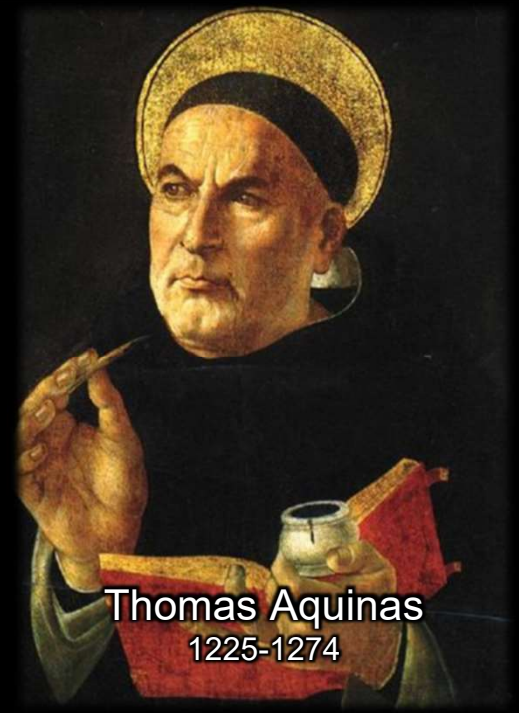
"Those things, however, which are beyond the power of our understanding are said to be absent from the senses of the mind. Hence, our understanding cannot be fixed on them."



Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

"As a result, we cannot assent to them on our own witness, but on that of someone else. These things are properly called the objects of faith."

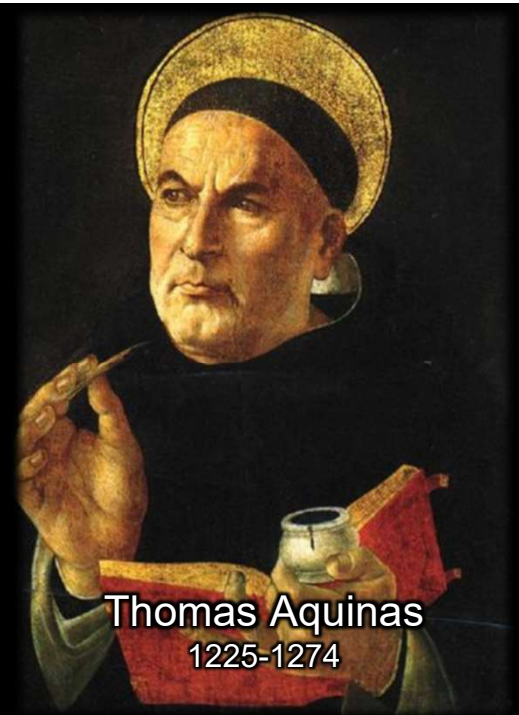
[*Truth*, QXIV, Art. 9, reply, trans. James V. McGlynn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 249-250]



Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

"One who believes [i.e., has faith] gives assent to things that are proposed to him by another person, and which he himself does not see."

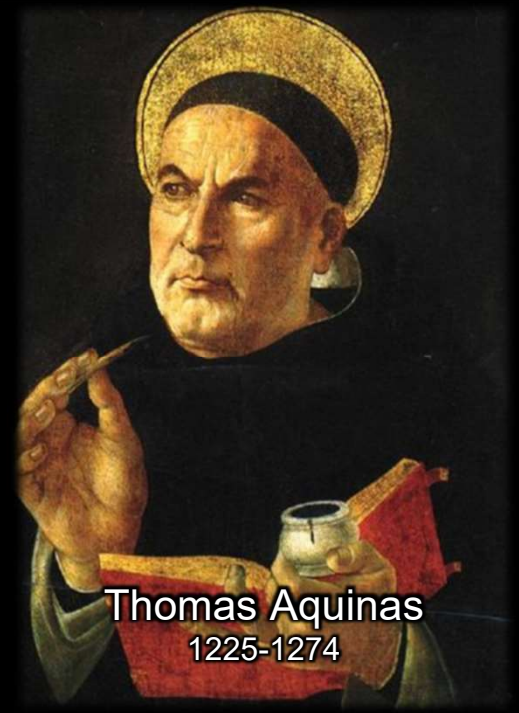
[*Truth*, QXIV, Art. 9, reply, trans. James V. McGlynn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 249-250]



Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

"Since man can only know the things that he does not see himself by taking them from another who does see them, and since faith is among the things we do not see, the knowledge of the objects of faith must be handed on by one who sees them himself. Now, this one is God, Who perfectly comprehends Himself, and naturally sees His essence."

[SCG, 3, 154 [1], trans. Vernon J. Bourke, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), 239]

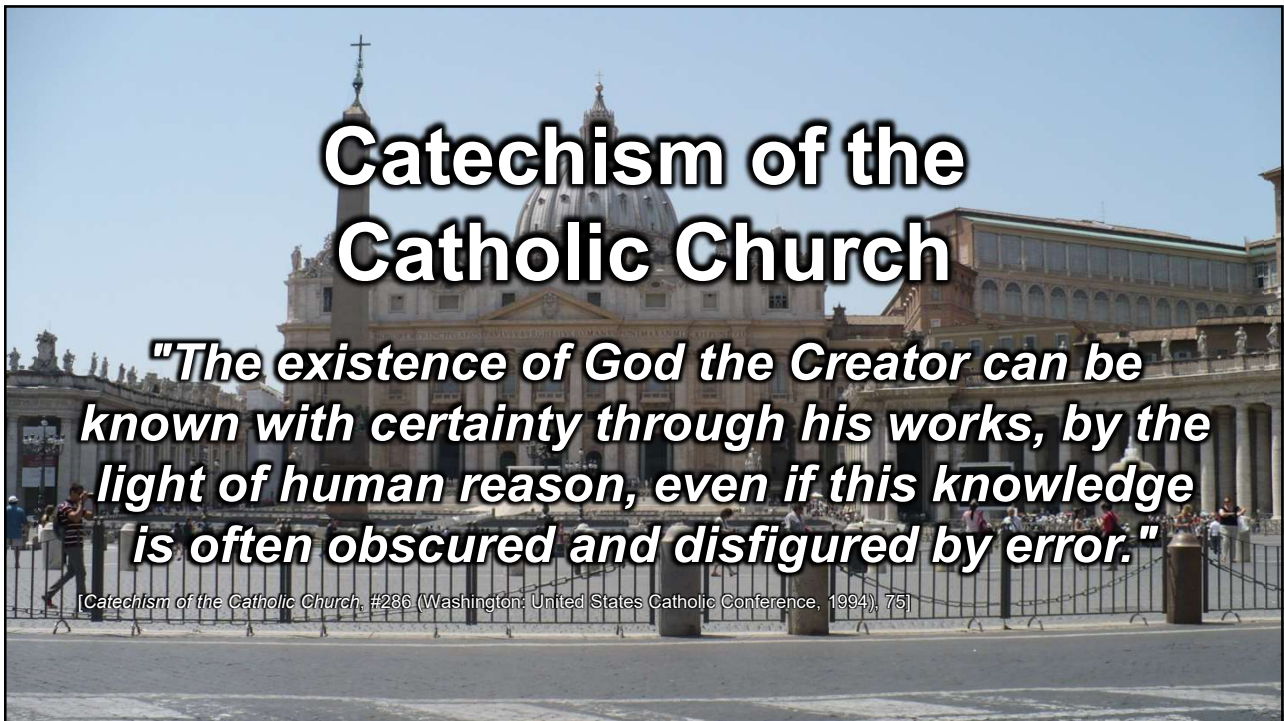


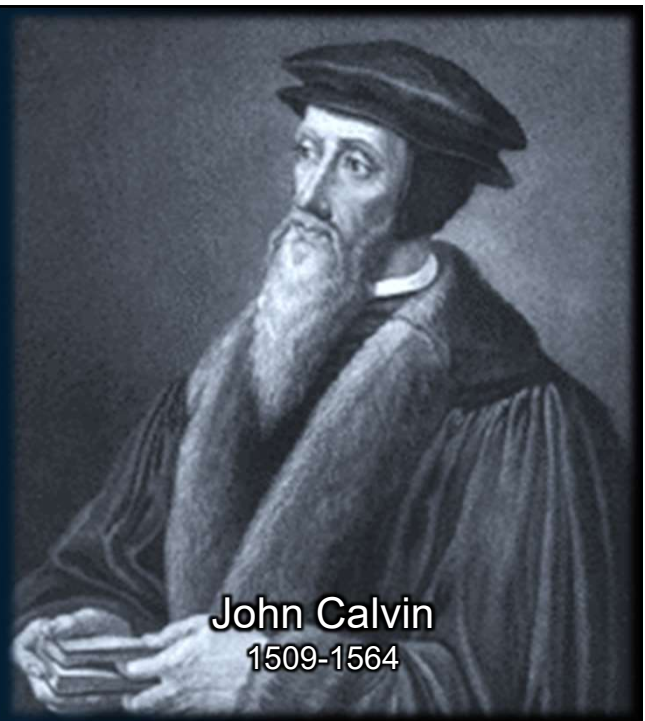
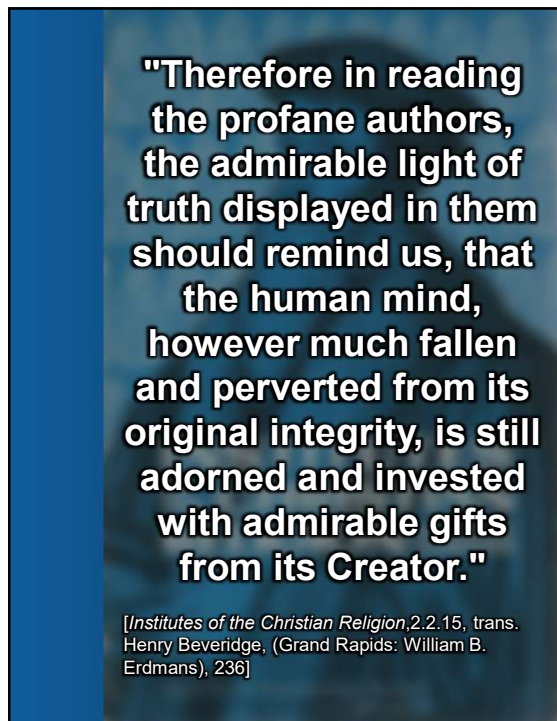
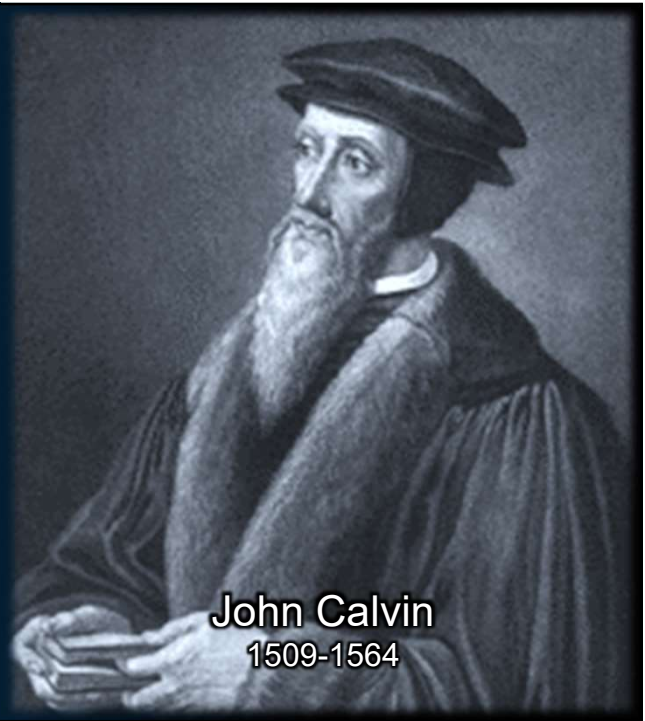
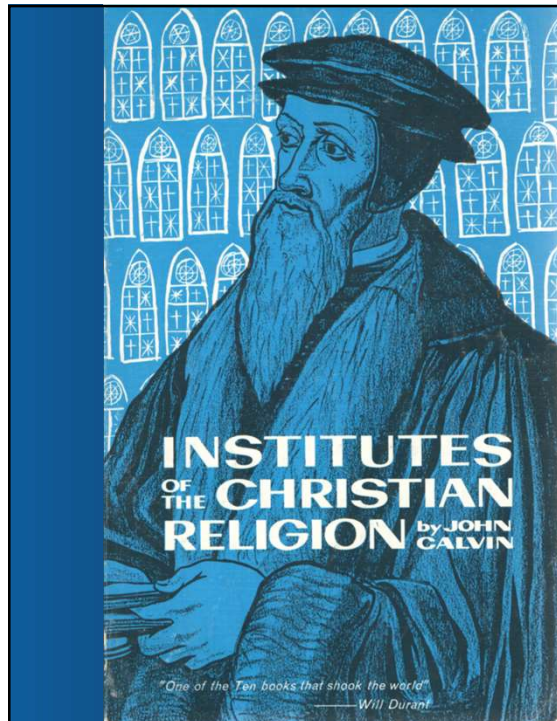
Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

Catechism of the Catholic Church

"The existence of God the Creator can be known with certainty through his works, by the light of human reason, even if this knowledge is often obscured and disfigured by error."

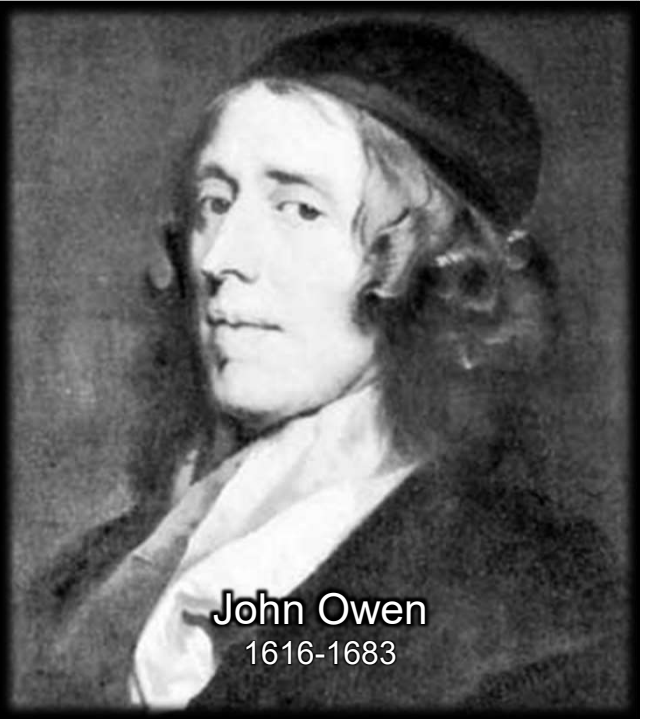
[Catechism of the Catholic Church, #286 (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1994), 75]





THE WORKS OF JOHN OWEN

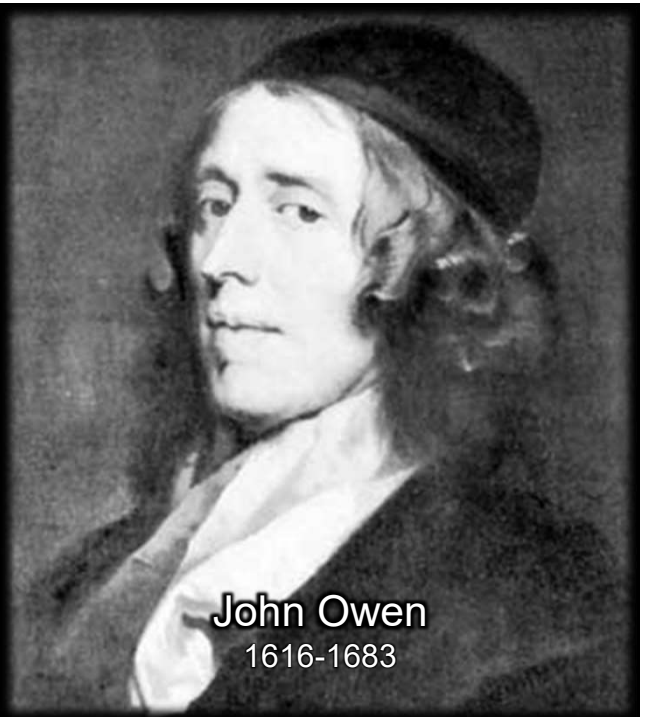
volume four



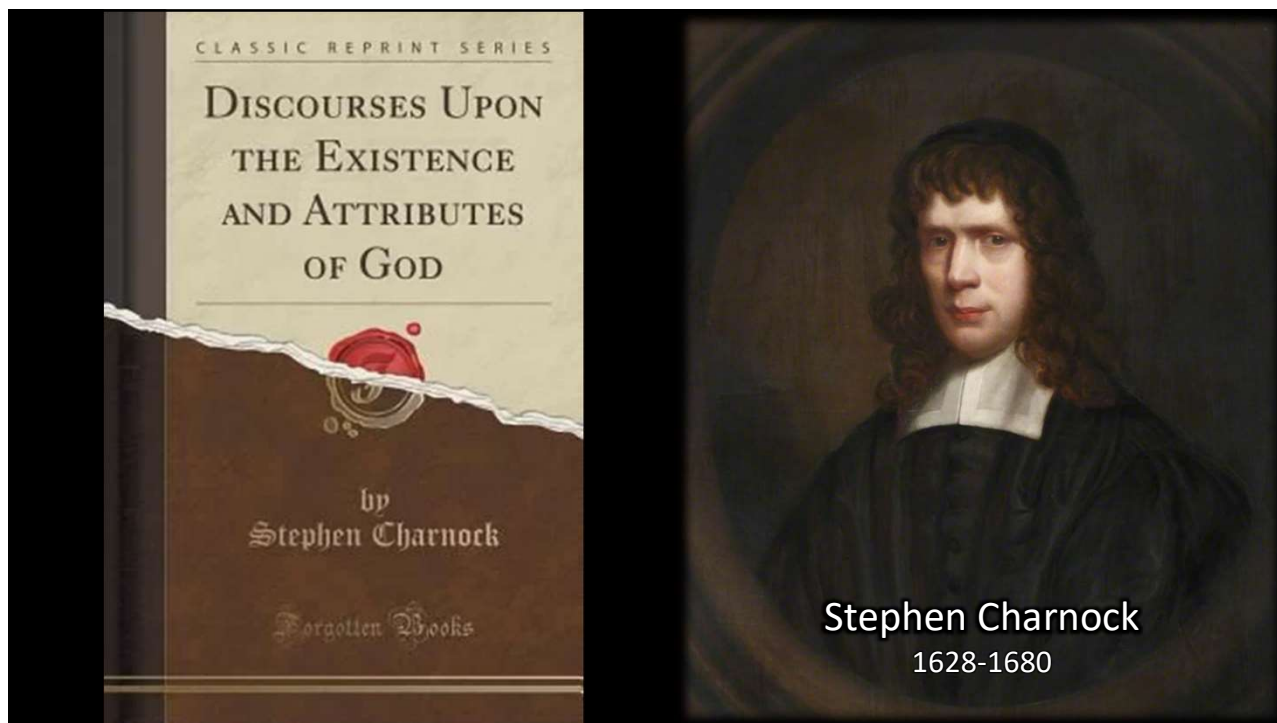
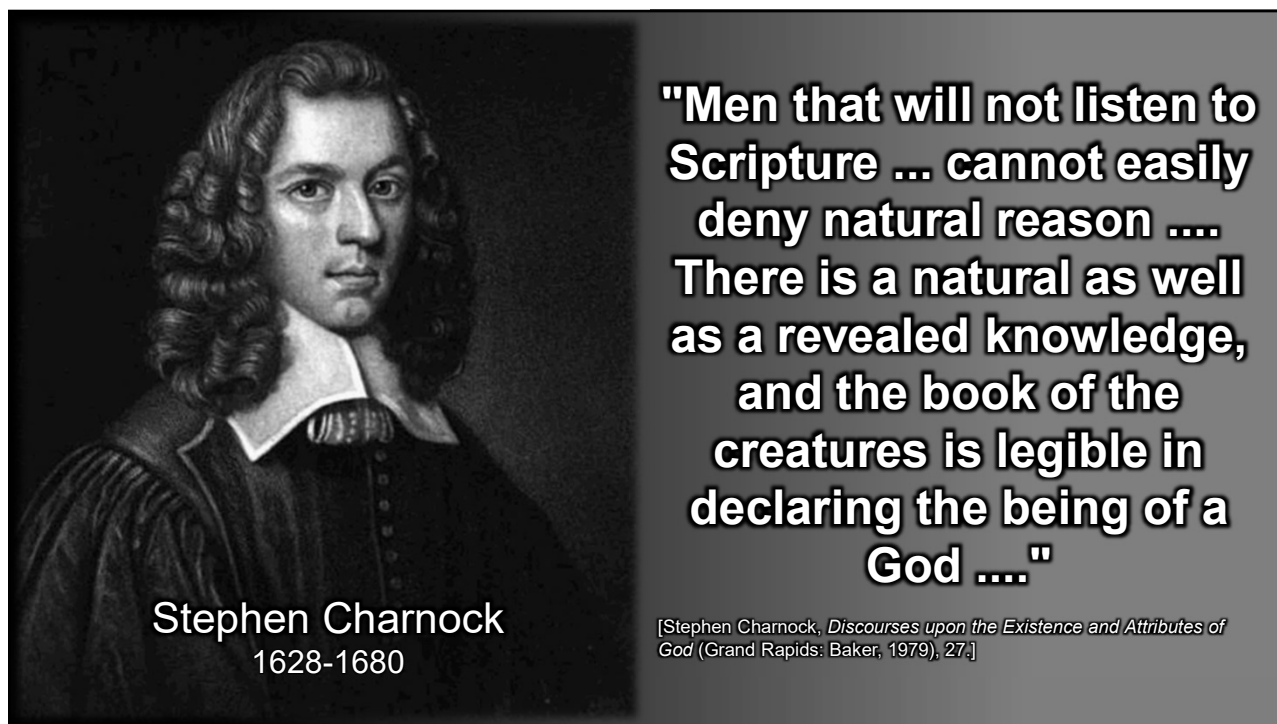
John Owen
1616-1683

"There are sundry cogent arguments, which are taken from external considerations of the Scripture, that evince it on rational grounds to be from God. ... and ... are... necessary unto the confirmation of our faith herein against temptations, oppositions, and objections."

[John Owen, "The Reason of Faith," in *The Works of John Owen*, vol. 4, (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 20]

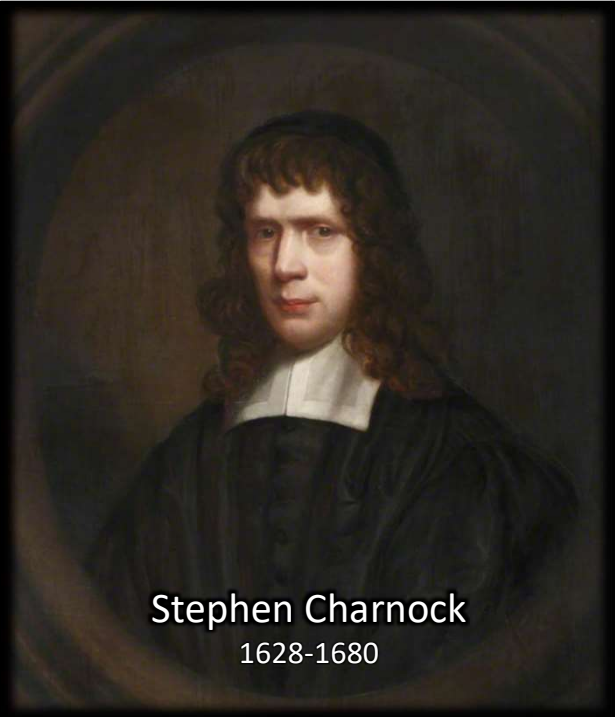


John Owen
1616-1683



"Men that will not listen to Scripture ... cannot easily deny natural reason There is a natural as well as a revealed knowledge, and the book of the creatures is legible in declaring the being of a God"

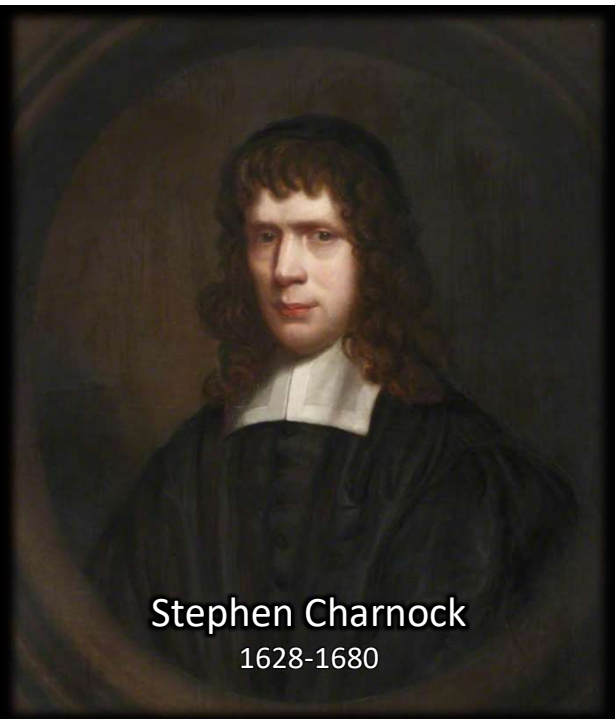
[Stephen Charnock, *Discourses upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 27.]



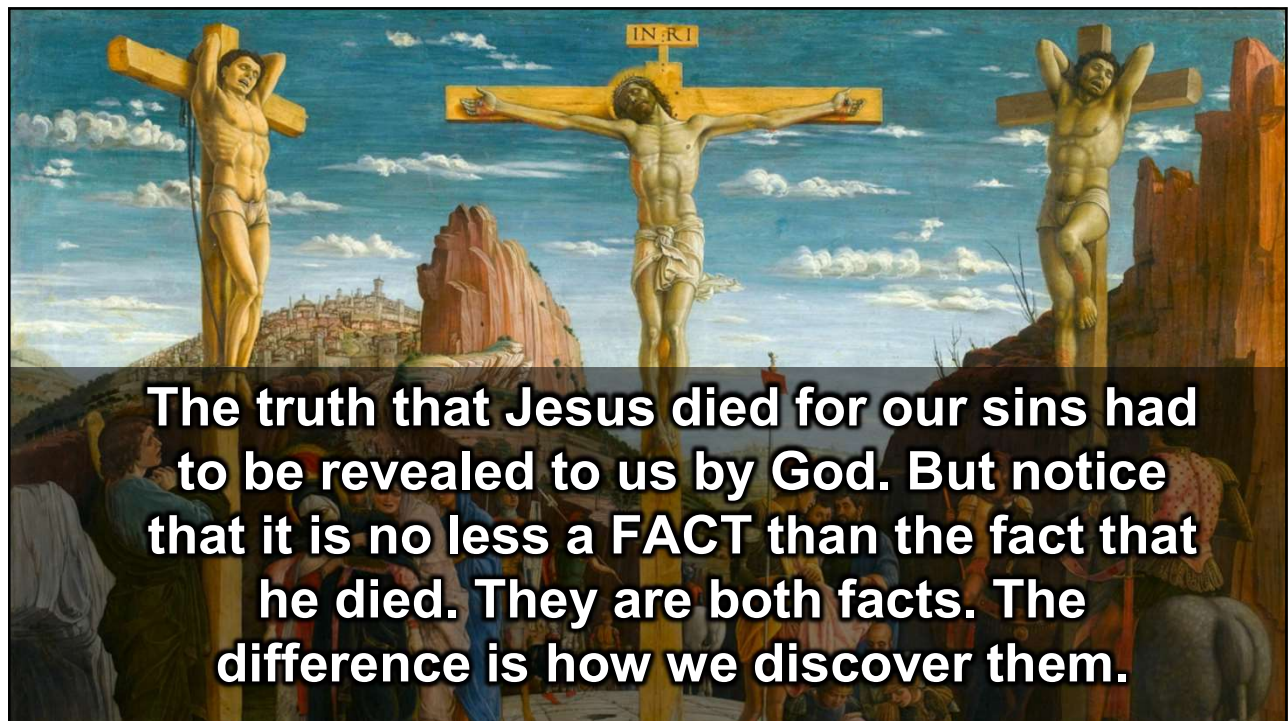
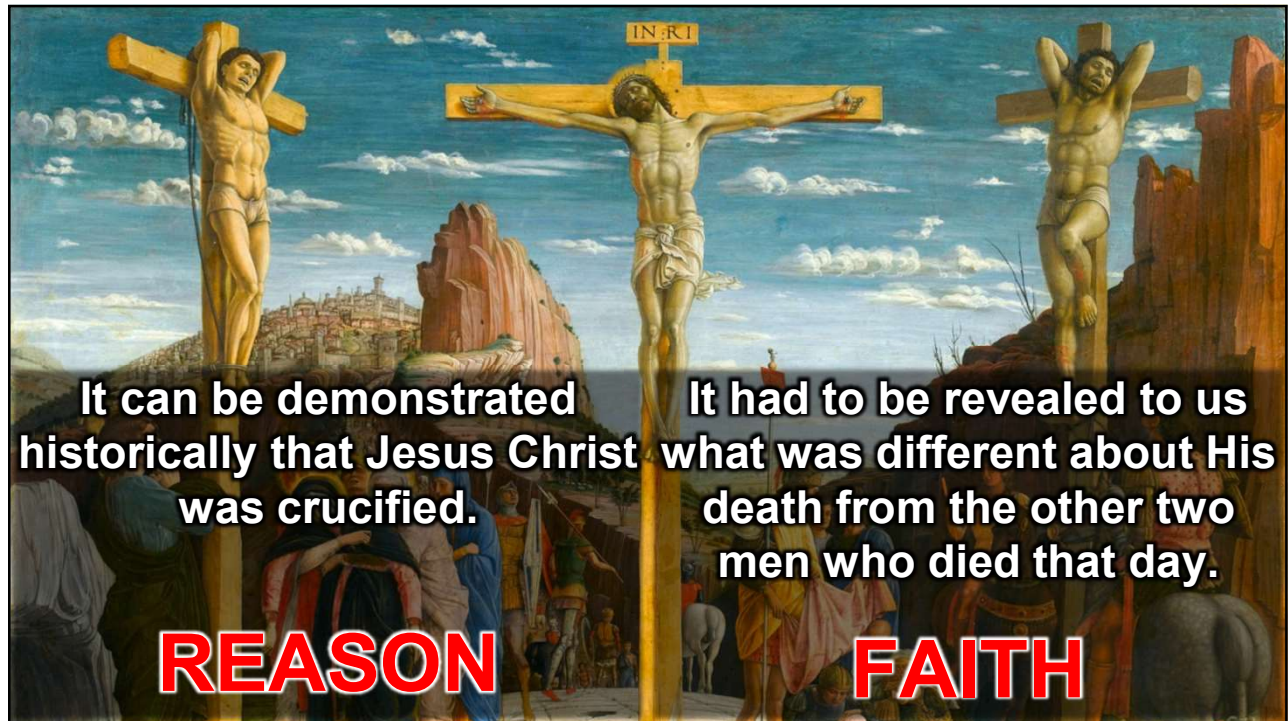
Stephen Charnock
1628-1680

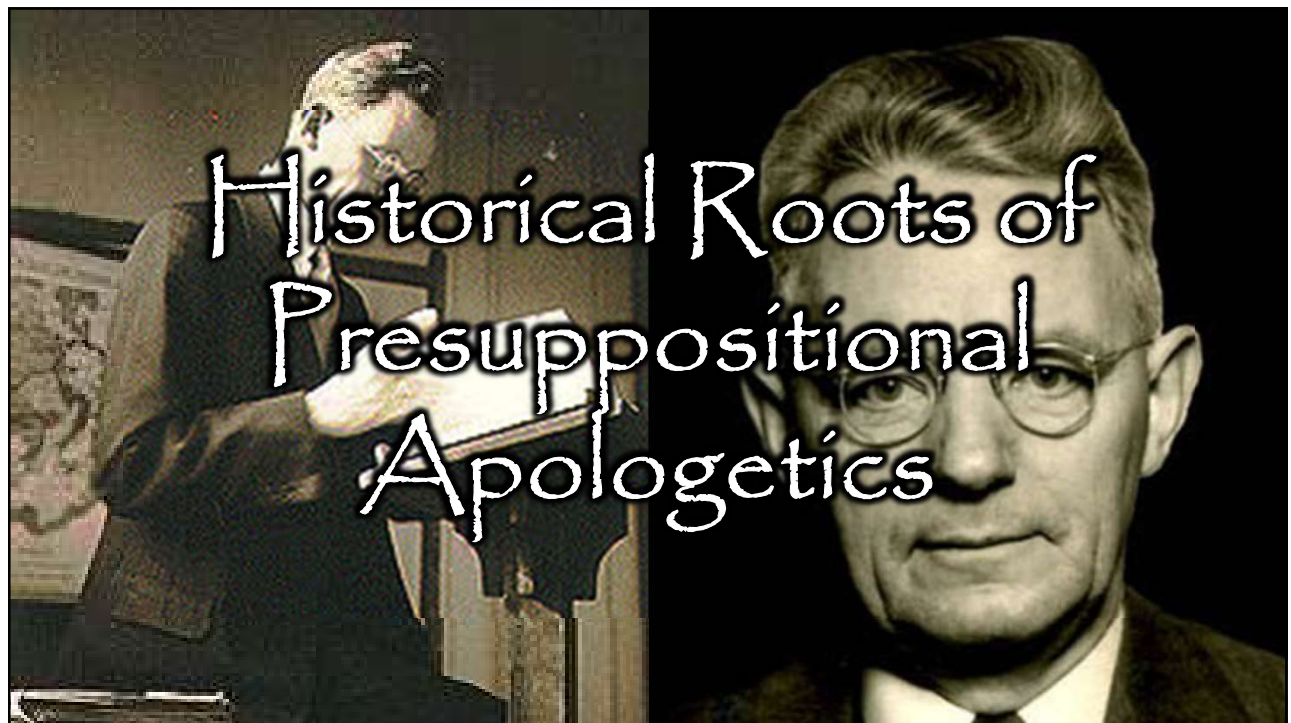
"God in regard of his existence is not only the discovery of faith, but of reason. God hath revealed not only his being, but some sparks of his eternal power and godhead in his works, as well as in his word. ... It is a discovery of our reason ... and an object of our faith ... it is an article of our faith and an article of our reason."

[Stephen Charnock, *Discourses upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 27.]

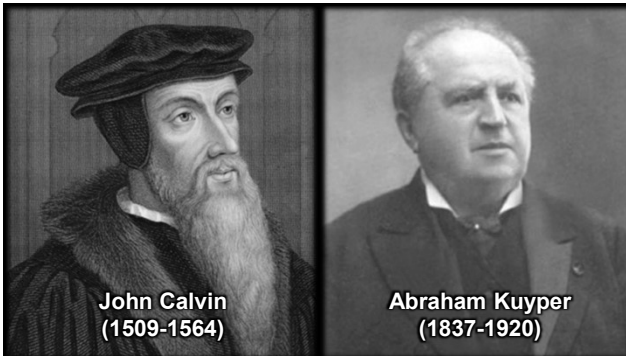


Stephen Charnock
1628-1680



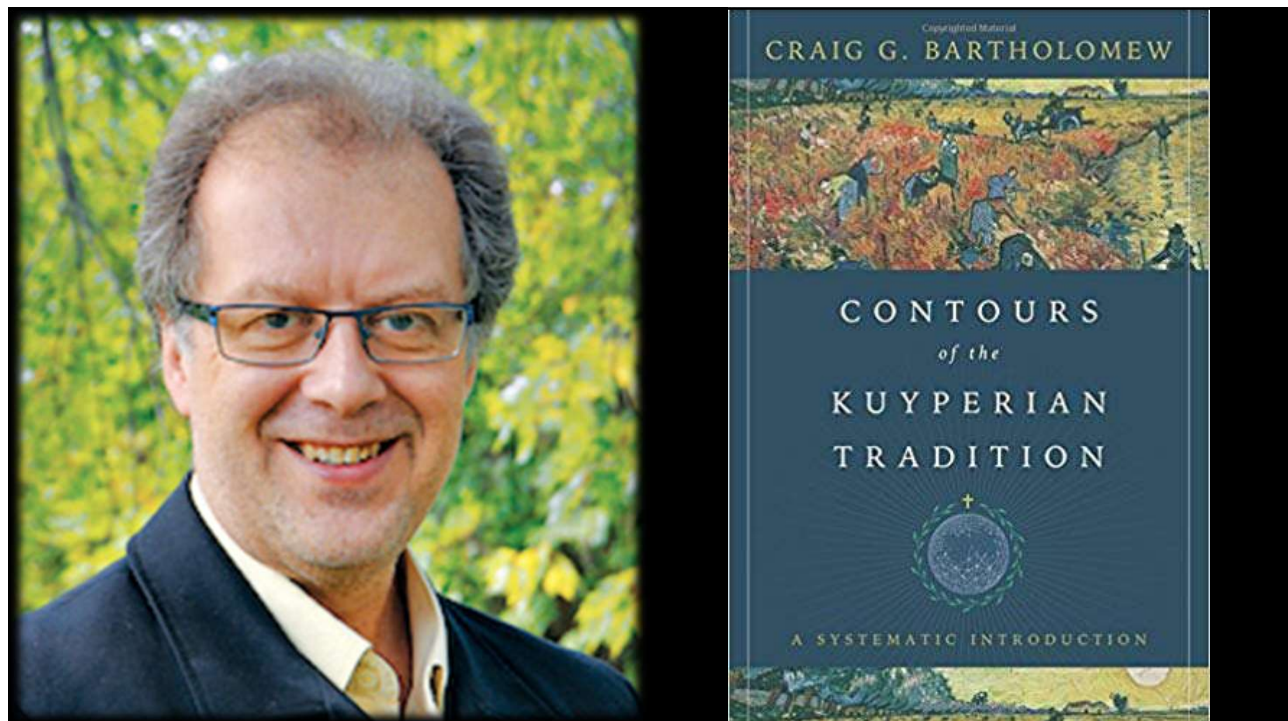
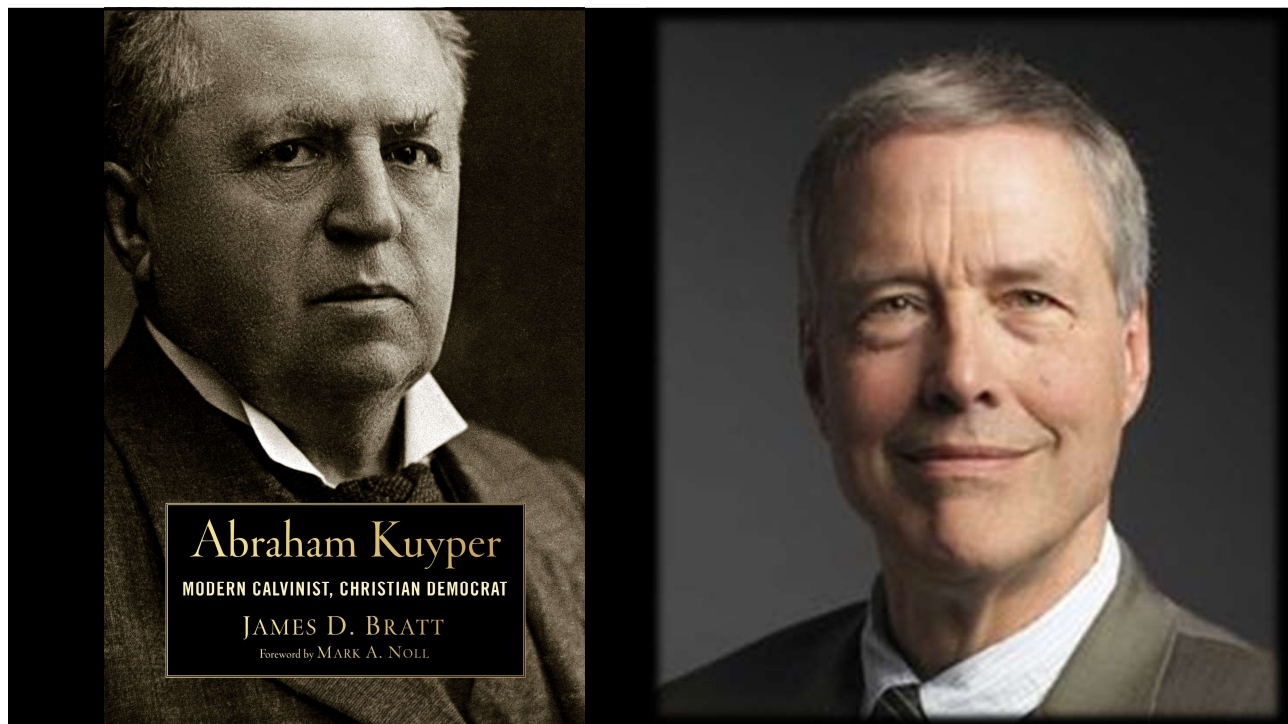


Influences

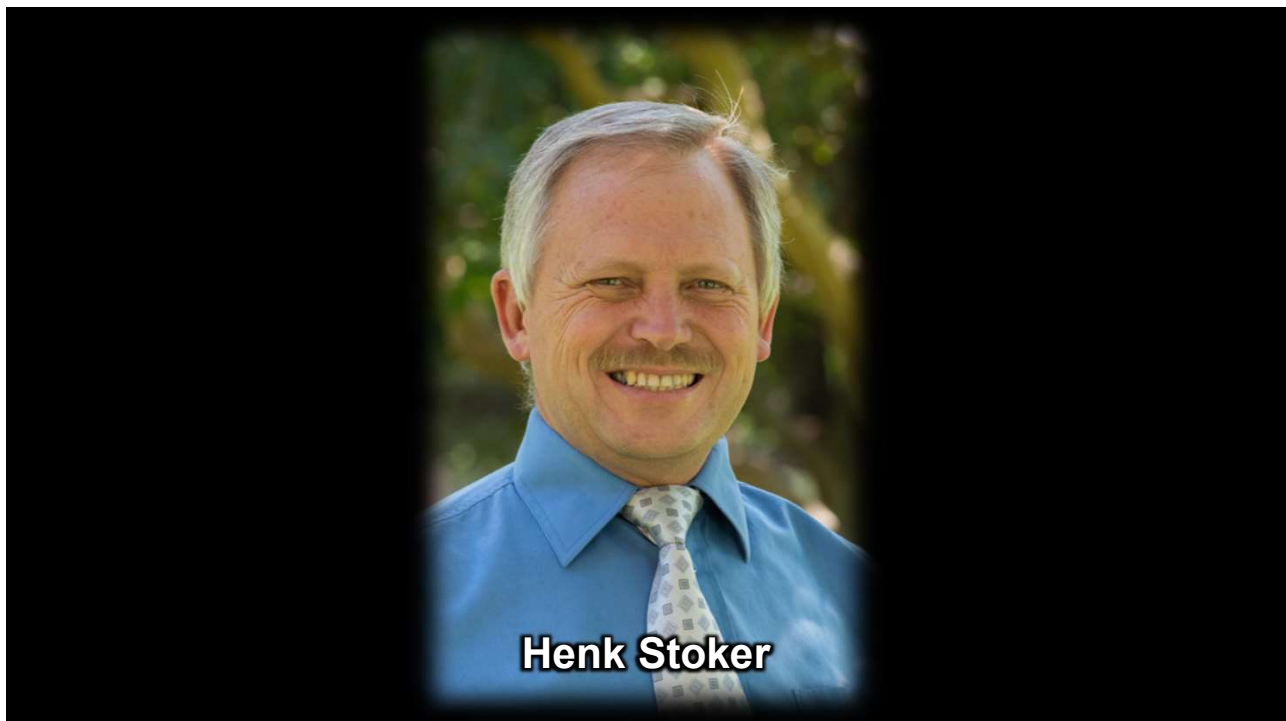


John Calvin
(1509-1564)

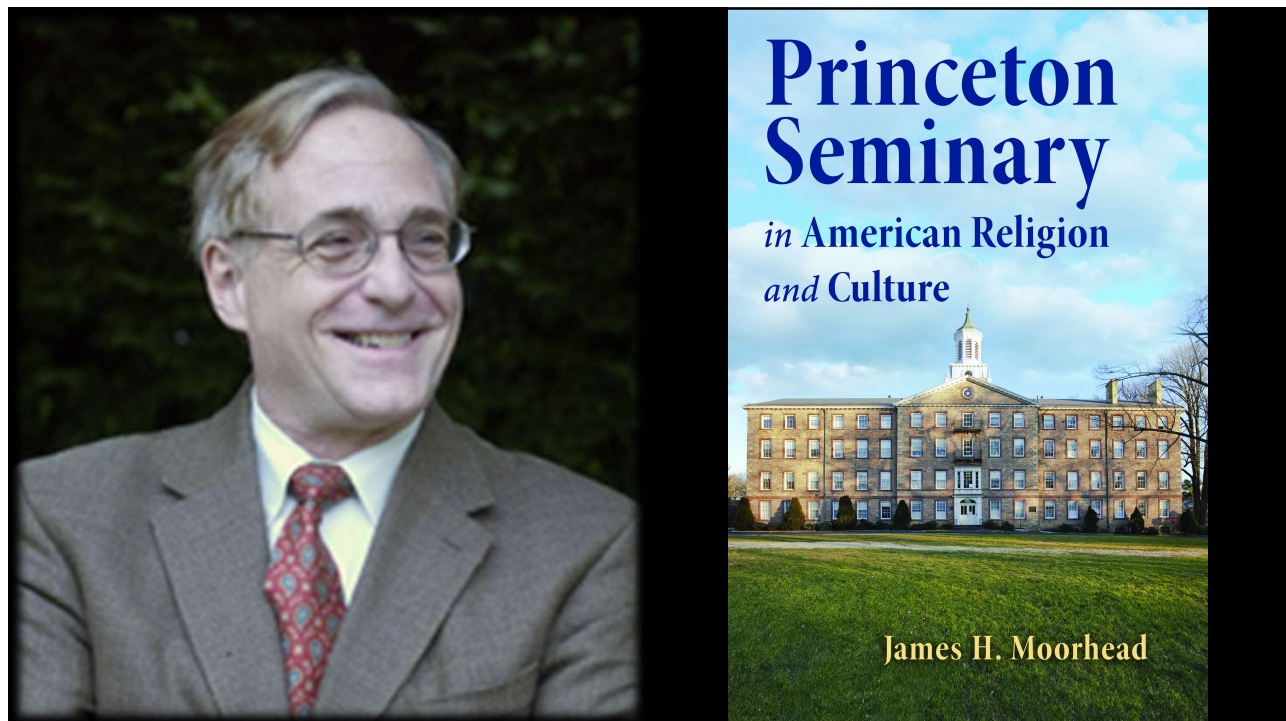
Abraham Kuyper
(1837-1920)



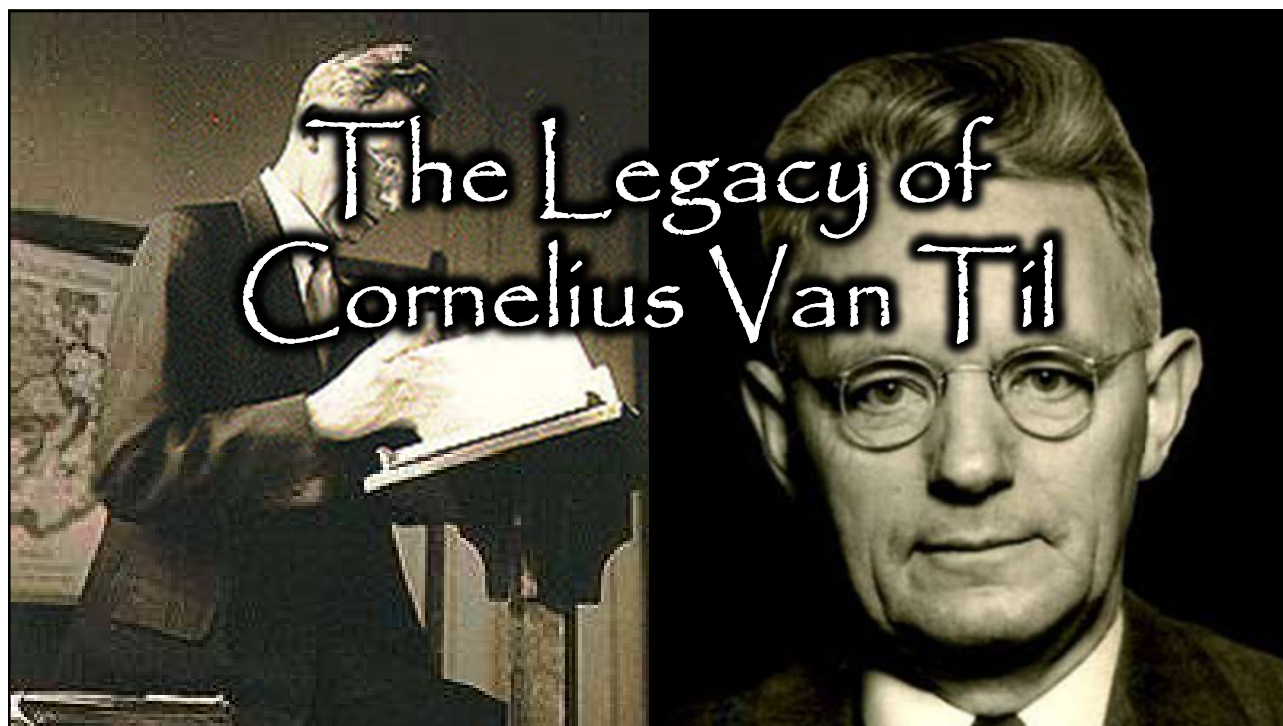




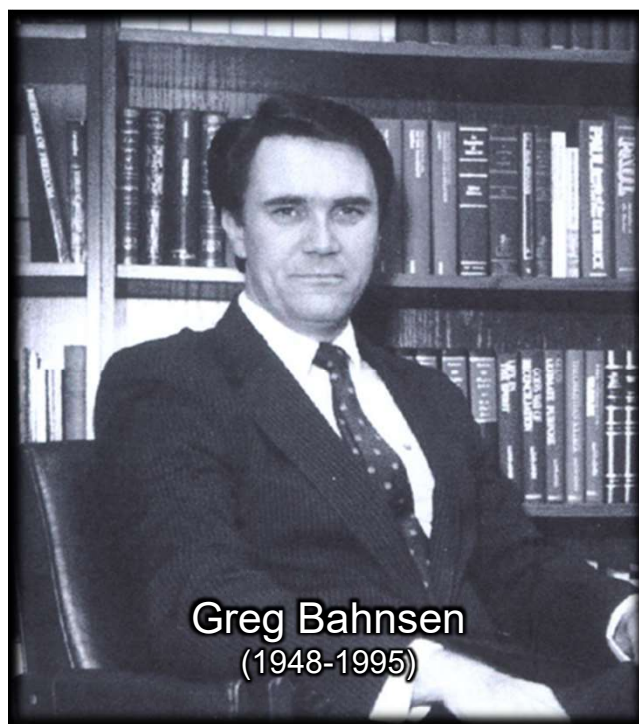




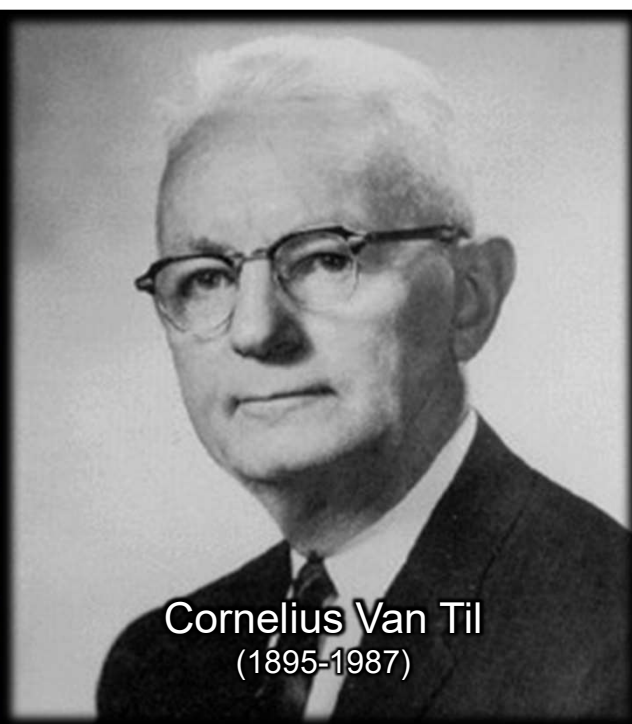




***The legacy of Van Til
endures primarily in the
reformed camp of
American Christian
evangelicalism.***



Greg Bahnsen
(1948-1995)



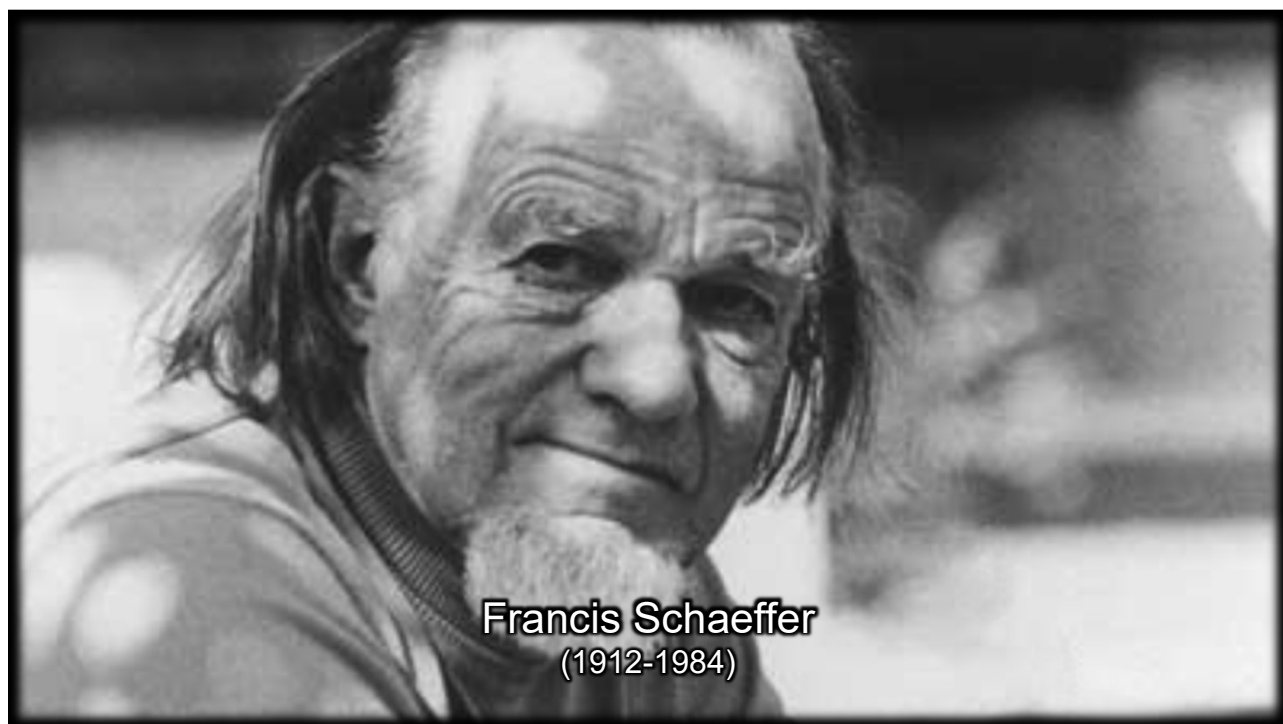
Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)



John Frame



K. Scott Oliphint






Gordon H. Clark
(1902-1985)

Carl F. H. Henry
(1913-2003)

The conventional view is that Van Til's approach in apologetics marked a shift from the standard methodology of apologetics that had dominated conservative reformed thought in America in late nineteenth and on into the twentieth centuries by the old Princeton Theological Seminary.



**Scottish Common
Sense Realism**

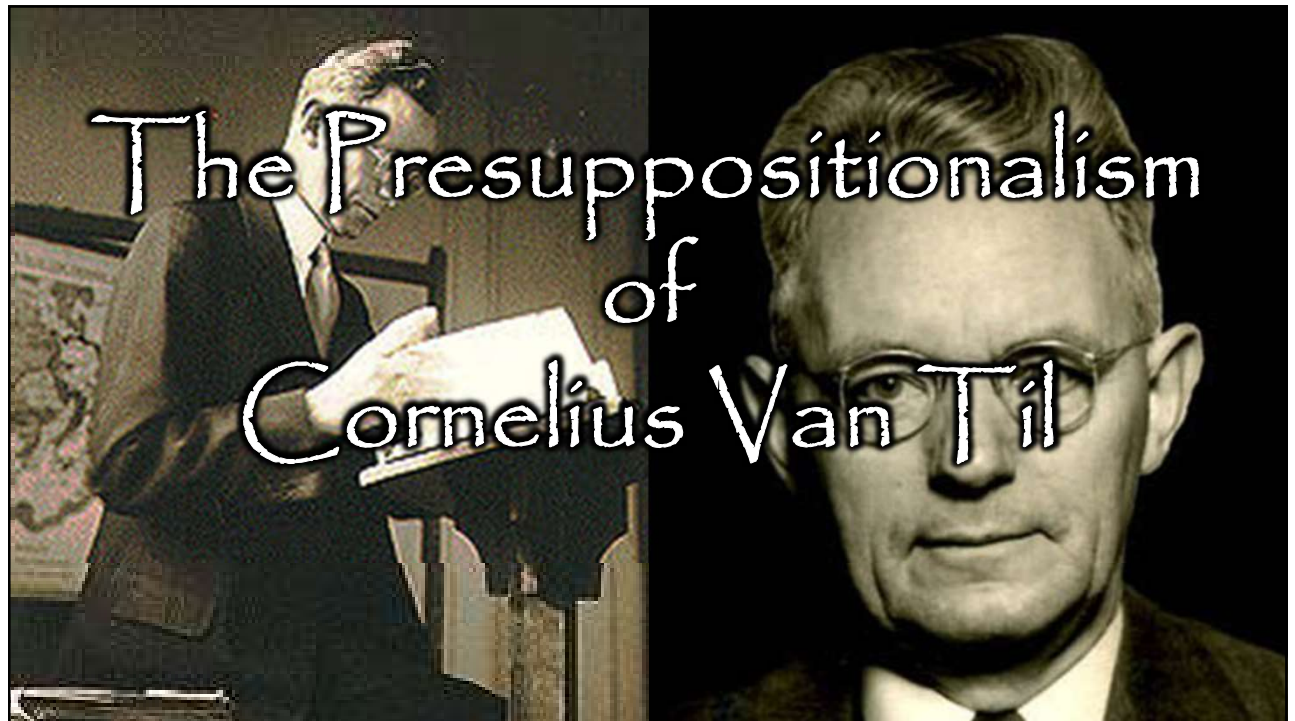
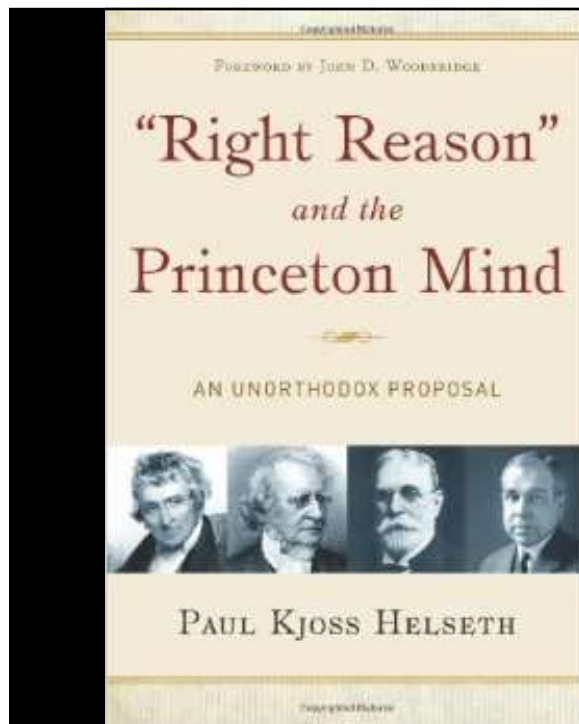
*"If there are certain principles, as I think there are, which the constitution of our nature leads us to believe, and which we are under a necessity to take for granted in the common concerns of life, without being able to give a reason for them — these are what we call **the principles of common sense**; and what is manifestly contrary to them, is what we call absurd."*

[Thomas Reid, *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense* I, § 6]



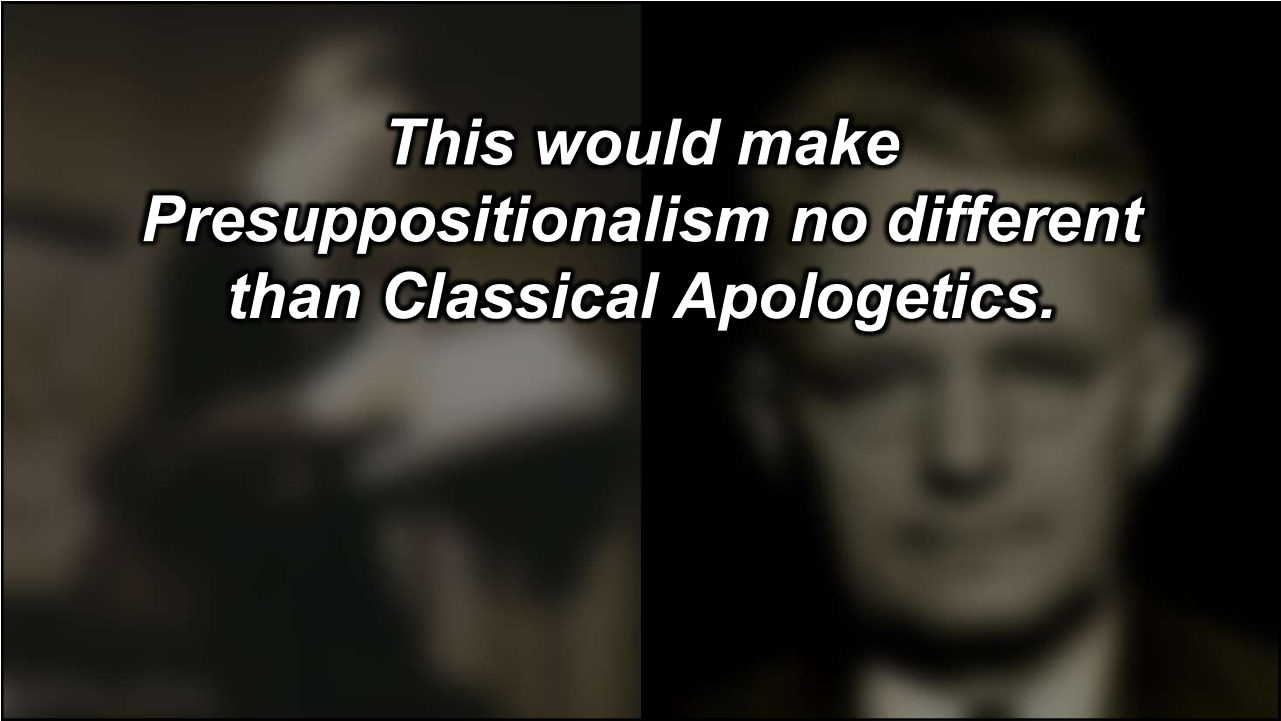
Thomas Reid
(1710-1796)

David Hume
(1711-1776)





***The 'presupposition' in the name
Presuppositionalism does not mean
that the method merely identifies
and analyzes presuppositions.***



***This would make
Presuppositionalism no different
than Classical Apologetics.***

In Van Til's estimation, the methodology of Presuppositionalism was necessitated by Reformed theology, particularly the doctrines of the sovereignty of God and the total depravity of the human race.

Van Til denied that there was a common ground between the believer and unbeliever on which a neutral argument for the truth of Christianity could be built.

He argued that to assume an intellectual common ground between the believer and unbeliever from which the believer could launch into a rational argument for God's existence, is de facto to deny the God of Christianity.

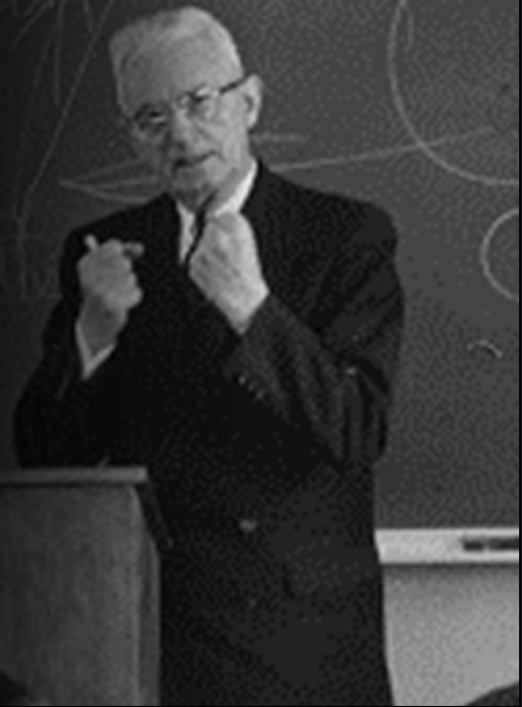
Van Til insisted that one must presuppose the Triune God and the Christian Scriptures before any sense can be made of anything else.

Another way to say this is that the presupposition of Triune God and the Christian Scriptures are the necessary pre-conditions of knowledge.

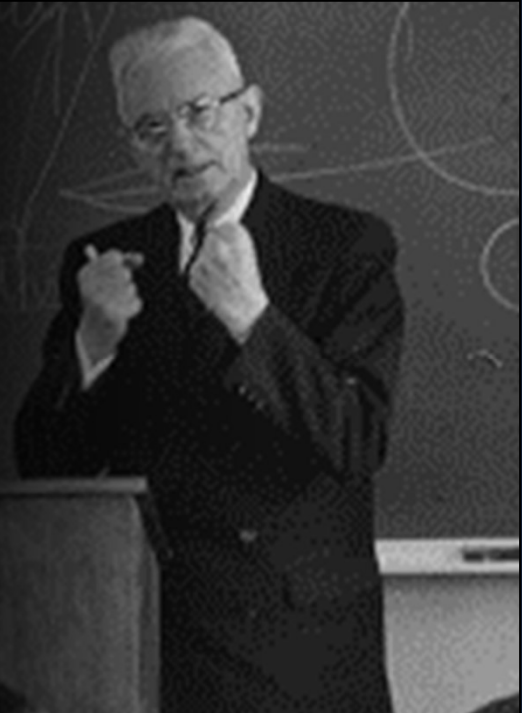
"This is, in the last analysis, the question as to what are one's ultimate presuppositions. When man became a sinner he made of himself instead of God the ultimate or final reference point.



"And it is precisely this presupposition, as it controls without exception all forms of non-Christian philosophy, that must be brought into question. ..."

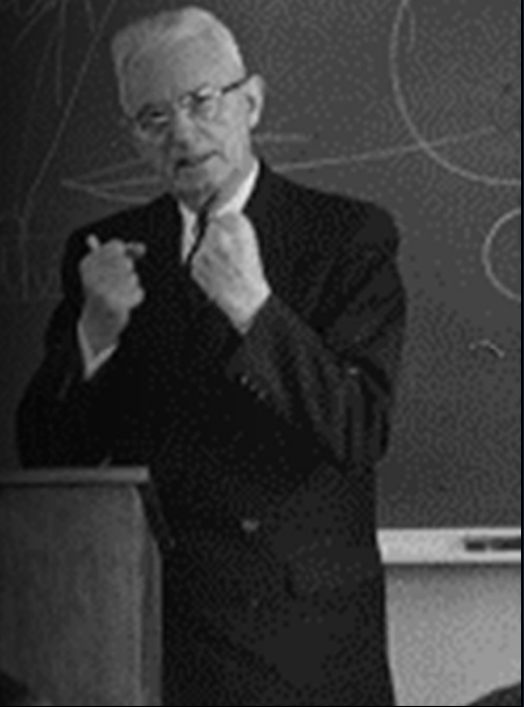


"In not challenging this basic presupposition with respect to himself as the final reference point in predication the natural man may accept the 'theistic proofs' as fully valid."



*" He may construct such proofs. He has constructed such proofs. **But the god whose existence he proves to himself in this way is always a god who is something other than the self-contained ontological trinity of Scripture.**"*

[The Defense of the Faith (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1979), 77]



Sometimes the Presuppositionalist will refer to his method as a transcendental argument because the presupposition of the Triune God and the Christian Scriptures are "transcendentally necessary" for knowledge.

JERUSALEM and ATHENS

CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON
THE PHILOSOPHY AND
APOLOGETICS OF
CORNELIUS VAN TIL

EDITED BY E. R. GEEHAN



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

***"The only 'proof' of the
Christian position is
that unless its truth is
presupposed there is
no possibility of
'proving' anything at all.
The actual state of
affairs as preached by
Christianity is the
necessary foundation
of 'proof' itself."***

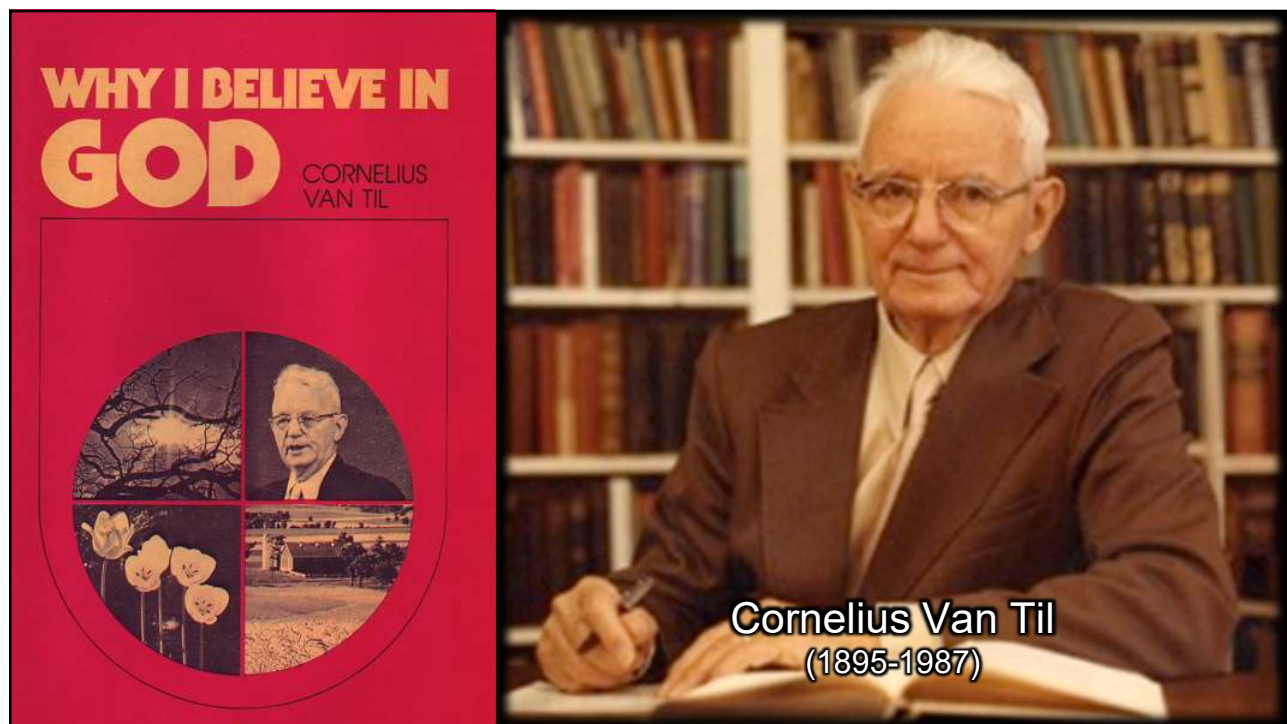
["My Credo" in *Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Philosophy and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971), 21]



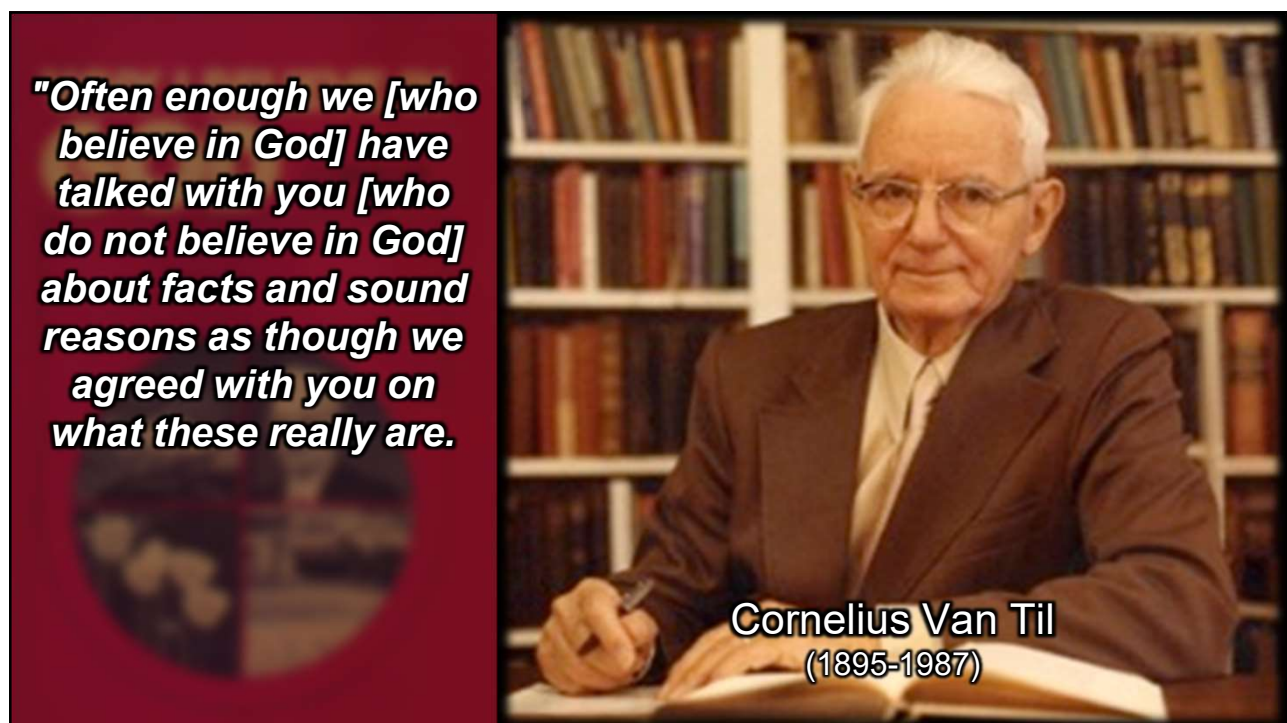
Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

For Y to be transcendentally necessary for X means (in this context) that in order to know X, you have to posit, or assume, or presuppose Y.

An example (though not an altogether uncontroversial example in this debate) would be that logic is transcendentally necessary for there to be any knowledge at all.



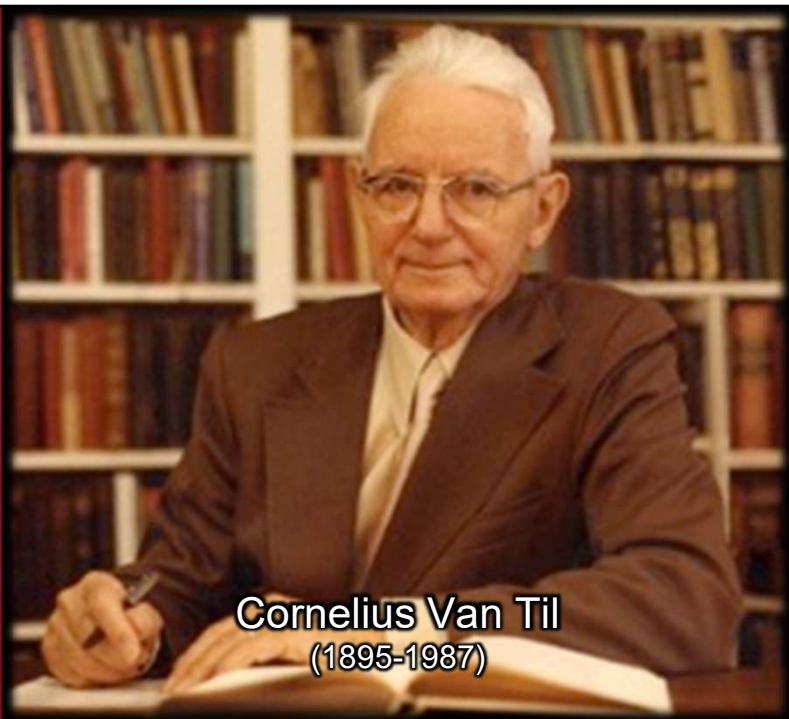
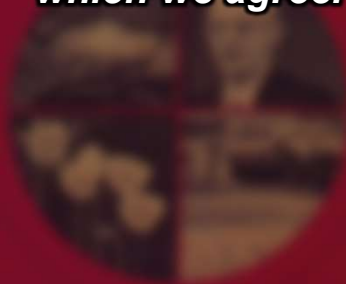
Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)



"Often enough we [who believe in God] have talked with you [who do not believe in God] about facts and sound reasons as though we agreed with you on what these really are."

Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

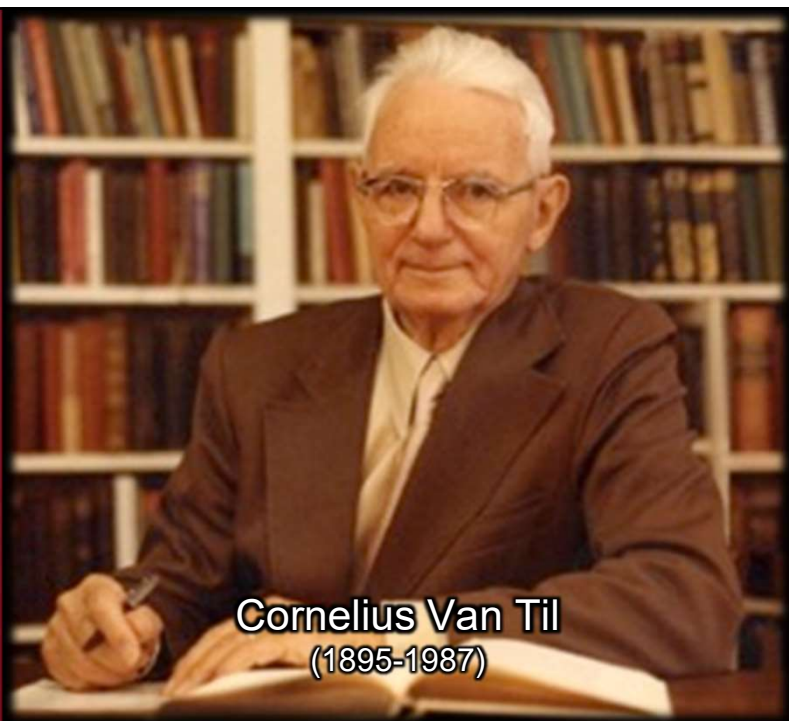
"In our arguments for the existence of God we have frequently assumed that you and we together have an area of knowledge on which we agree."



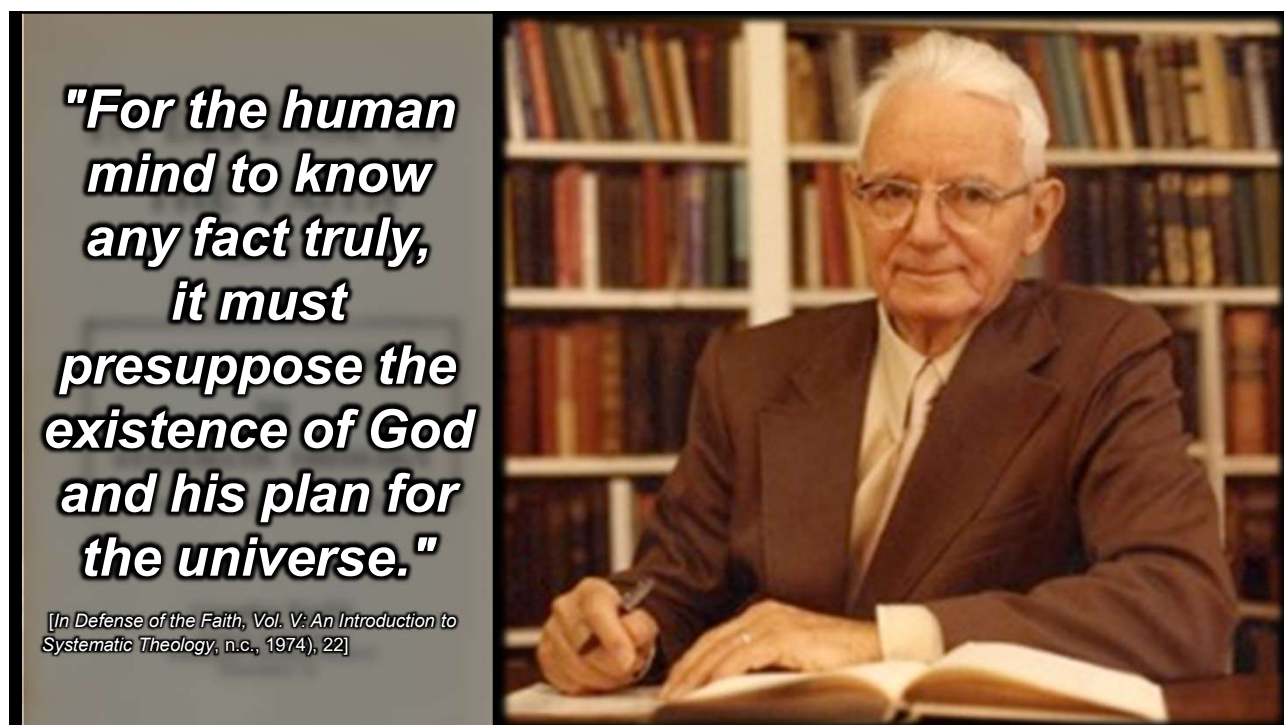
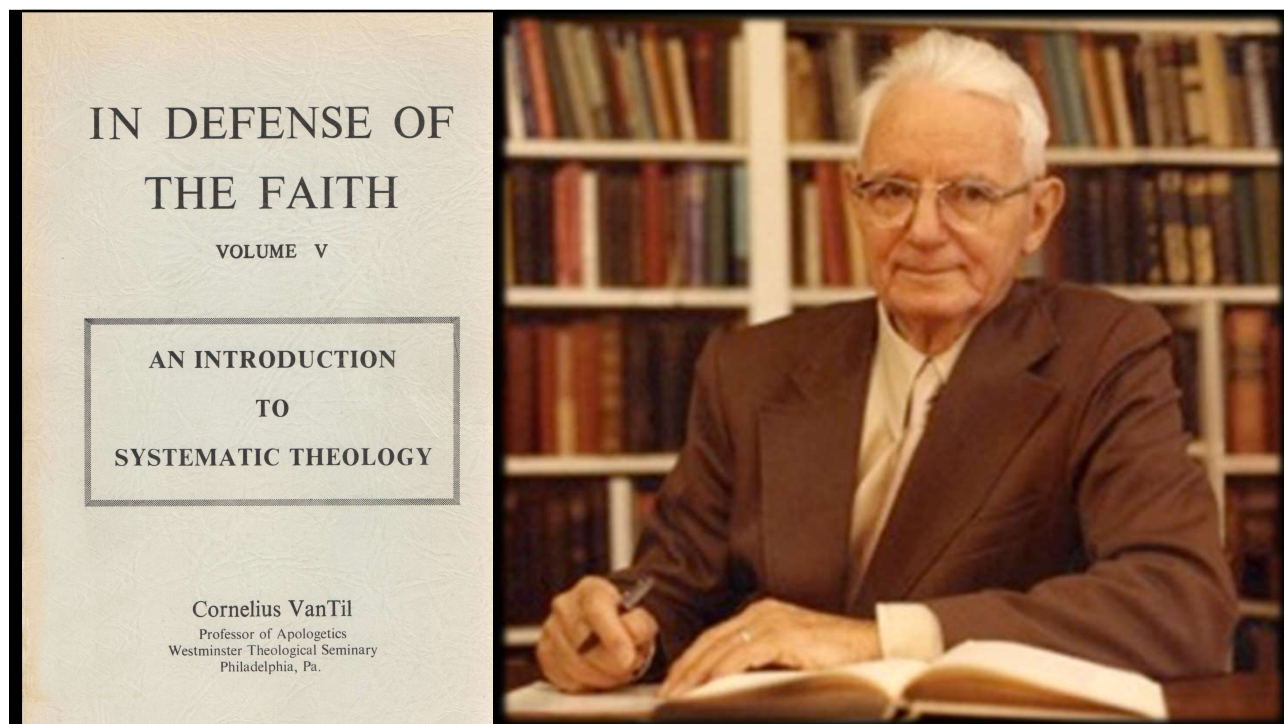
Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

"But we really do not grant that you see **any fact in any dimension of life truly**. We really think you have colored glasses on your nose when you talk about chickens and cows, as well as when you talk about the life hereafter."

[Why I Believe in God (Philadelphia: Westminster Theological Seminary, n.d.), 9]

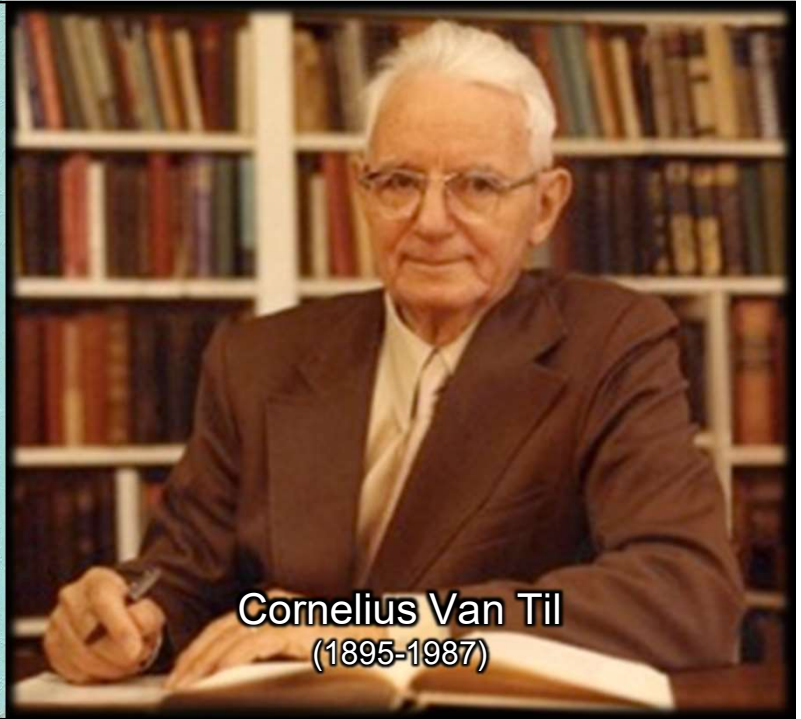


Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)



THE DEFENSE OF THE FAITH

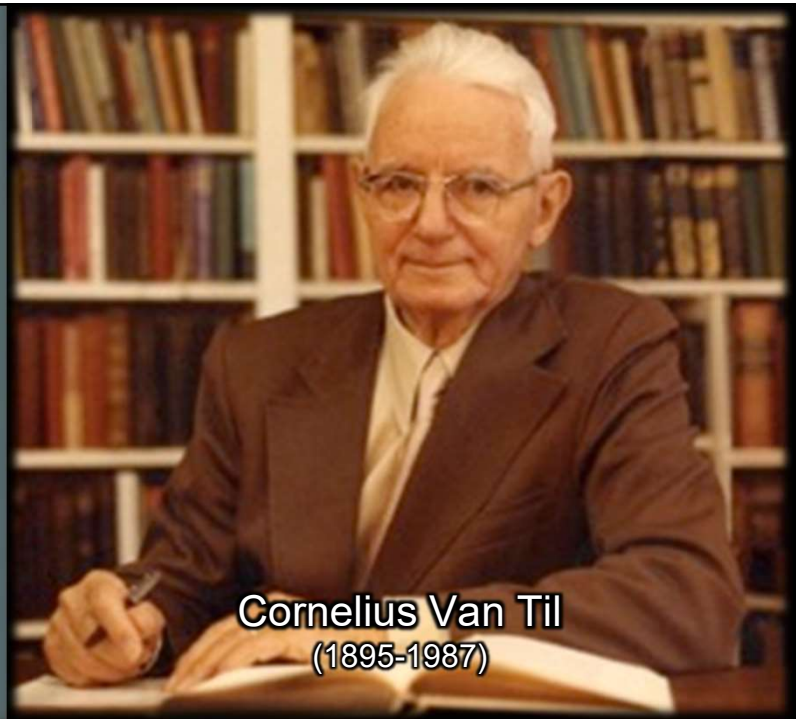
CORNELIUS VAN TIL



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

***"Without the
presupposition
of the truth of
Christian theism
no fact can be
distinguished
from any other
fact."***

[The Defense of the Faith, (Phillipsburgh:
Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979), 115]



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

JERUSALEM **and** ATHENS

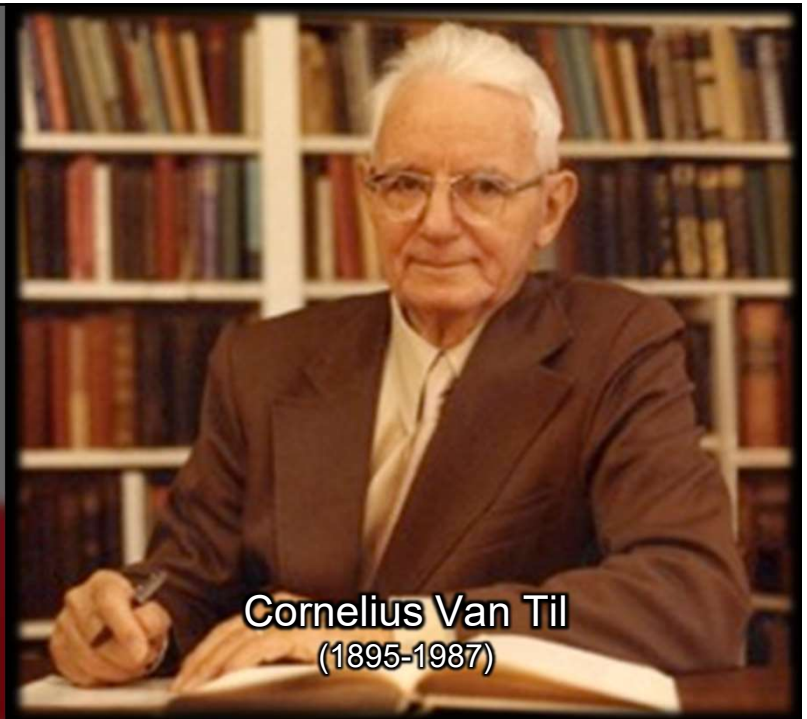
CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON
THE PHILOSOPHY AND
APOLOGETICS OF
CORNELIUS VAN TIL

EDITED BY E. R. GEEHAN



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

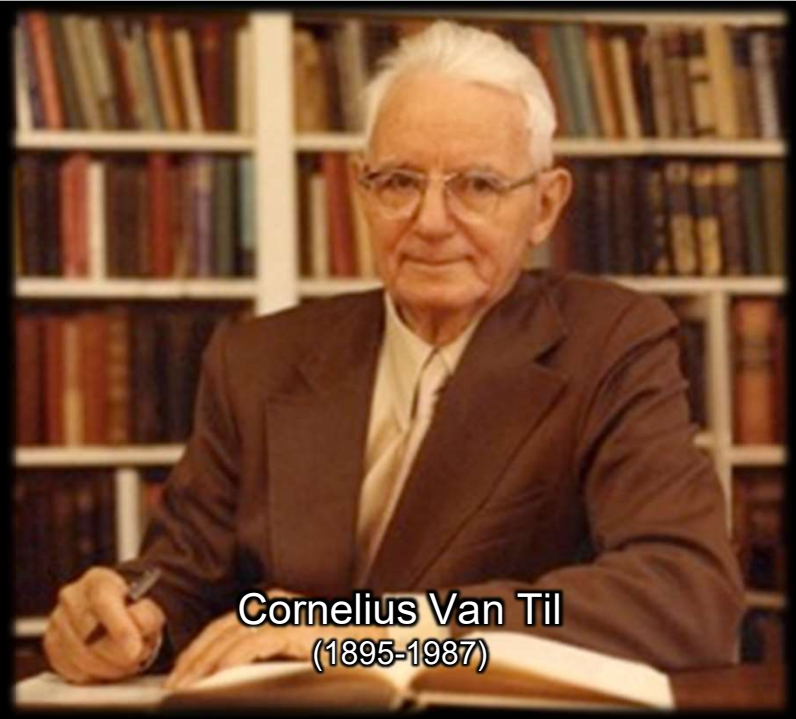
*"If we allow that one
intelligent word can be
spoken about being or
knowing or acting as
such, without first
introducing the Creator-
creature distinction, we
are sunk."*



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

"As Christians we must not allow that even such a thing as enumeration or counting can be accounted for except upon the presupposition of truth of what we are told in Scripture about the triune God as the Creator and Redeemer of the world."

["Response by Cornelius Van Til to Herman Dooyeweerd, 'Cornelius Van Til and the Transcendental Critique of Theoretical Thought'" in *Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Philosophy and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971), 91, emphasis in original]



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

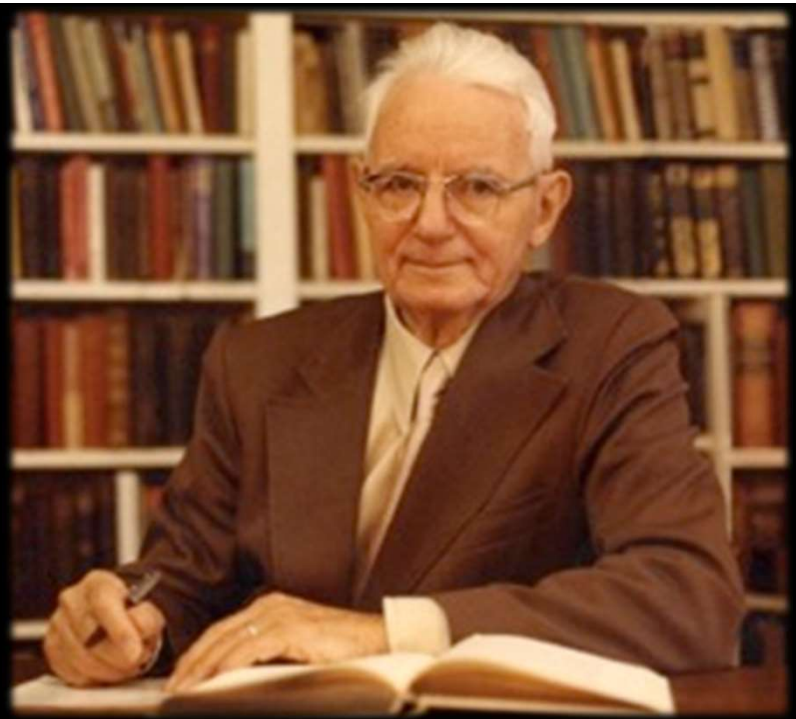
IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH

VOLUME V

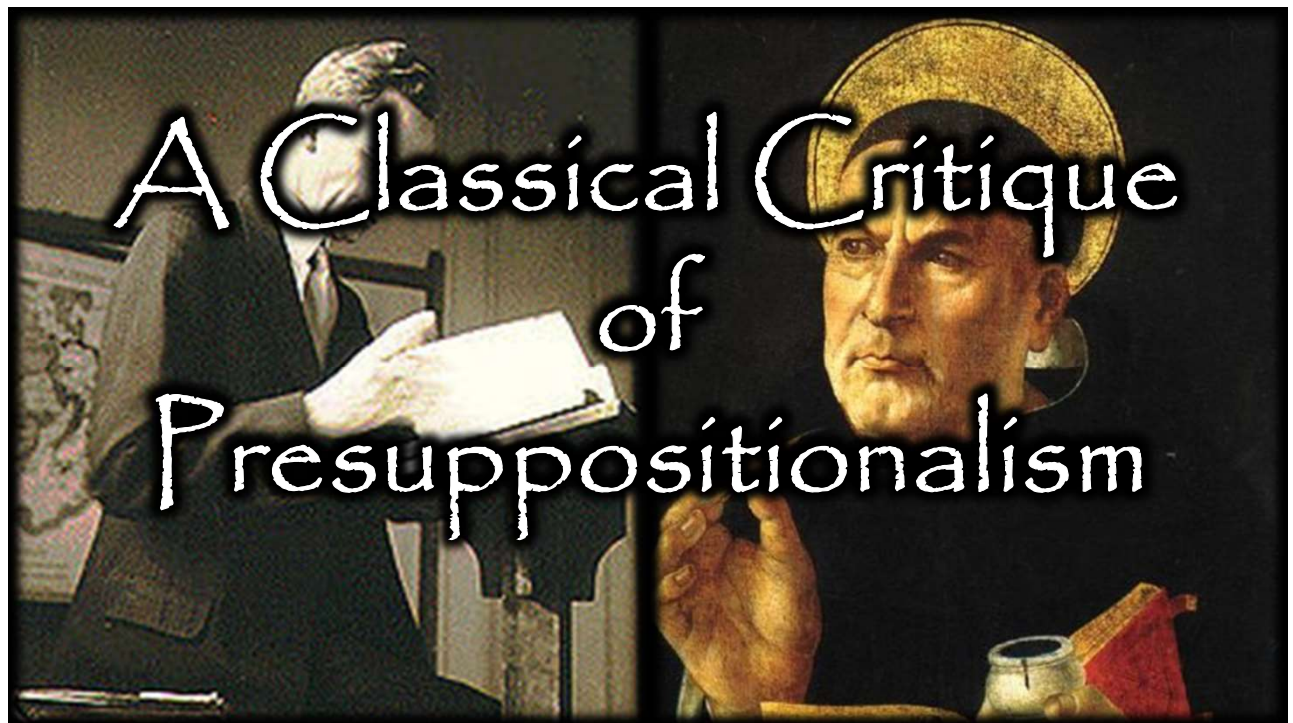
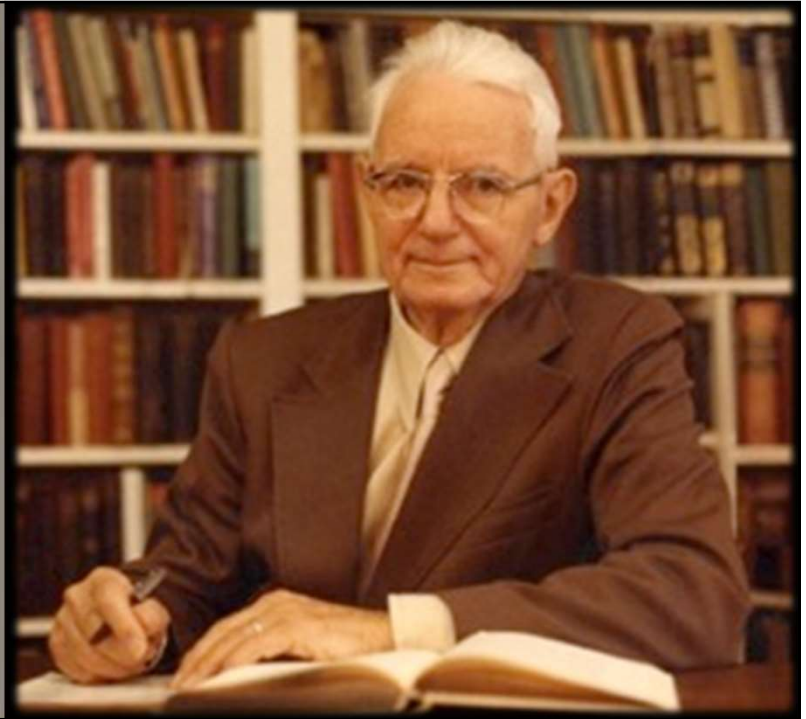
AN INTRODUCTION
TO
SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Cornelius Van Til

Professor of Apologetics
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pa.



"Christian apologists often speak of scientism as being objectionable but of science as being innocent with respect to the claims of Christianity. But surely this cannot be the case."





Strengths of Presuppositionalism

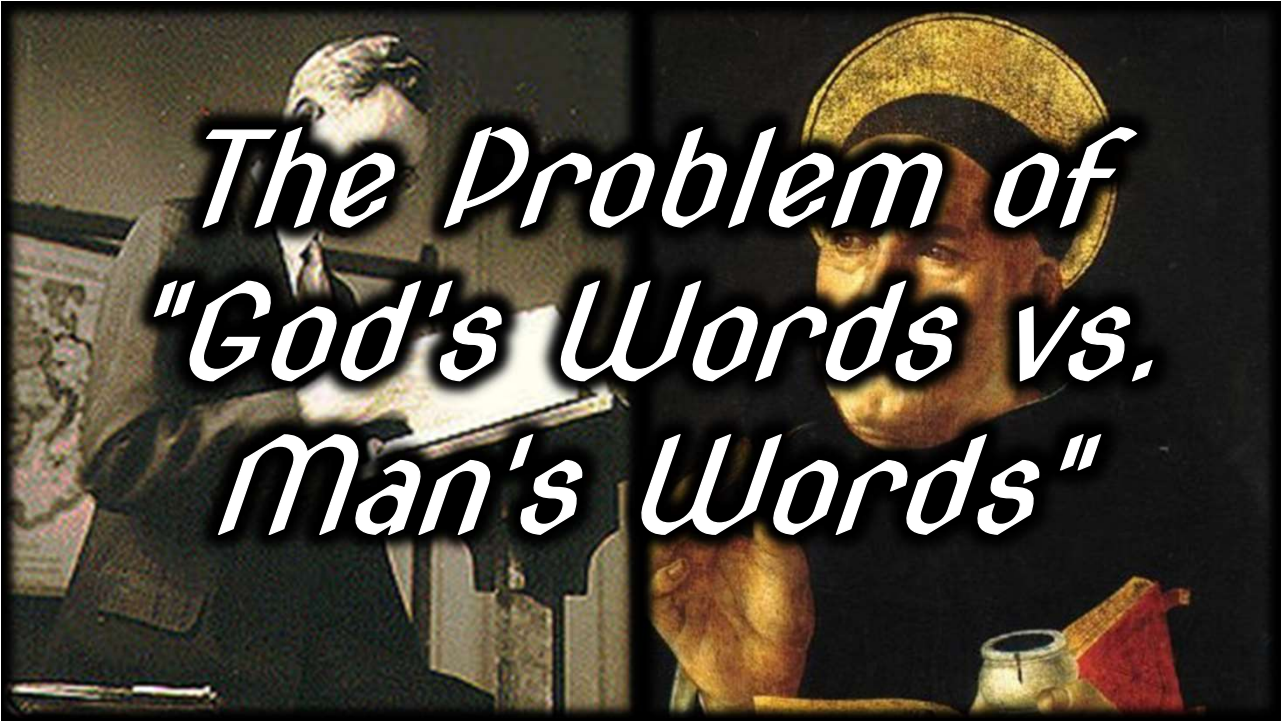
***A Strong Stance on
the Authority of Scripture***

***A Strong View of
the Inerrancy of Scripture***

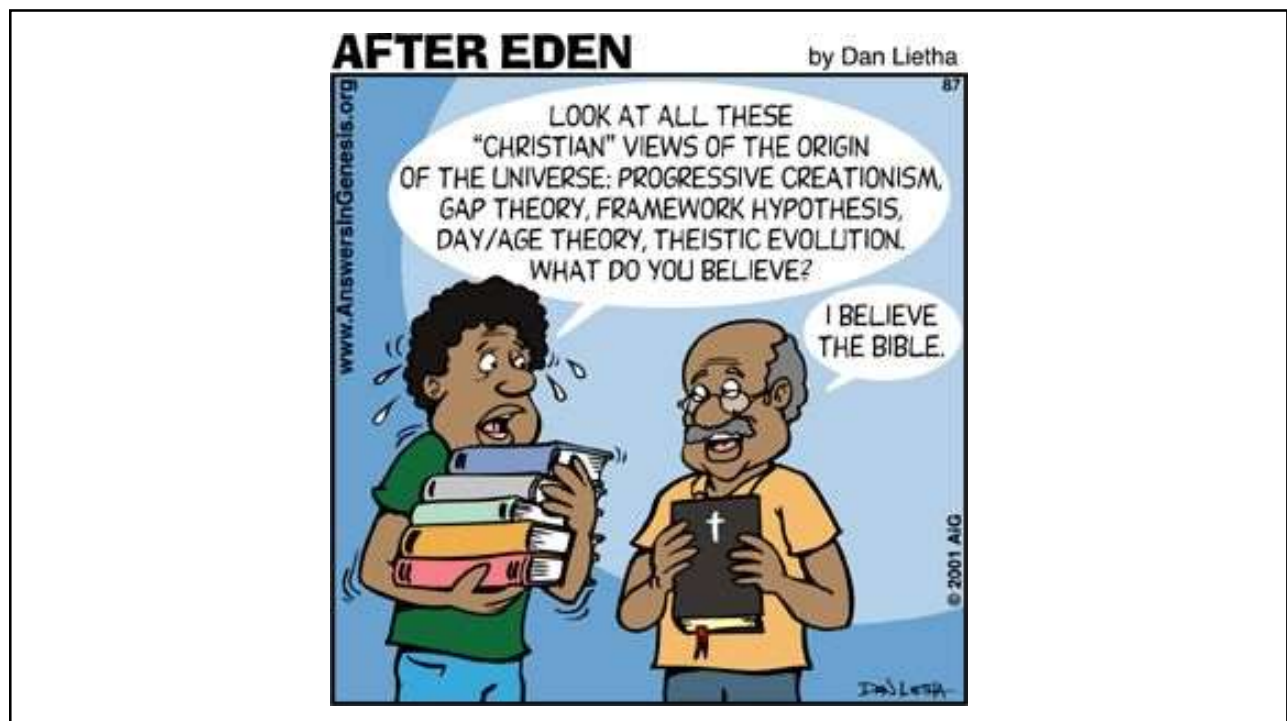
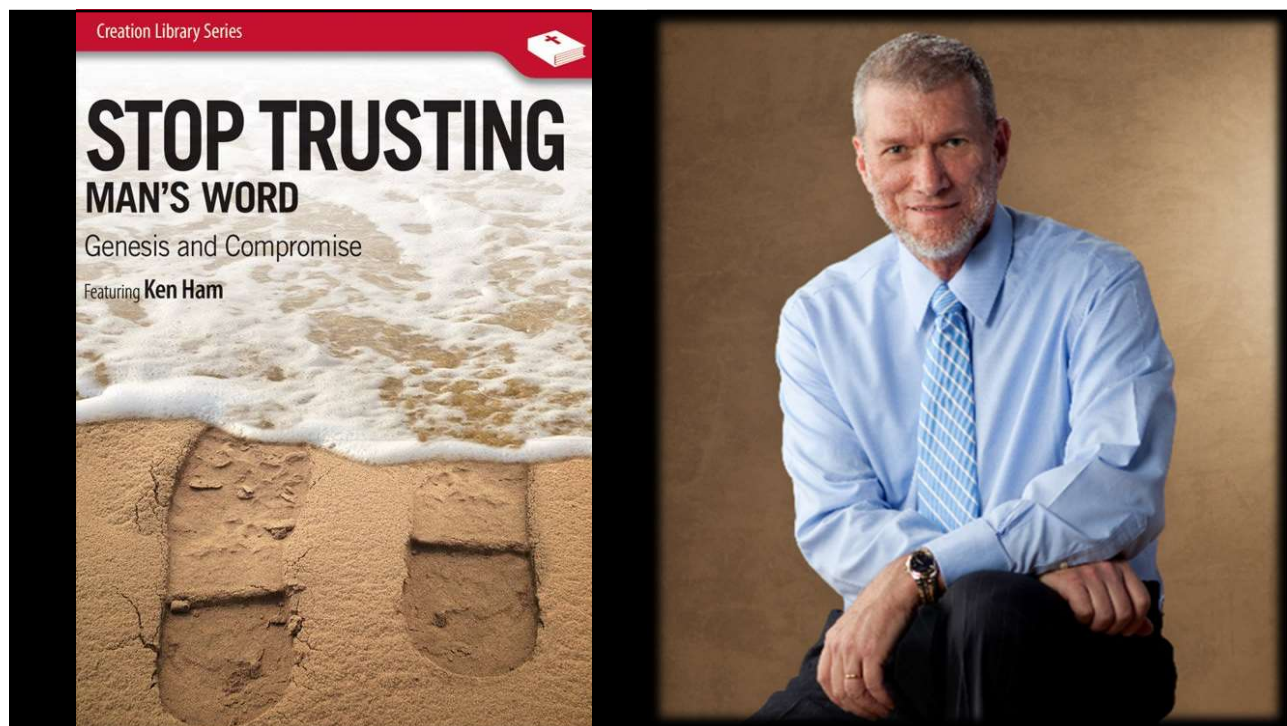
***A Strong Emphasis on
the Integration of Theology and
Apologetics***

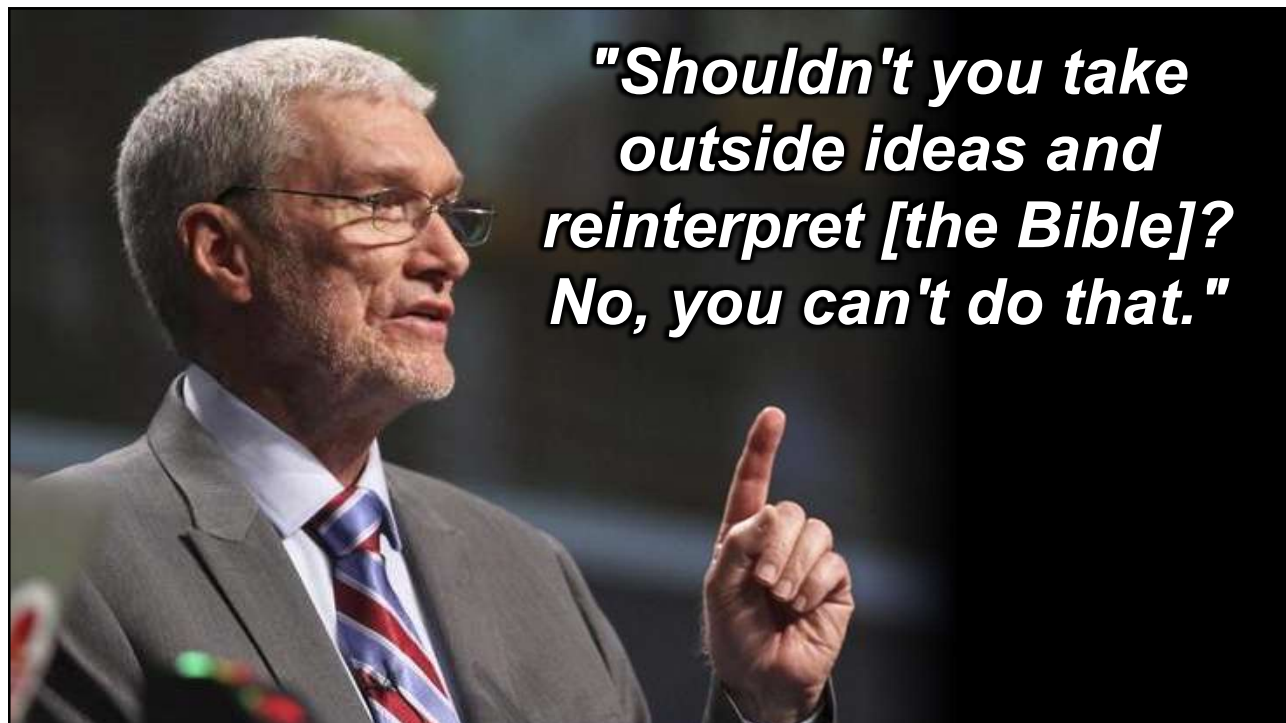


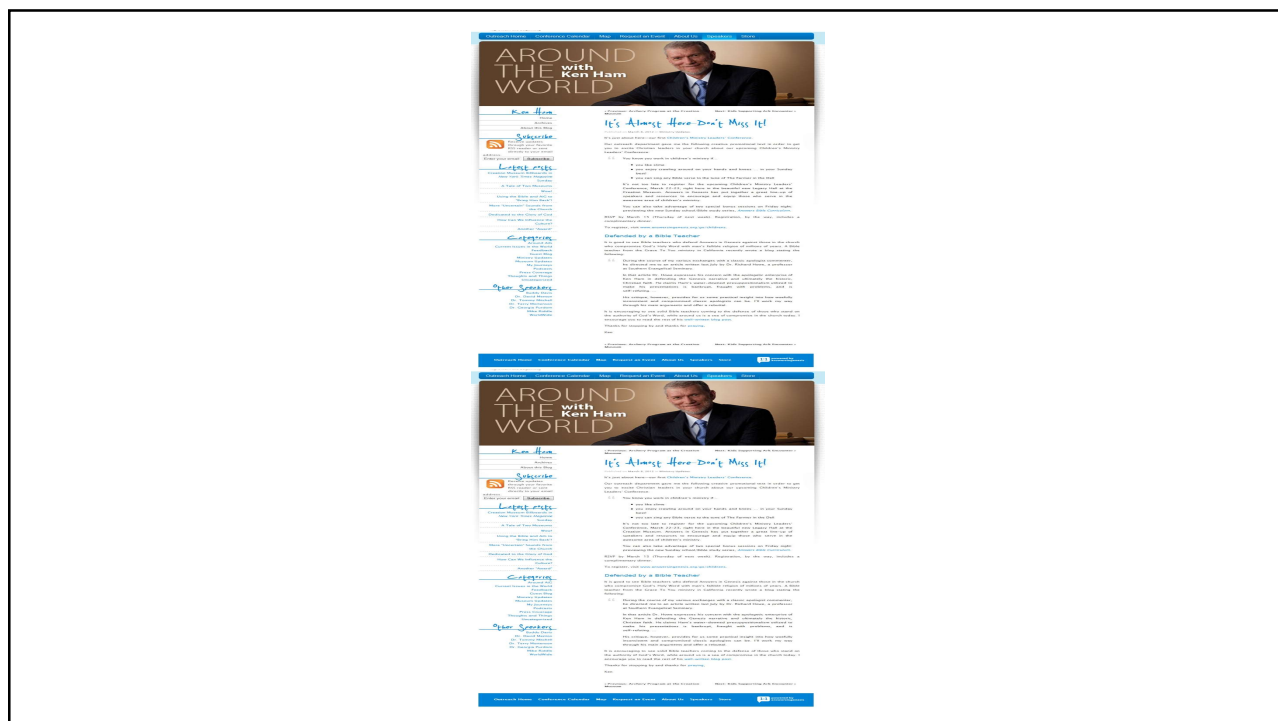
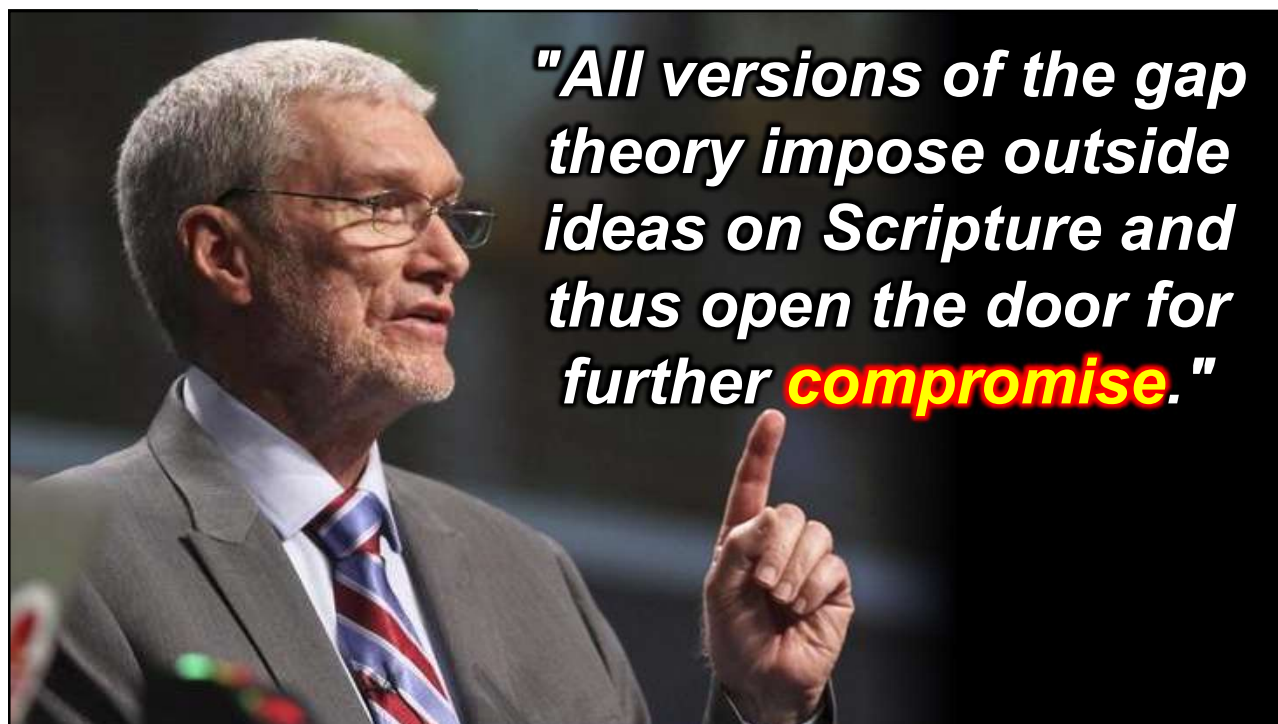
Problems with Presuppositionalism



The Problem of "God's Words vs. Man's Words"







Defended by a Bible Teacher

It is good to see Bible teachers who defend Answers in Genesis against those in the church who **compromise God's Holy Word** with man's fallible religion of millions of years. A Bible teacher from the Grace To You ministry in California recently wrote a blog stating the following:

“During the course of my various exchanges with a classic apologist commenter, he directed me to an article written last July by **Dr. Richard Howe**, a professor at Southern Evangelical Seminary.

In that article Dr. Howe expresses his concern with the apologetic enterprise of Ken Ham in defending the Genesis narrative and ultimately the historic, Christian faith. He claims Ham's water-downed presuppositionalism utilized to make his presentations is bankrupt, fraught with problems, and is self-refuting. ...

His critique, however, provides for us some practical insight into how woefully inconsistent and compromised classic apologists can be. I'll work my way through his main arguments and offer a rebuttal.

It is encouraging to see solid Bible teachers coming to the defense of those who stand on the authority of God's Word, while around us is a sea of compromise in the church today. I encourage you to read the rest of his well-written blog post.

Thanks for stopping by and thanks for praying,

Ken

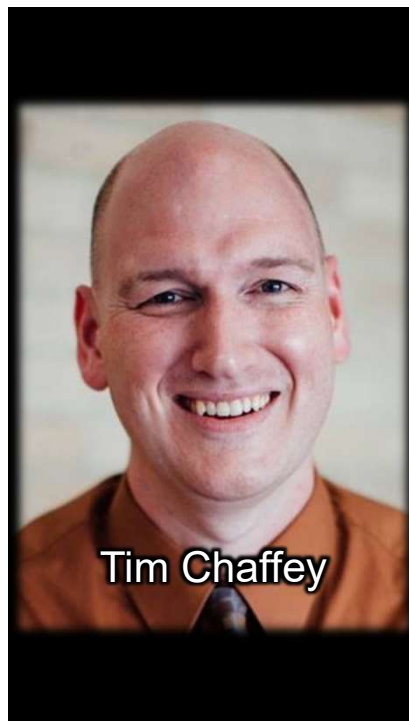


"Presuppositional apologetics is the method of defending the Christian faith that relies on the Bible as the supreme authority in all matters. ... I will show below that it is logically inescapable that indeed the Bible must be the ultimate standard even when evaluating its own claims. ... For the presuppositionalist, the Bible is the ultimate standard for all things, even its own defense."

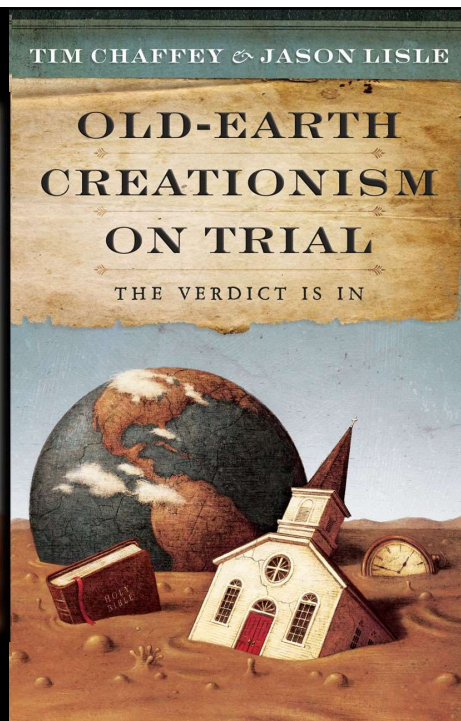
[Jason Lisle, "Young Earth Presuppositionalism," in *Christian Research Journal* 11, No. 2, (Fall 2013): 65, emphasis in original]



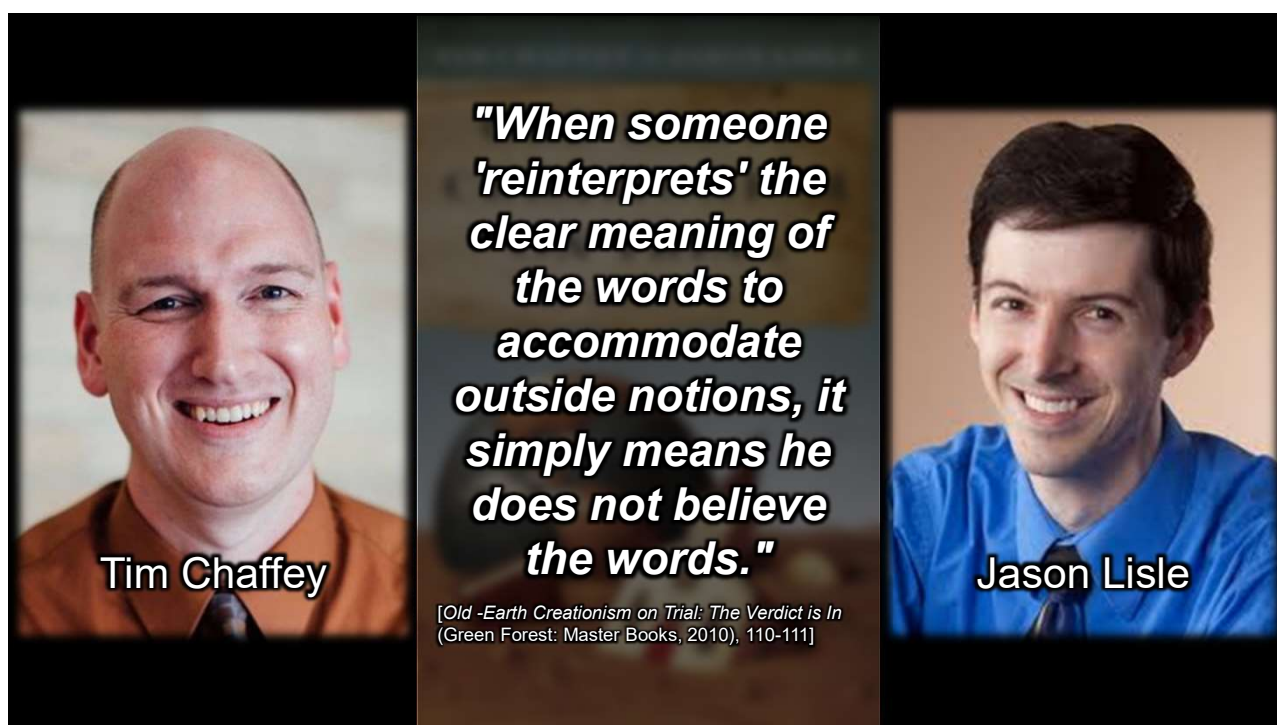
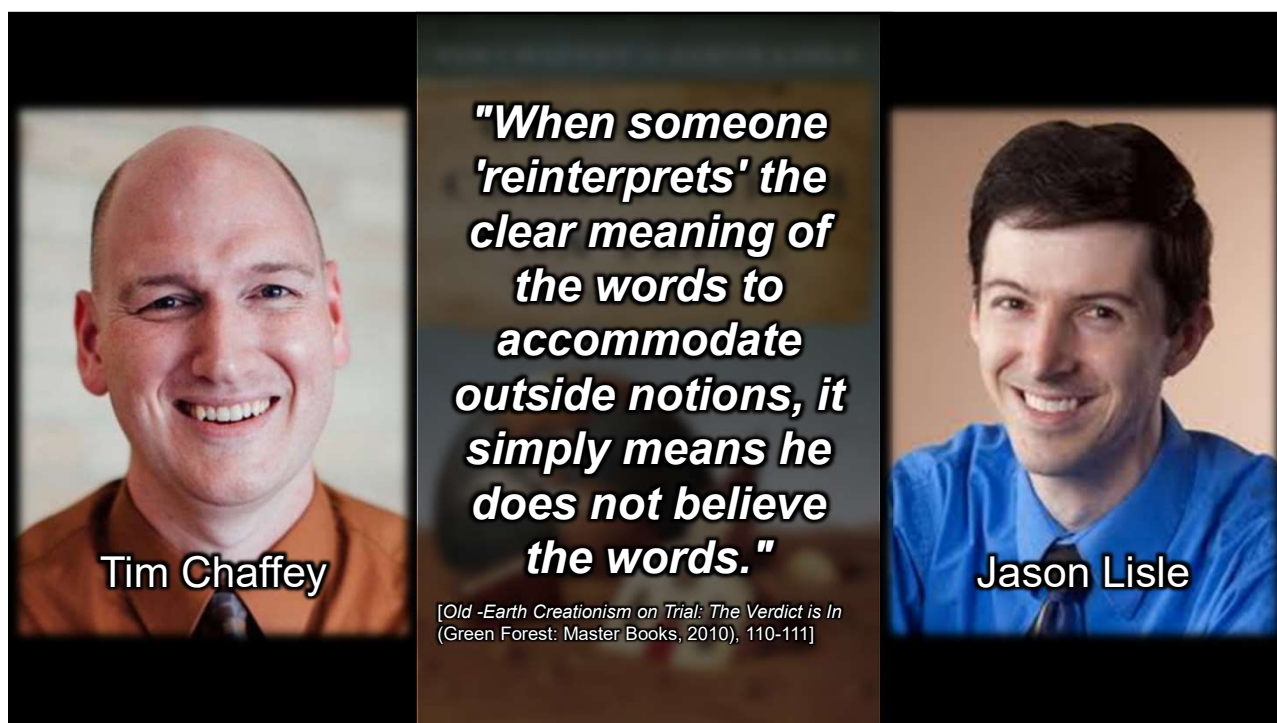
Jason Lisle
Institute for Creation Research



Tim Chaffey



Jason Lisle



They are confusing
using "outside ideas"
to *interpret the Bible*
with
using "outside ideas"
to *judge the Bible.*



"Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: 'Sun, stand still over Gibeon; And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.' So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies."

Joshua 10:12-13 NKJV



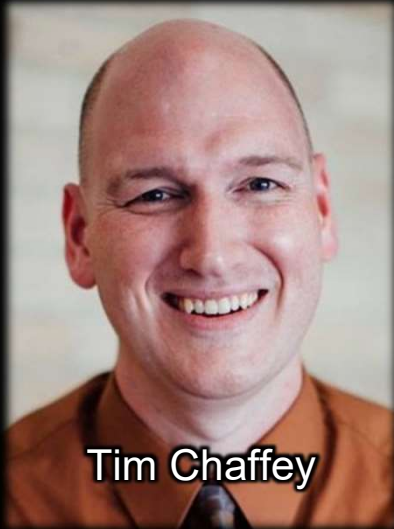
Tim Chaffey

"When someone 'reinterprets' the clear meaning of the words to accommodate outside notions, it simply means he does not believe the words."

[Old -Earth Creationism on Trial: The Verdict is In (Green Forest: Master Books, 2010), 110-111]




Jason Lisle



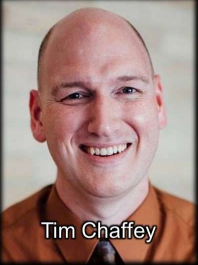
Tim Chaffey

"Supporters often used a hyper-literal reading of Joshua 10:12-13 to buttress their position [of geocentricism]. However, it is quite obvious that Joshua was simply using observational language."

[Old -Earth Creationism on Trial: The Verdict is In (Green Forest: Master Books, 2010), 62]




Jason Lisle



Tim Chaffey

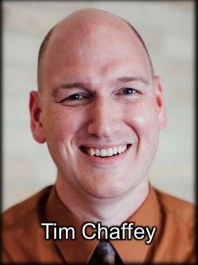
"When someone 'reinterprets' the clear meaning of the words to accommodate outside notions, it simply means he does not believe the words."

[Old -Earth Creationism on Trial: The Verdict is In (Green Forest: Master Books, 2010), 110-111]



Jason Lisle


It is only "quite obvious" to us today precisely because of the development of the science since the 17th Century.



Tim Chaffey

"Supporters often used a hyper-literal reading of Joshua 10:12-13 to buttress their position [of geocentricism]. However, it is quite obvious that Joshua was simply using observational language."

[Old -Earth Creationism on Trial: The Verdict is In (Green Forest: Master Books, 2010), 62]

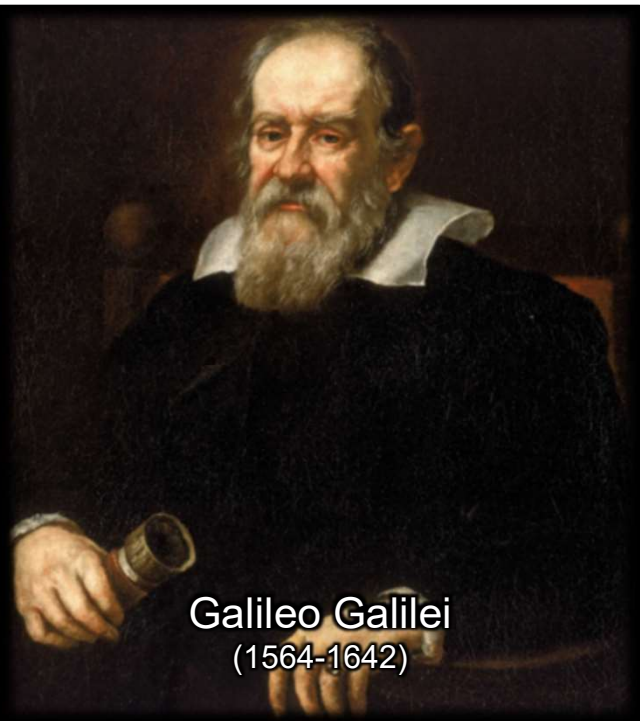


Jason Lisle

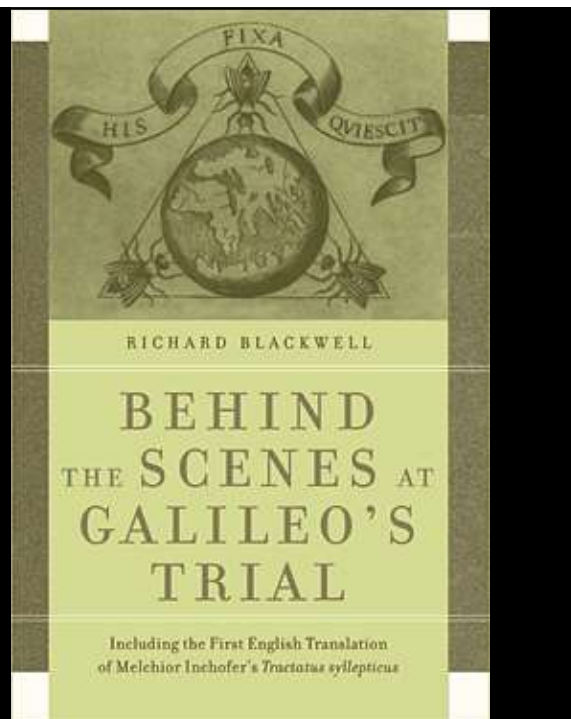
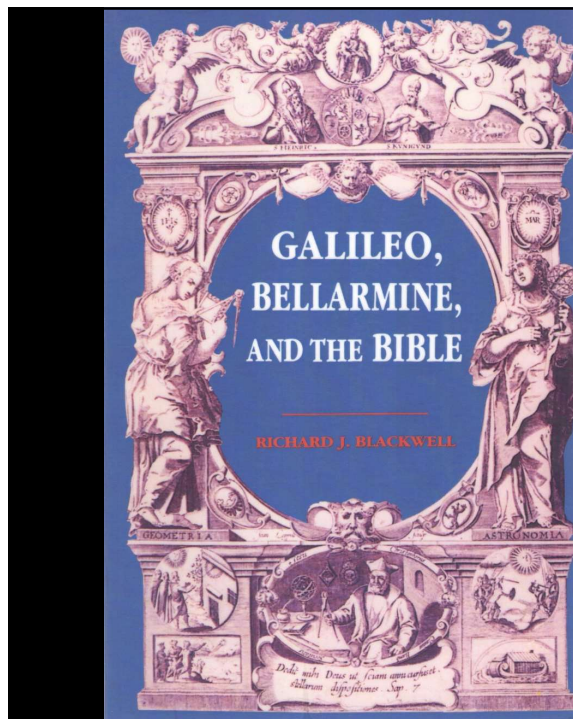
Thus, it is because of the science since the 17th Century that we "reinterpret" the "clear meaning of the words" "accommodate" the "outside notions".

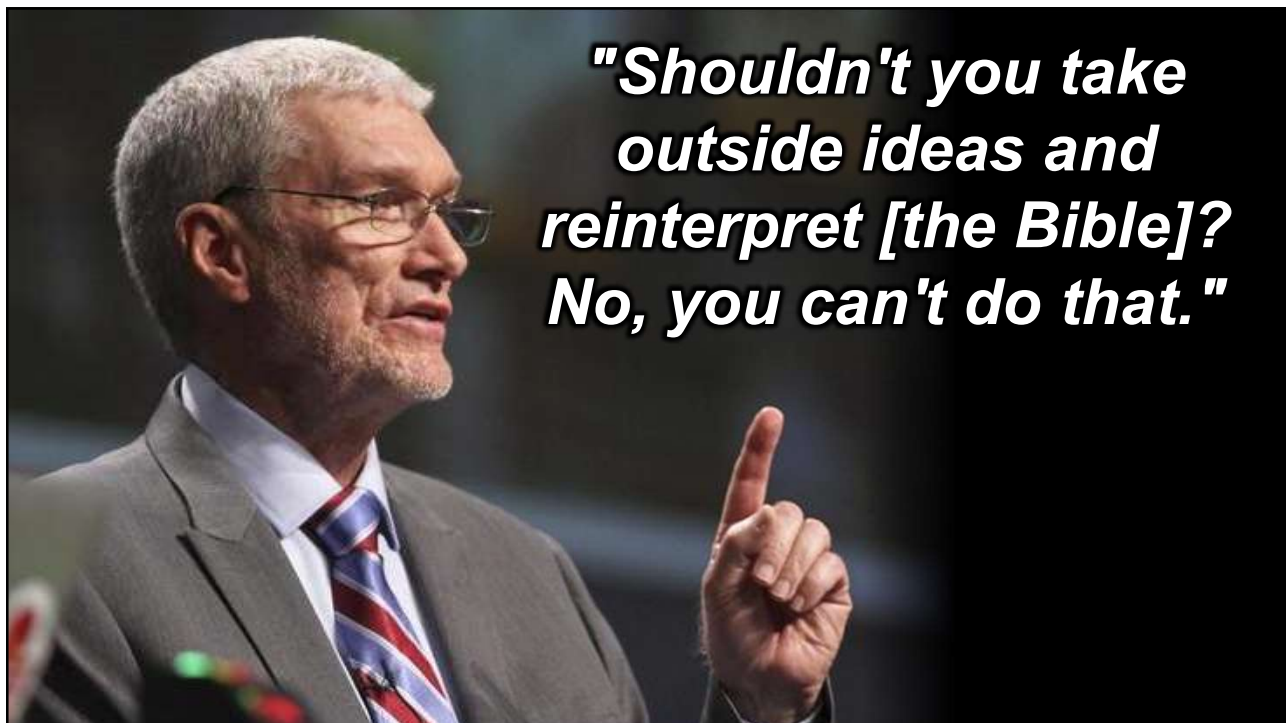


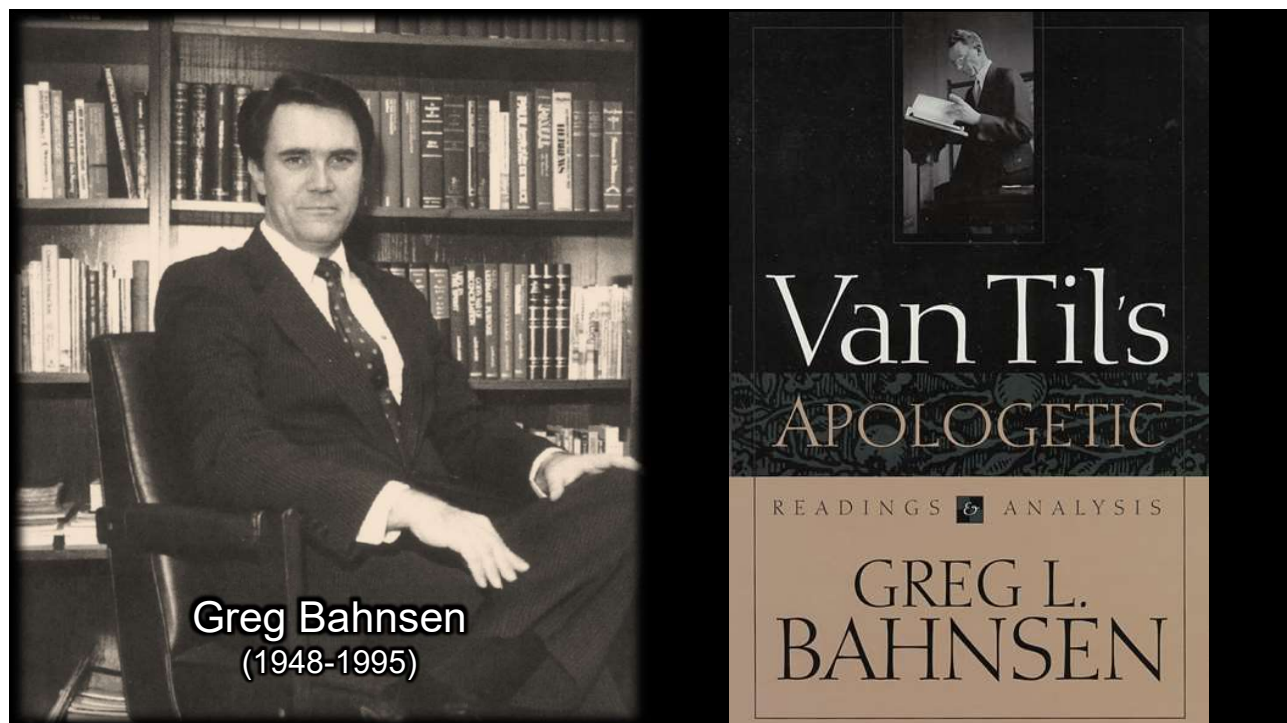
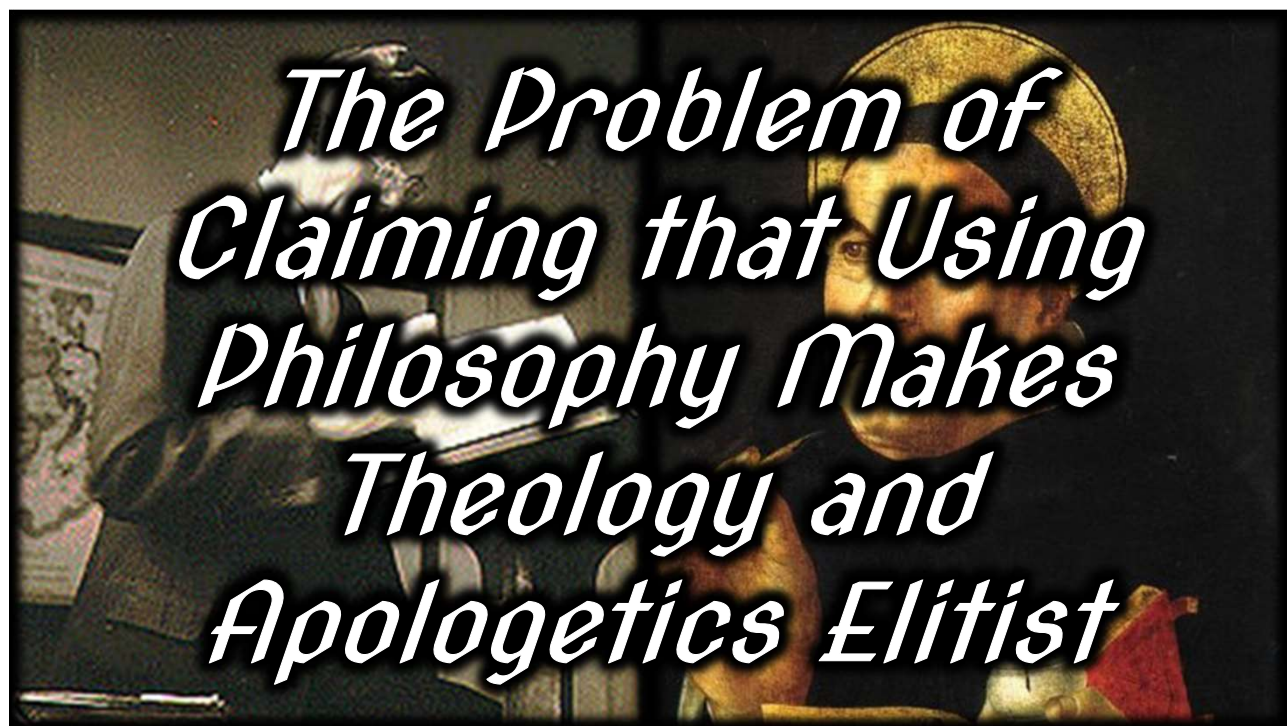
Cardinal Robert Bellarmine
(1542-1621)

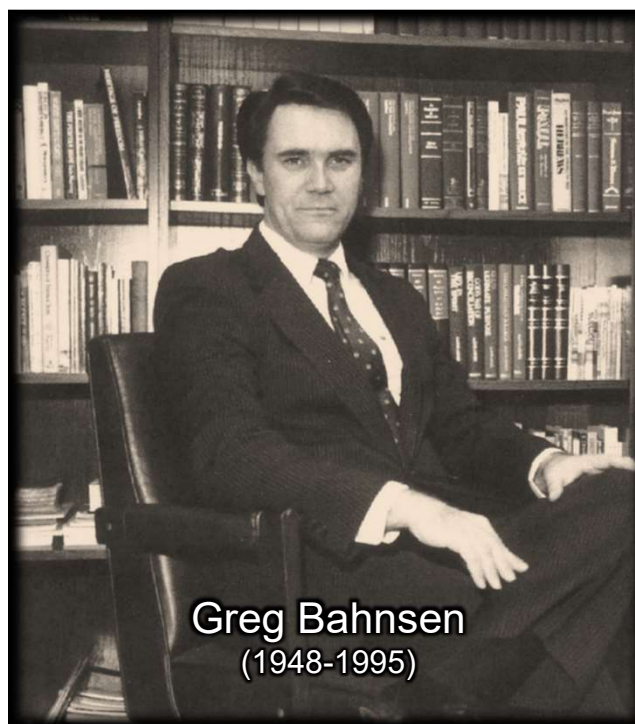


Galileo Galilei
(1564-1642)



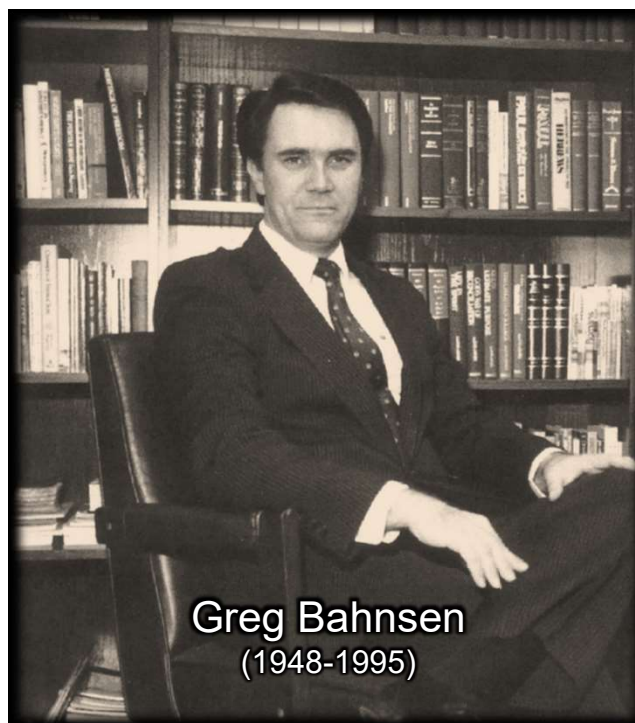






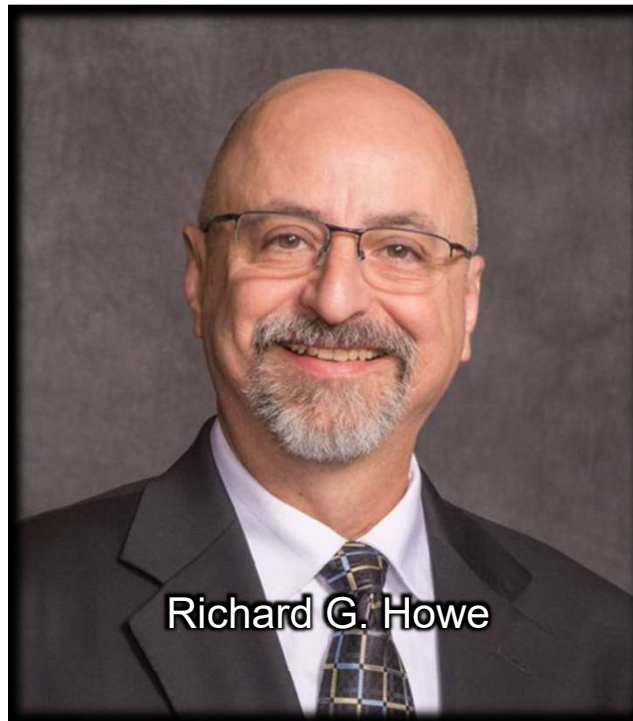
This is a troublesome conception of Christian philosophy. ... The philosopher is placed in the privileged position of laying down for the exegete how the Bible may and may not be used, how its teaching must be broadly conceived, and what the Bible can and cannot say. ... Philosophy is thereby rendered rationally autonomous"

[Van Til's *Apologetic: Readings and Analysis* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1998), 50]

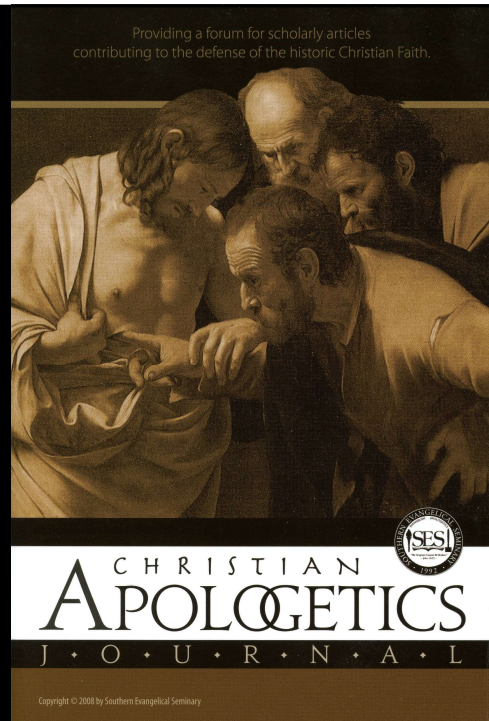


The deadly assumption here is that some philosophical reasoning is possible or intelligible for the unbeliever without presupposing the Christian worldview. That makes philosophical reasoning autonomous after all, and the apologetical case is lost from the very start."

[Van Til's *Apologetic*, 50]



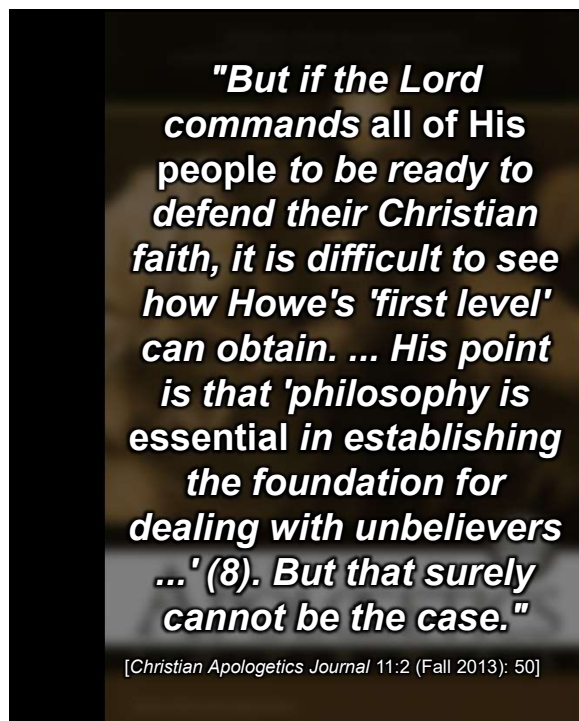
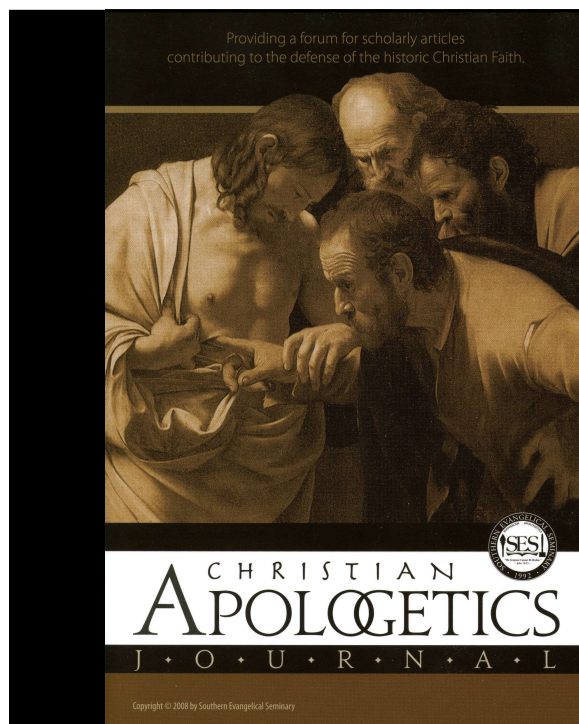
Richard G. Howe



Richard G. Howe

"... philosophy is essential is establishing the foundation for dealing with unbelievers who might bring up certain challenges, including the challenge that truth is not objective or the challenge that only the natural sciences are the source of truth about reality."

[Christian Apologetics Journal 11:2 (Fall 2013): 8]





*"... philosophy is essential is establishing the foundation for dealing with unbelievers **who might bring up certain challenges**, including the challenge that truth is not objective or the challenge that only the natural sciences are the source of truth about reality."*

[Christian Apologetics Journal 11:2 (Fall 2013): 8]

*"But if the Lord commands all of His people to be ready to defend their Christian faith, it is difficult to see how Howe's 'first level' can obtain. ... His point is that **'philosophy is essential in establishing the foundation for dealing with unbelievers ...'** (8). But that surely cannot be the case."*

[Christian Apologetics Journal 11:2 (Fall 2013): 8]

"What Howe's 'first level' of apologetic methodology does, therefore, is establish an elite group of academics and intellectuals who alone can protect the rest of us from the challenges and objections that are brought against our faith."

[Christian Apologetics Journal 11:2 (Fall 2013): 8]



K. Scott Oliphint



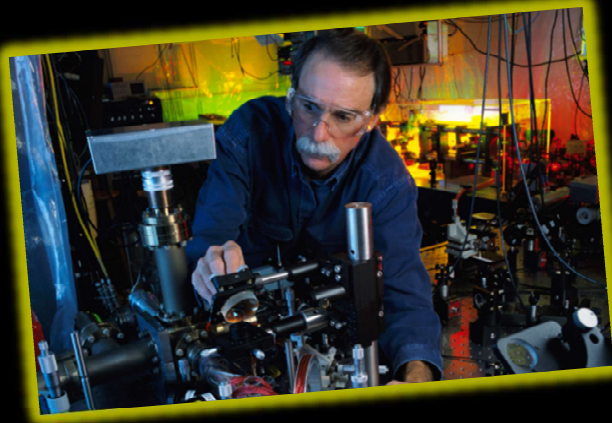
***A child can know what a flower is.
She knows that a flower is not a person.***



However, to delve deeper into the physical nature of a flower, one would need to understand botany.

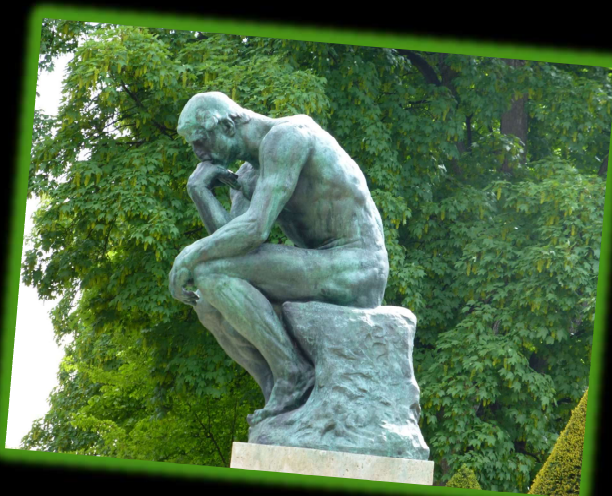


To delve deeper still, one would need to understand chemistry (to understand, e.g., photosynthesis).



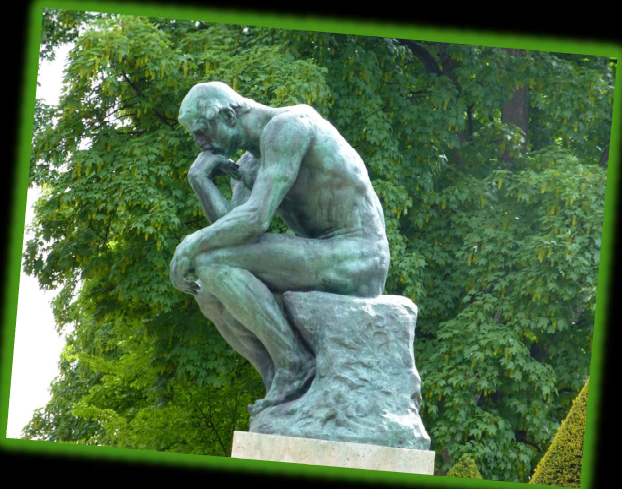
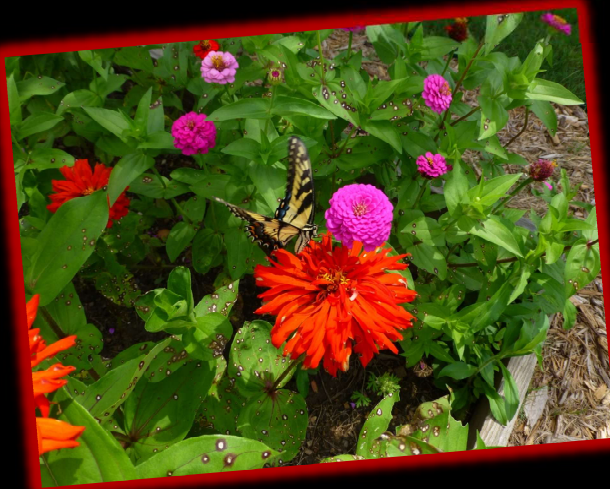
And to delve deeper still, one would need to understand physics.

Suppose we wanted to account for a number of other aspects of the flower and the person.



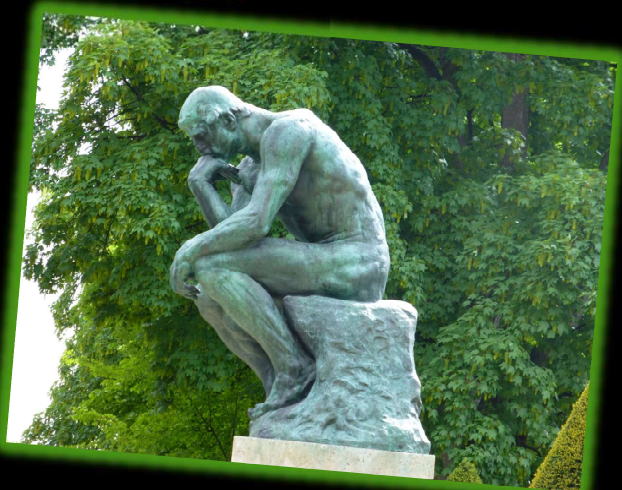
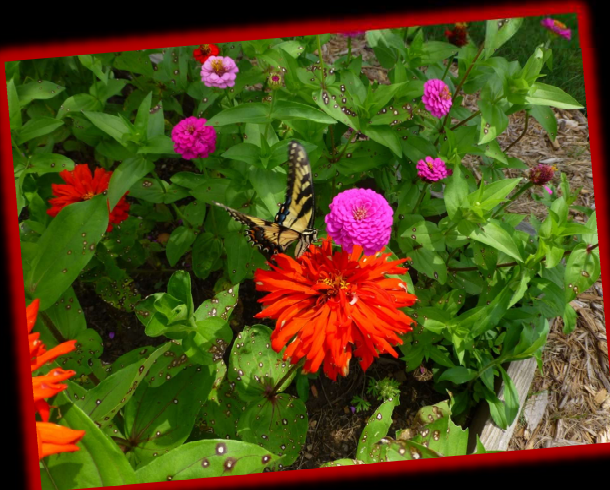
***What makes a flower a flower and what makes a person
a person are their respective natures.***

Metaphysics



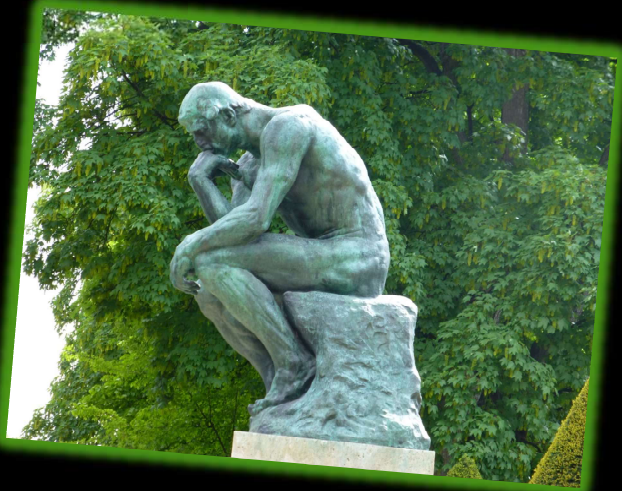
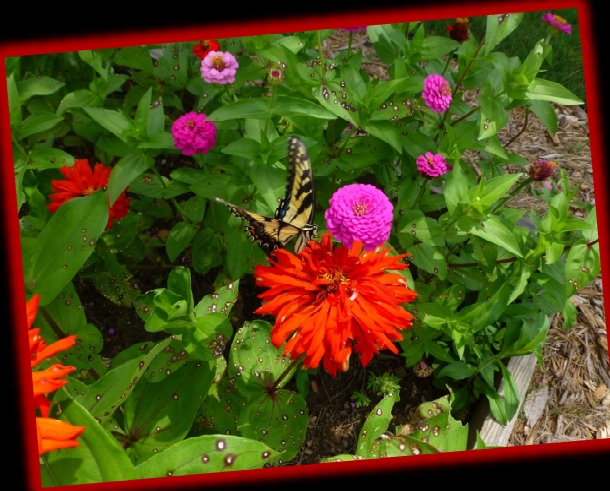
***We can know that one is a flower and the other is a
person by our senses.***

Epistemology



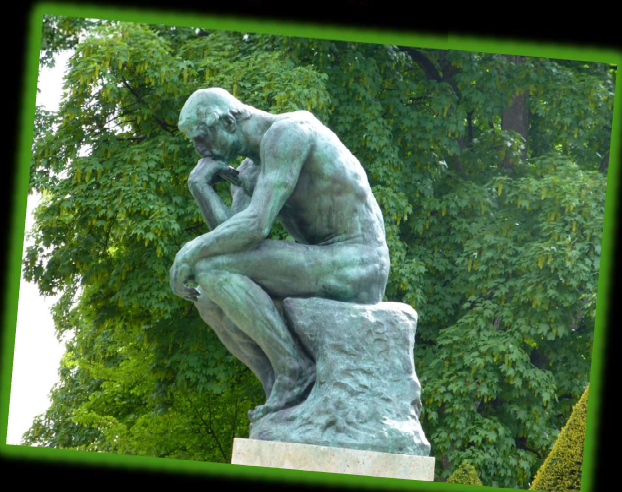
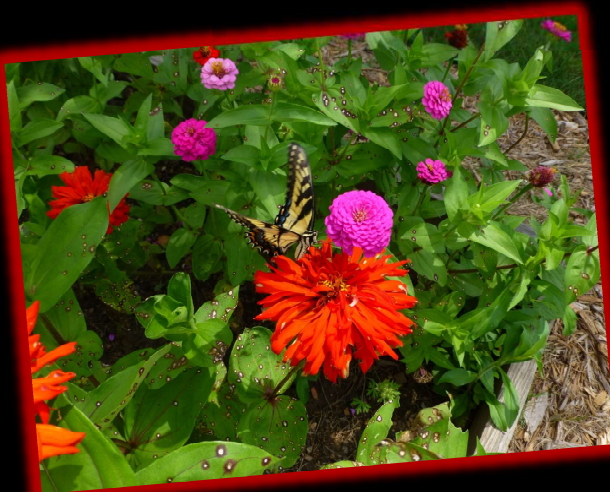
***We value the person over the flower because of the
different kinds of things they are.***

Ethics



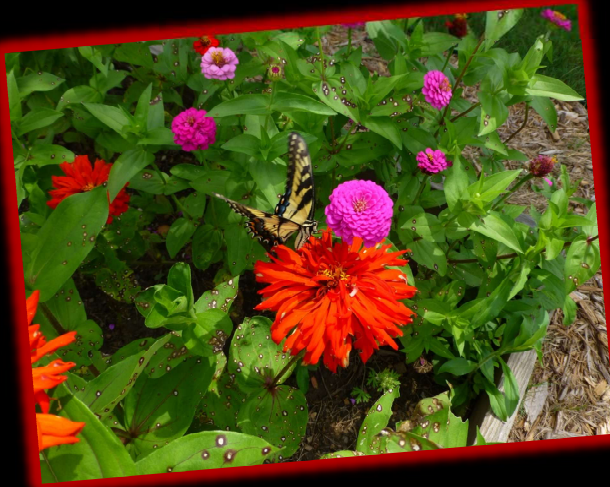
***We insist that others value the person over the flower
and hold them accountable when they do not.***

Political Philosophy

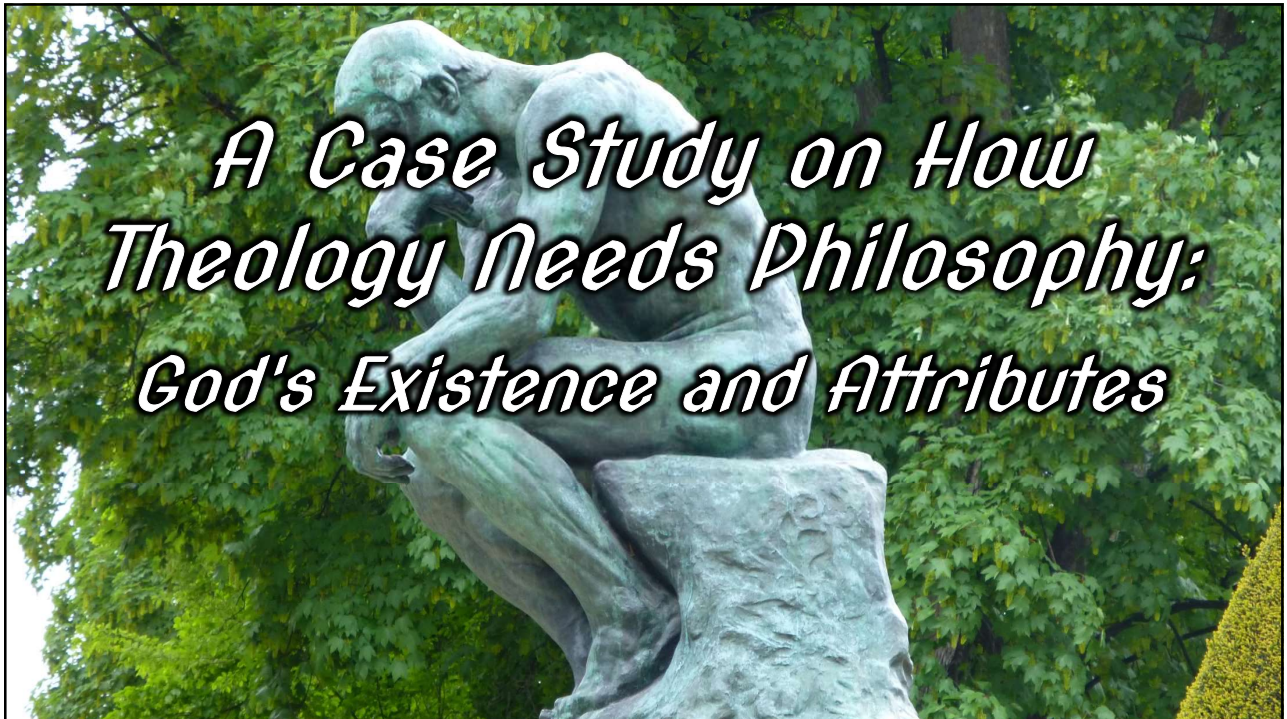


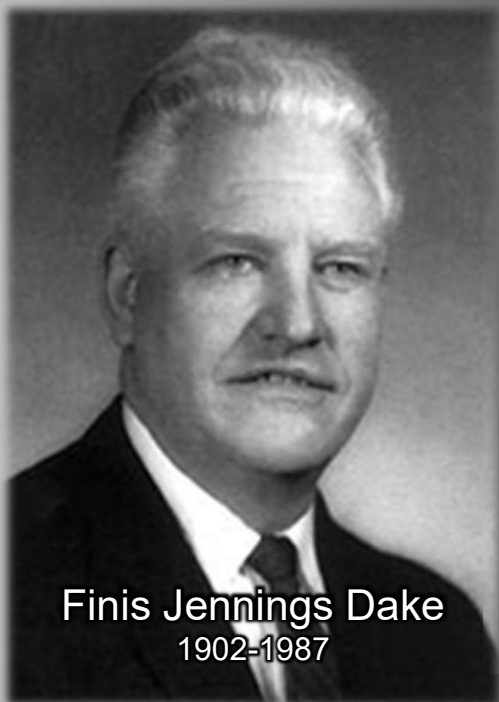
***We know that neither the flower nor the person can
account for their own existence but are created by God.***

Philosophy of Religion



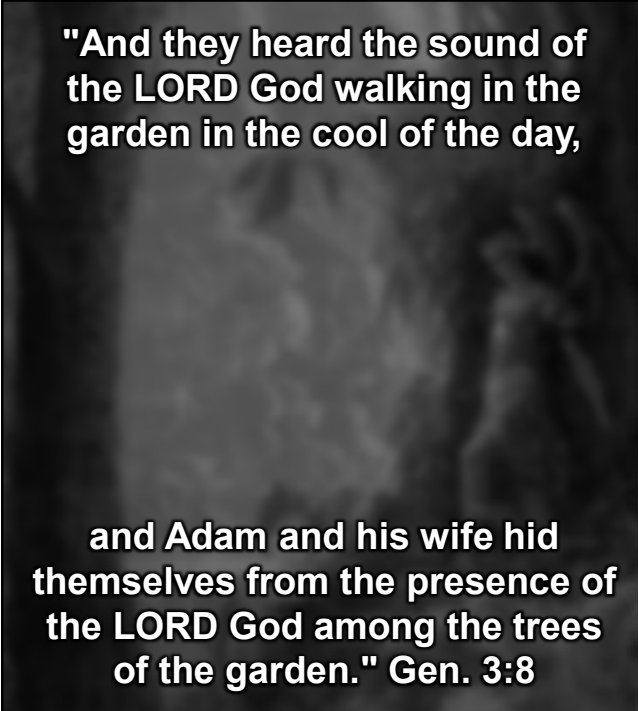
***A Case Study on How
Theology Needs Philosophy:
God's Existence and Attributes***



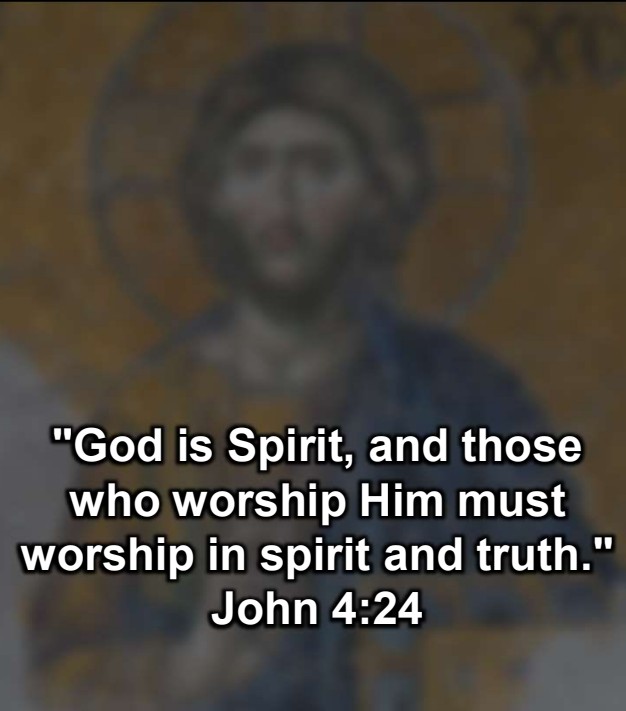


Finis Jennings Dake
1902-1987

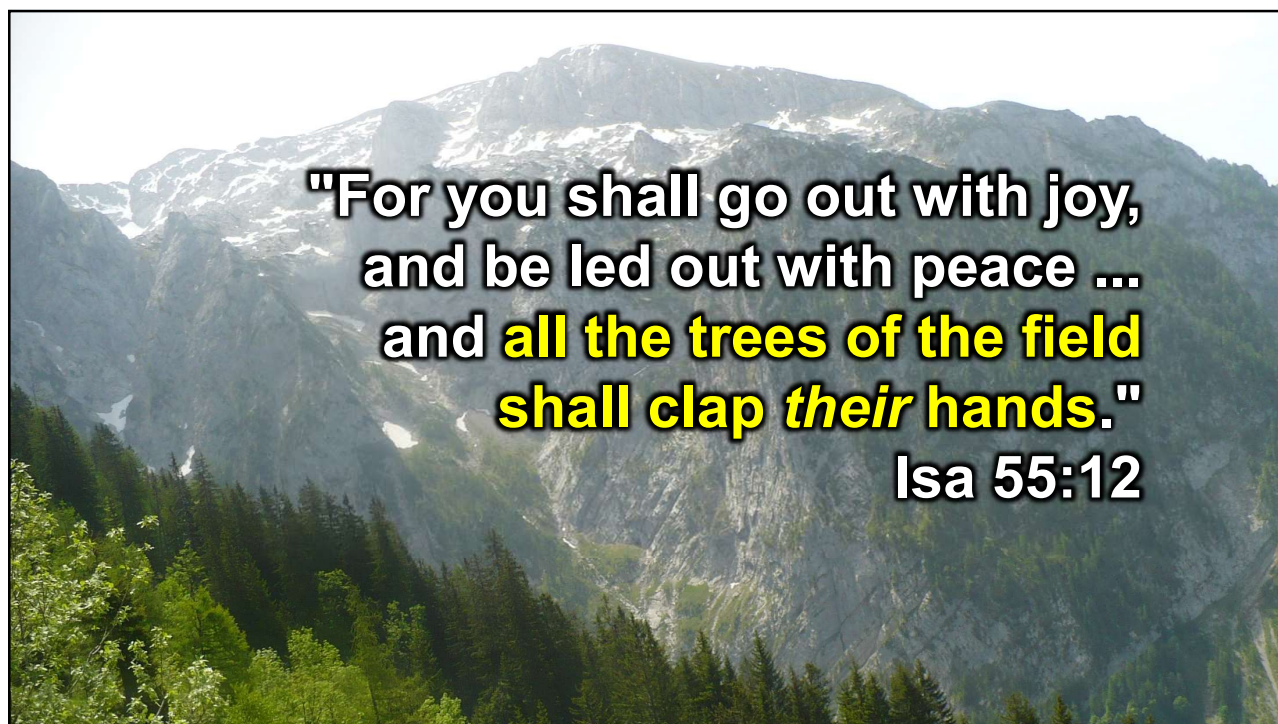
(Dan. 7:9-14; 10:5-19) (Jn. 5:37)
(Phil. 2:5-7)
(Gen. 1:26; 9:6; Ezek. 1:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:7; Jas. 3:9)
(Ex. 33:23) (Gen. 6:6; 8:21) (Ps. 8:3-6; Heb. 1:10; Rev. 5:1-7) (Num. 12:8) (Isa. 30:27)
(Ezek. 1:27; Ex. 24:10) (Ps. 11:4; 18:24; 33:18) (Ps. 18:6)
(Dan. 7:9-14; 10:5-19; Rev. 5:1-7; 22:4-6)



"And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden." Gen. 3:8



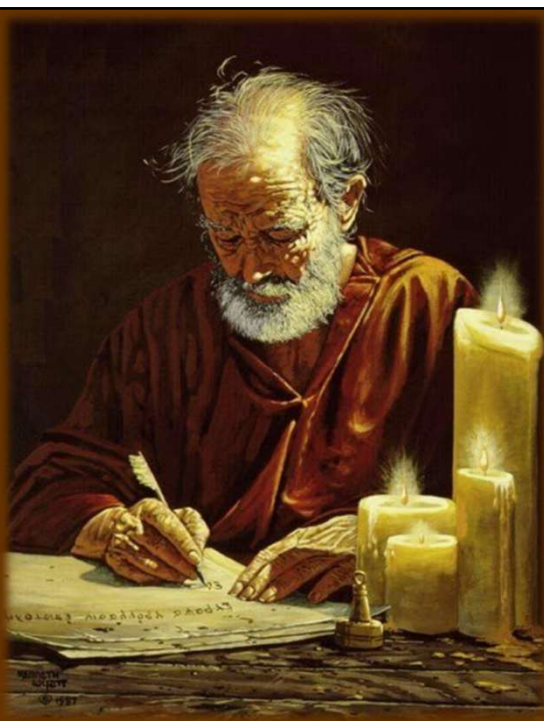
**"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
John 4:24**

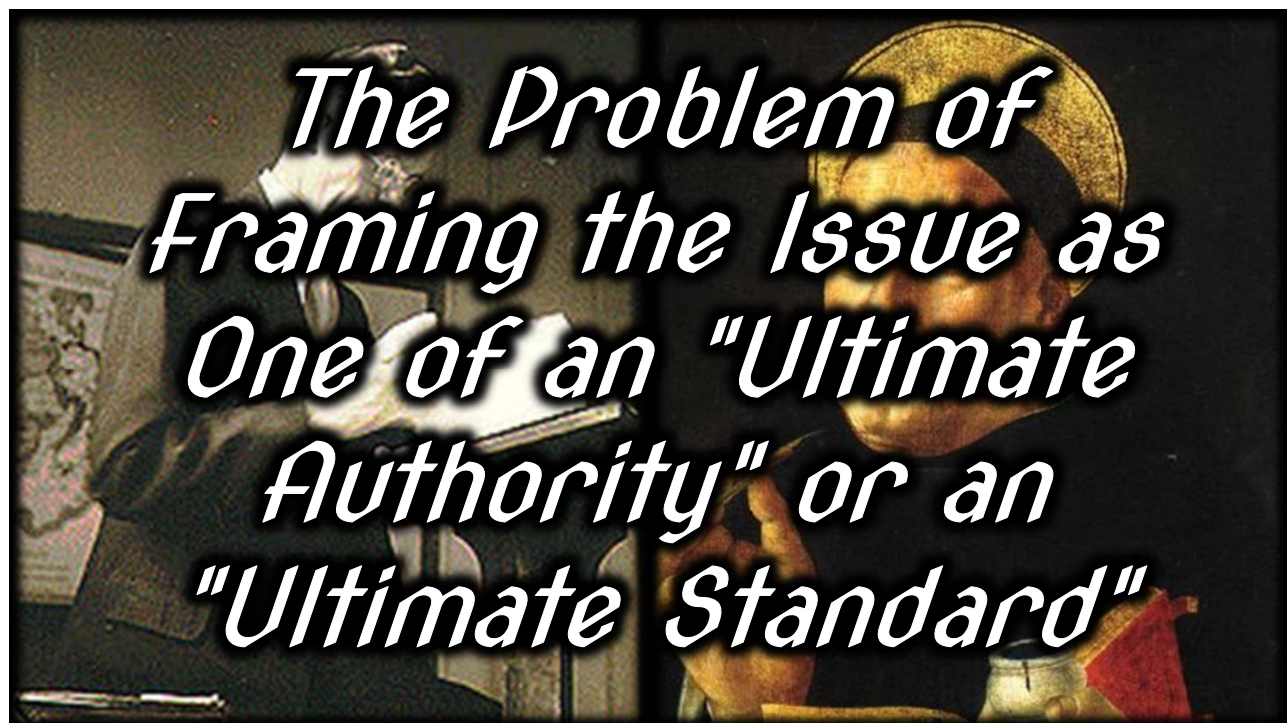
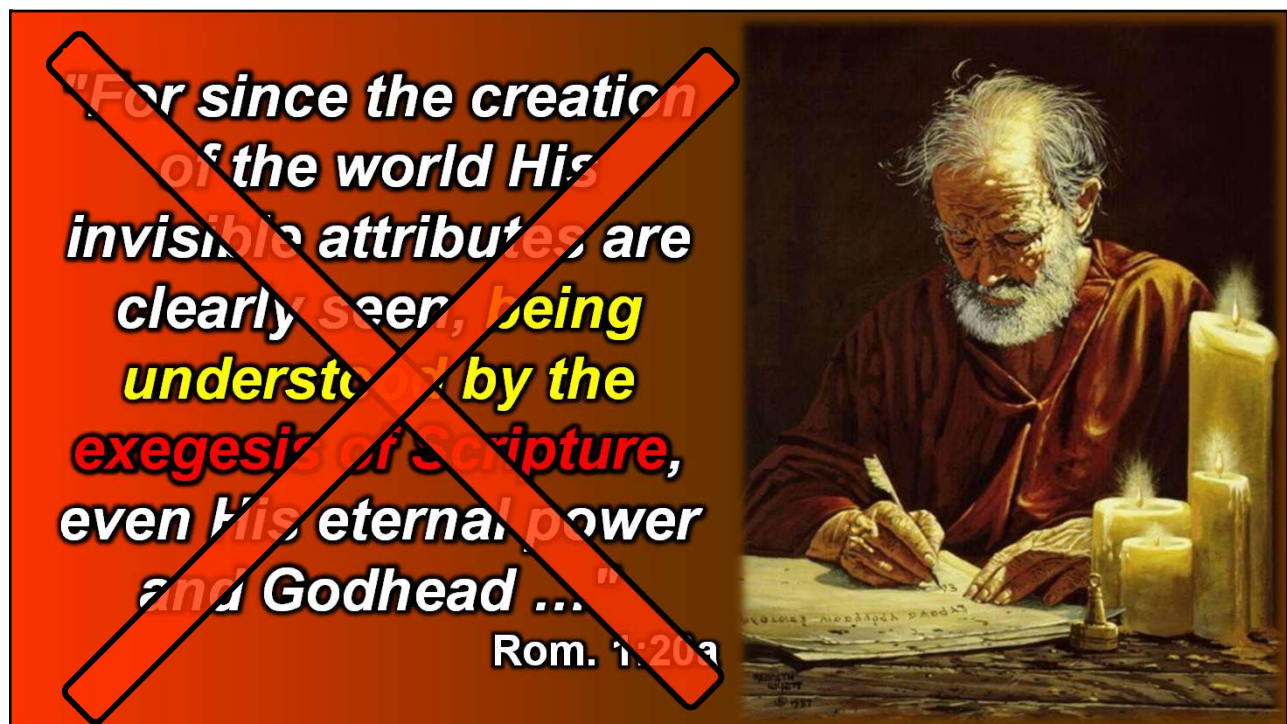


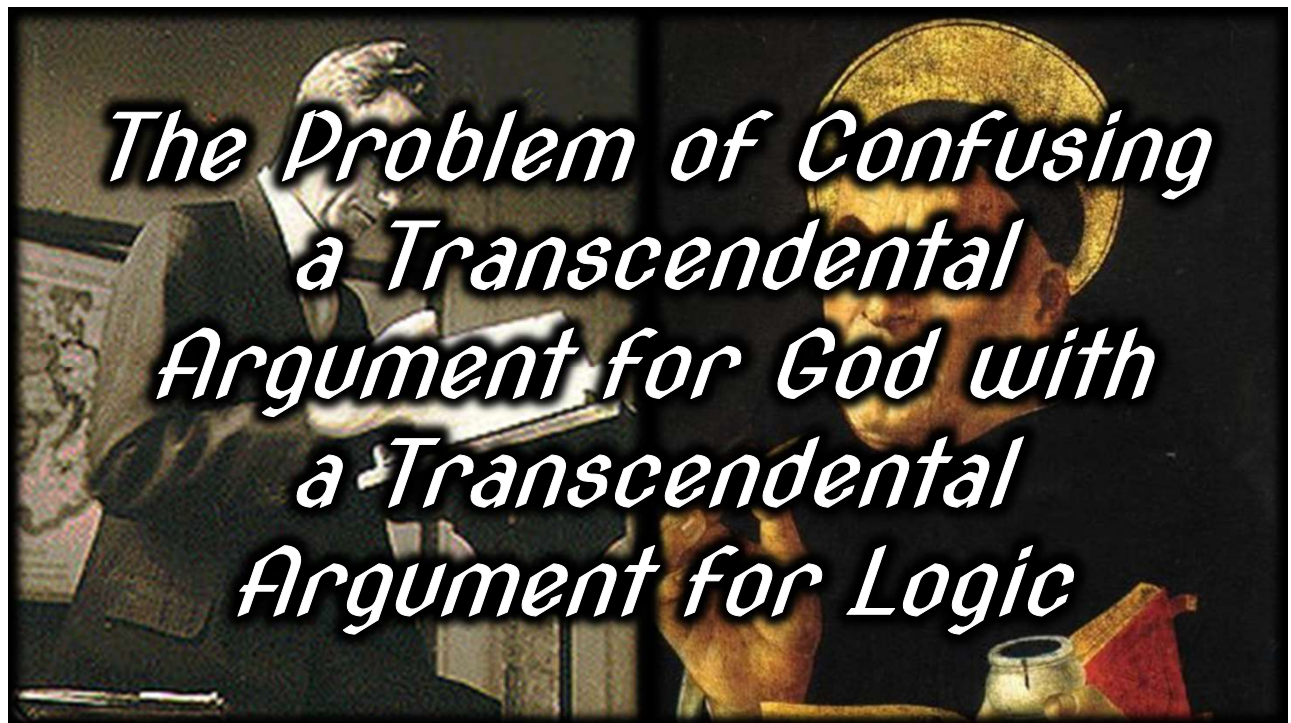
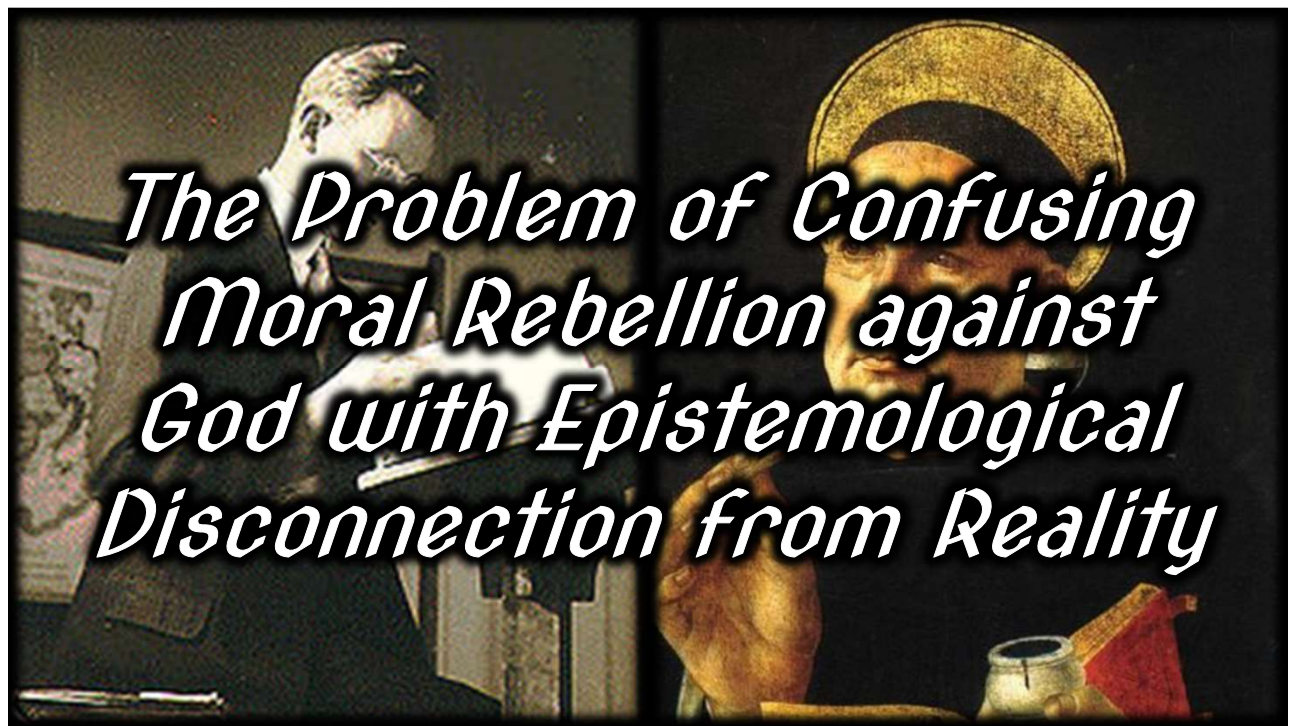
**"For you shall go out with joy,
and be led out with peace ...
and **all the trees of the field**
shall clap *their* hands."
Isa 55:12**

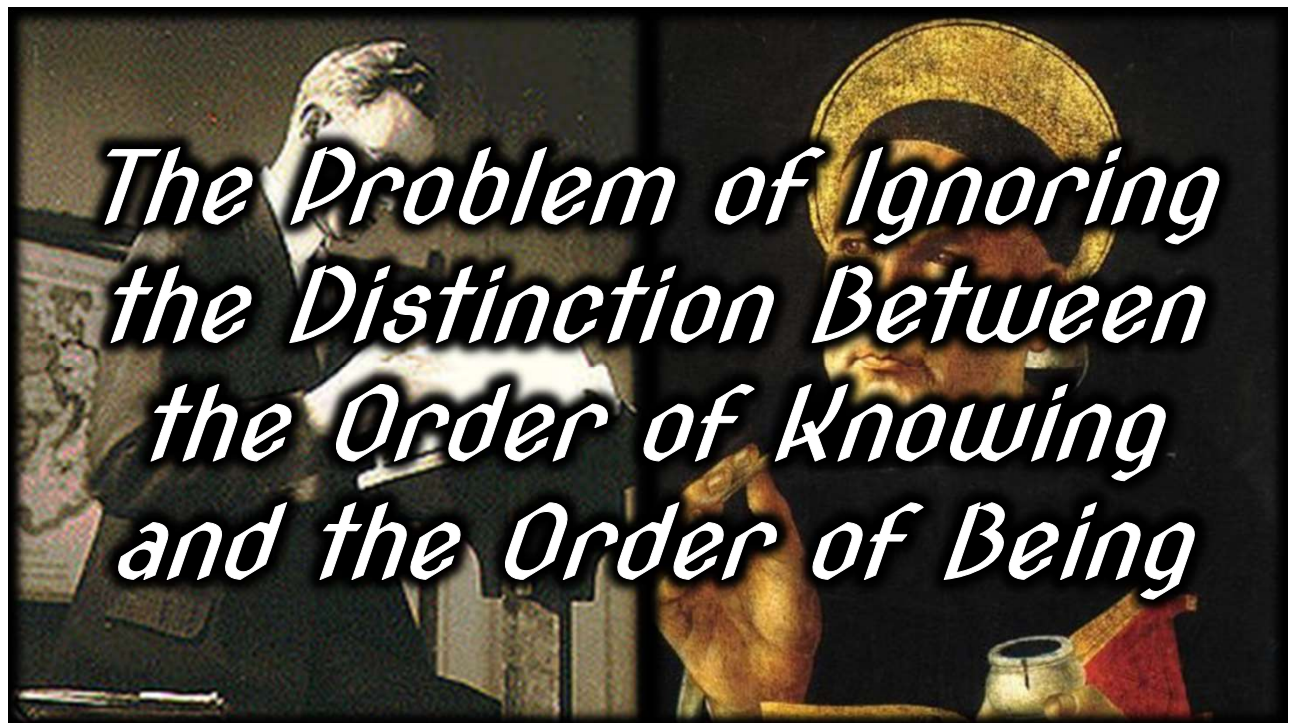
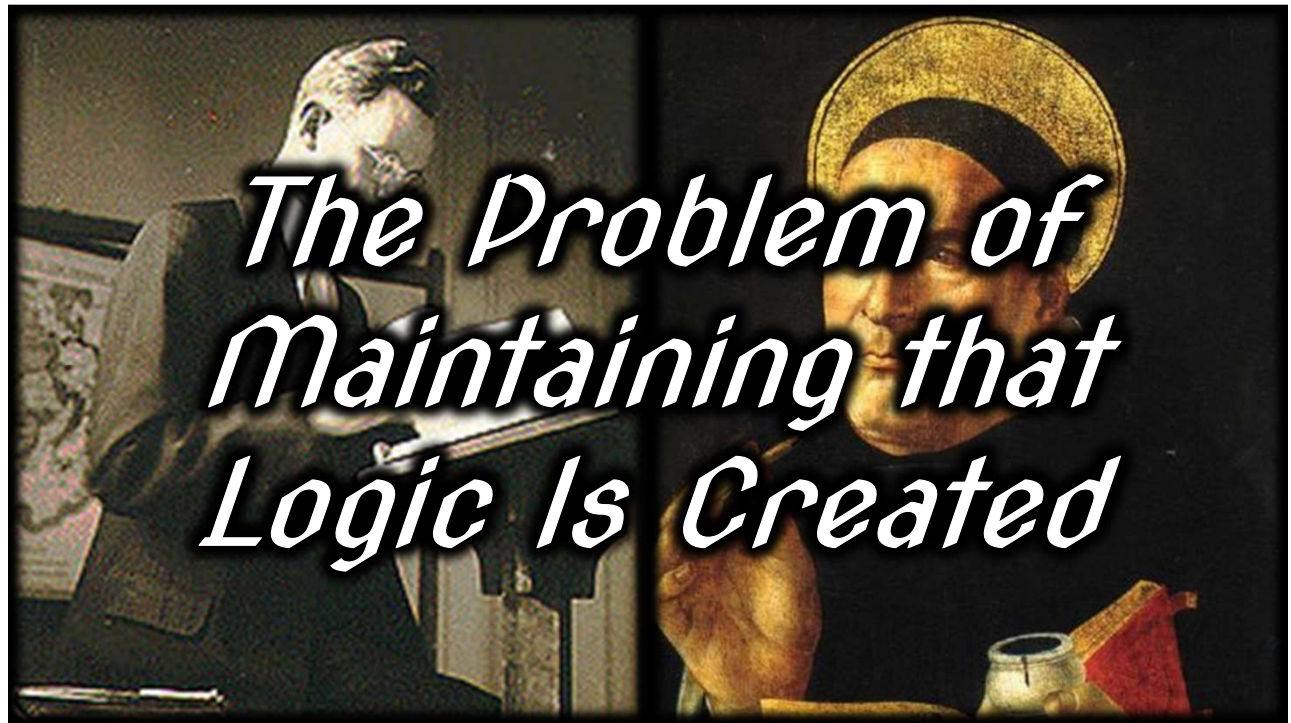
***"For since the creation
of the world His
invisible attributes are
clearly seen, **being
understood by the
things that are made,**
even His eternal power
and Godhead ..."***

Rom. 1:20a

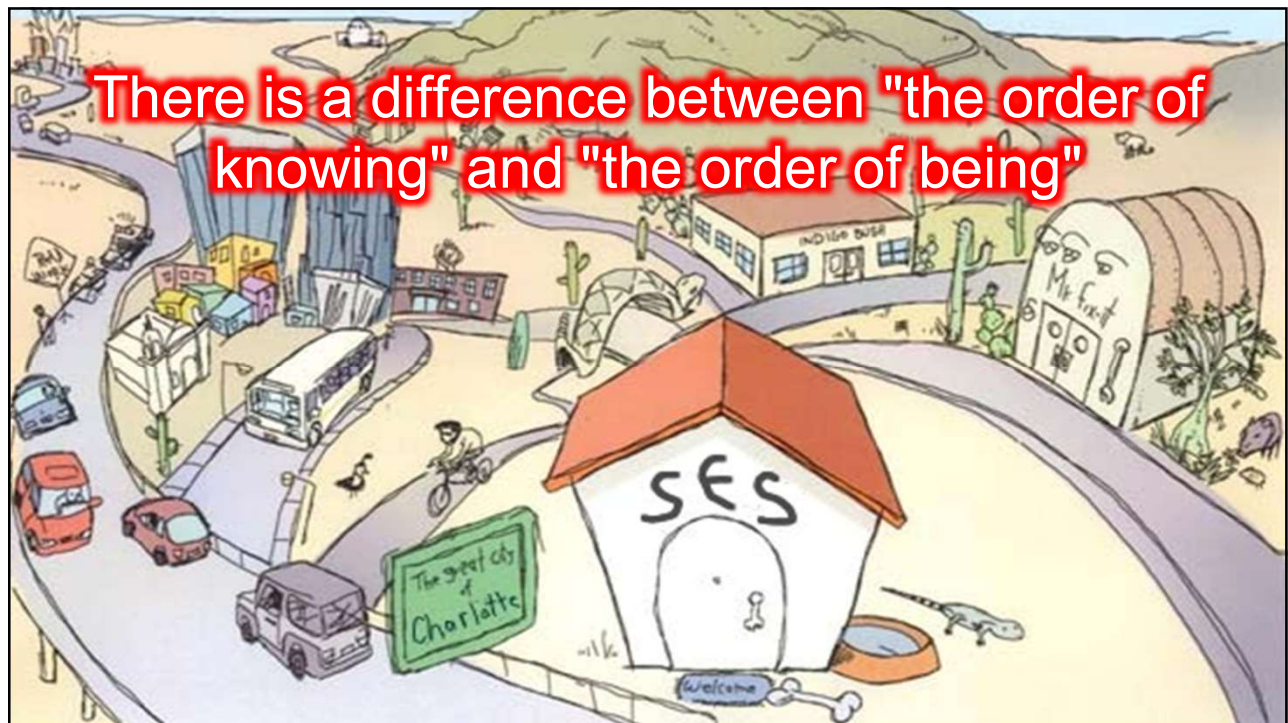


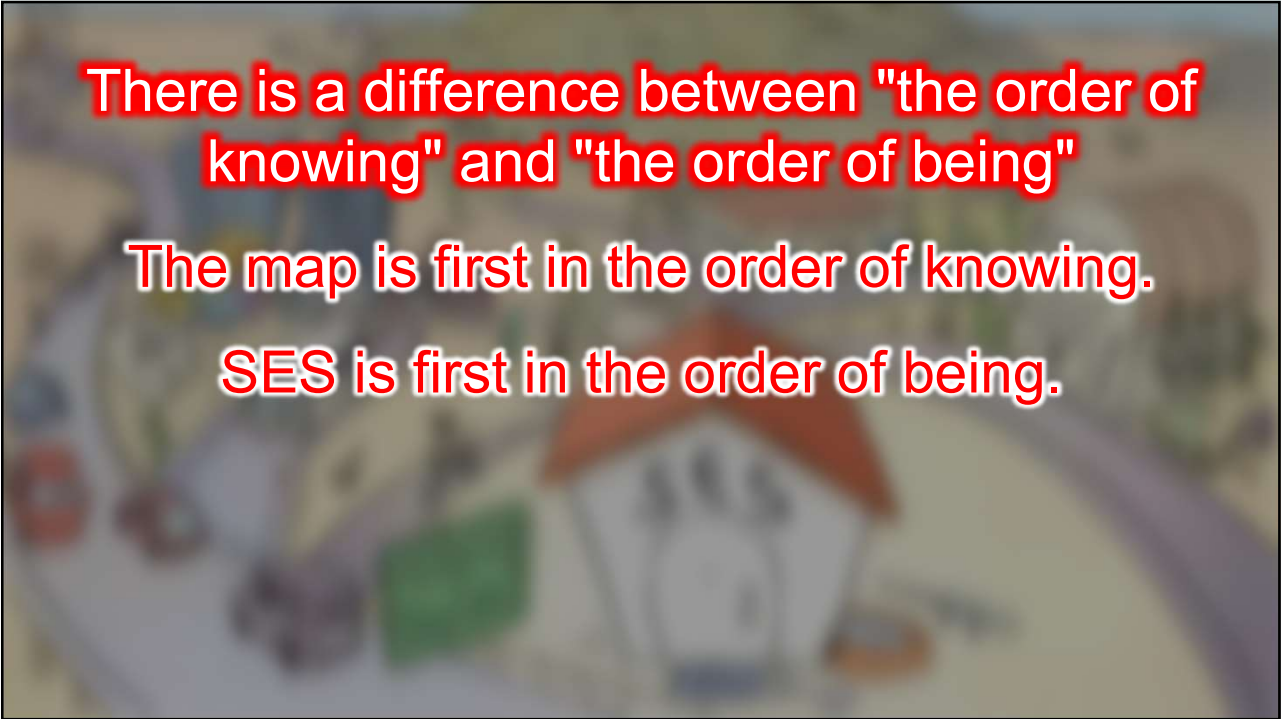






There is a difference between "the order of knowing" and "the order of being"

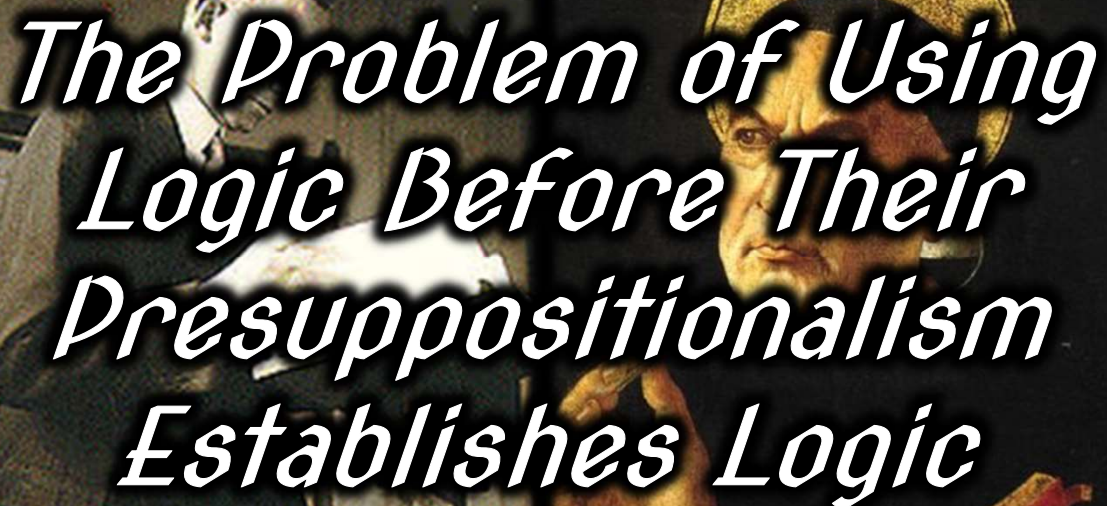




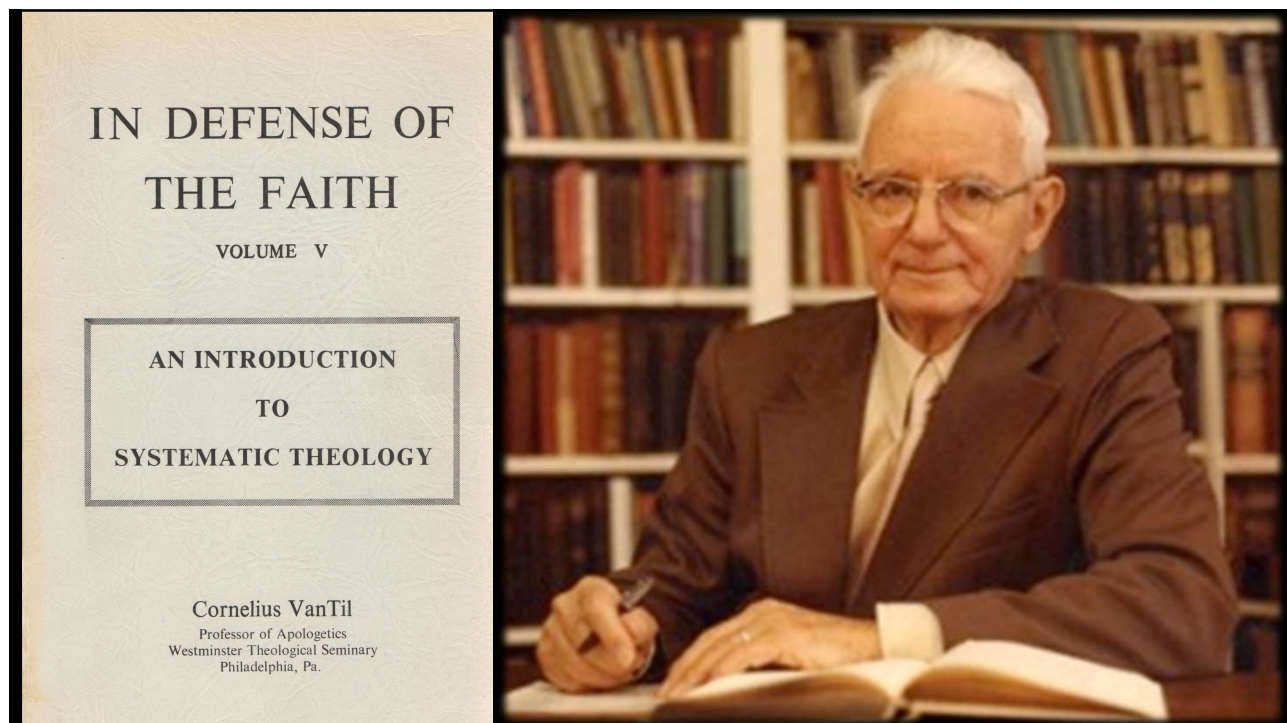
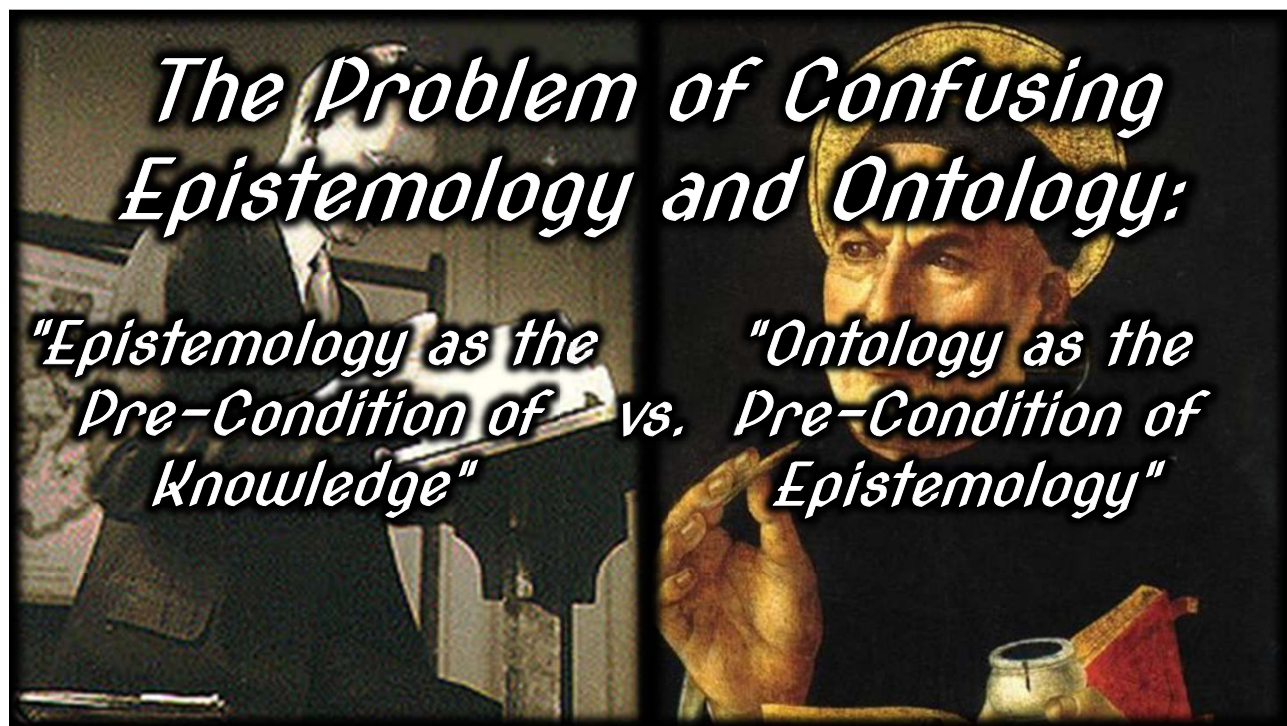
There is a difference between "the order of knowing" and "the order of being"

The map is first in the order of knowing.

SES is first in the order of being.

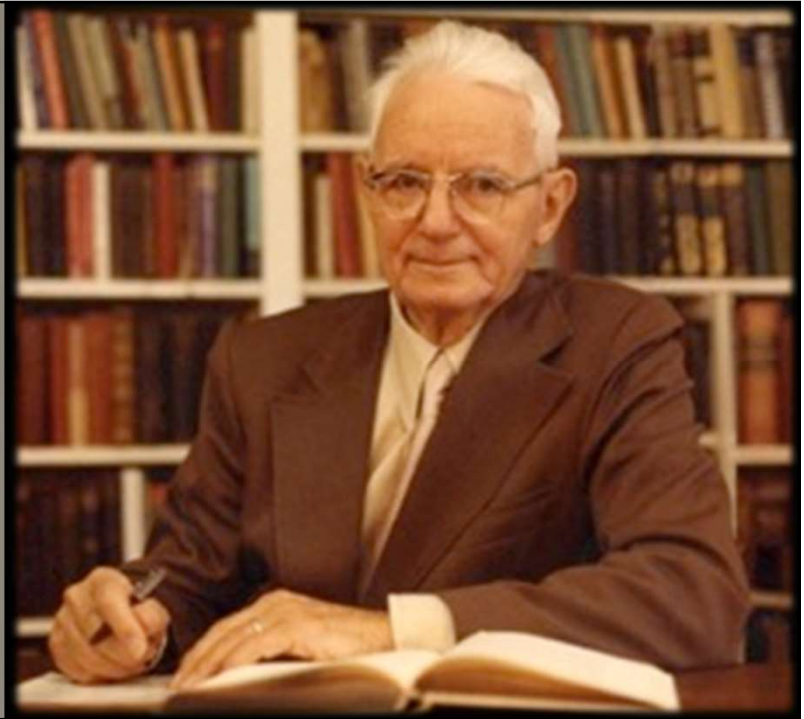


*The Problem of Using
Logic Before Their
Presuppositionalism
Establishes Logic*



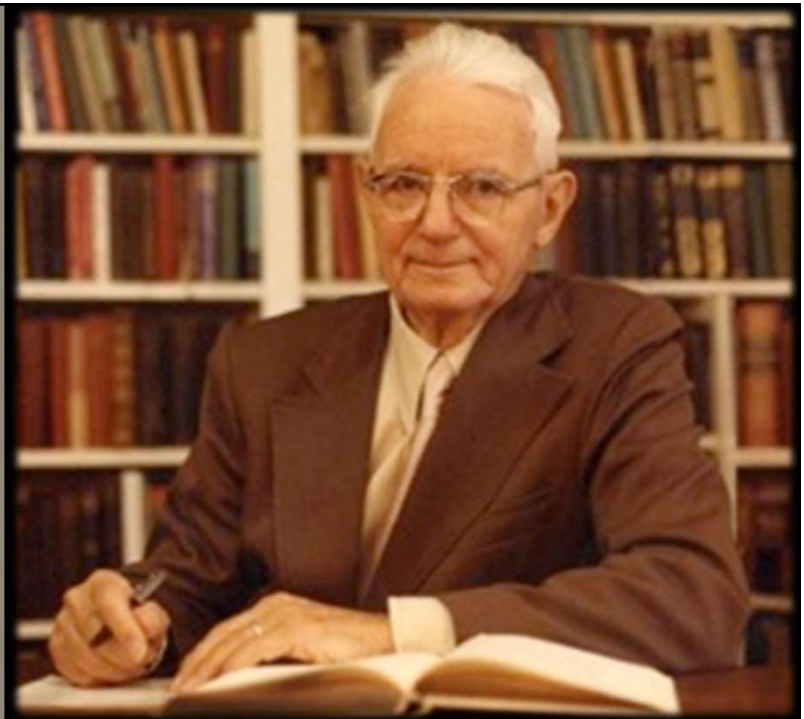
"We must avoid the idea that human reason exists as a known and definable entity apart from God so that we may begin from it as from an ultimate starting point."

In Defense of the Faith, Vol. V: An Introduction to Systematic Theology, p. 21



"We must avoid the idea that human reason exists as a known and definable entity **apart from God** so that we may begin from it as from an ultimate starting point."

In Defense of the Faith, Vol. V: An Introduction to Systematic Theology, p. 21



"We must avoid the idea that human reason exists as a known and definable entity **apart from God so that we may begin from it as from an ultimate starting point."**

In Defense of the Faith, Vol. V: An Introduction to Systematic Theology, p. 21

It is a point about **being, not about knowing.**

Because of this, Van Til's point is not about Presuppositionalism at all, but, instead, collapses into the classical cosmological argument.

"We must avoid the idea that human reason exists as a known and definable entity **apart from God so that we may begin from it as from an ultimate starting point."**

In Defense of the Faith, Vol. V: An Introduction to Systematic Theology, p. 21

What Van Till said

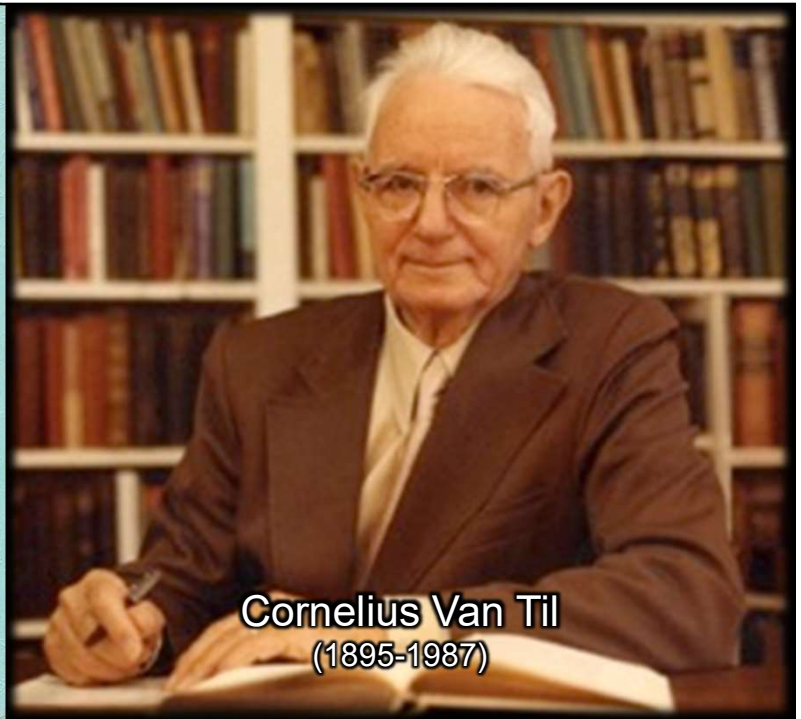
What Van Till should have said to be Presuppositional

"We must avoid the idea that human reason exists as a known and definable entity **apart from the conception of God so that we may begin from it as from an ultimate starting point."**

In Defense of the Faith, Vol. V: An Introduction to Systematic Theology, p. 21

THE DEFENSE OF THE FAITH

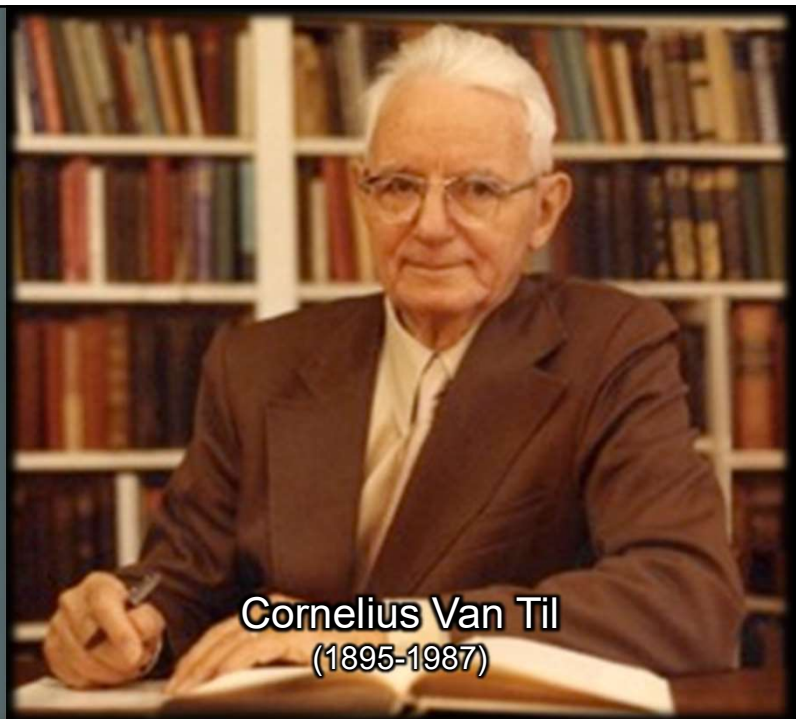
CORNELIUS VAN TIL



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

***"The Reformed
apologist assumes
that nothing can
be know by man
about himself or
the universe
unless God exists
and Christianity is
true."***

[The Defense of the Faith, (Phillipsburgh:
Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979), 223]



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

"The Reformed apologist assumes that nothing can be known by man about himself or the universe unless **God exists** and Christianity is true."

[The Defense of the Faith, (Phillipsburgh: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979), 223]

Again, this is an ontological point, not an epistemological one.

As with the previous example, because of this, Van Til's point is not about Presuppositionalism at all, but, instead, collapses into the classical cosmological argument.

JERUSALEM and ATHENS

CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON
THE PHILOSOPHY AND
APOLOGETICS OF
CORNELIUS VAN TIL

EDITED BY E. R. GEEHAN



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

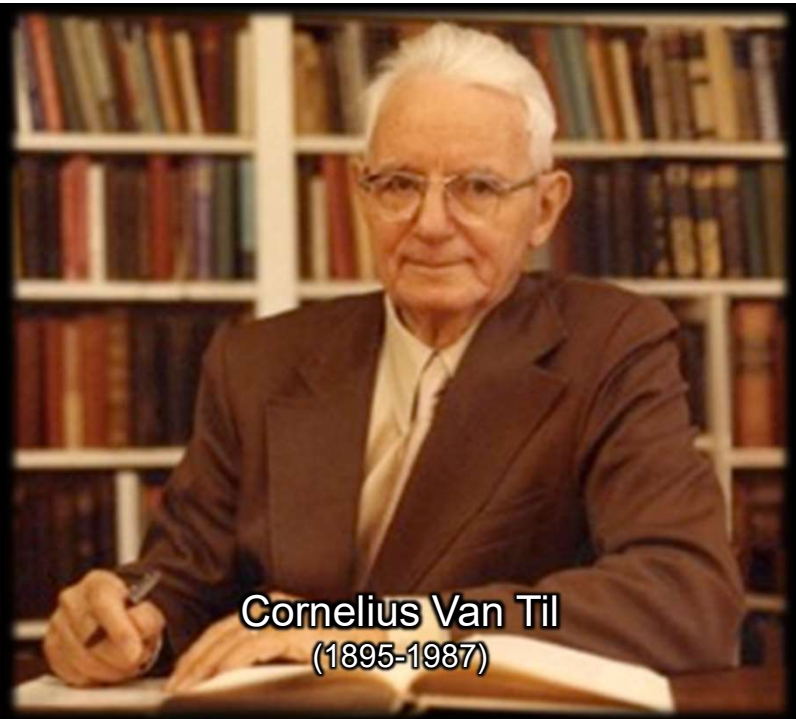
**"The only 'proof' of the
Christian position is
that *unless its truth is
presupposed there is
no possibility of
'proving' anything at all.*
The *actual state of
affairs* as preached by
Christianity is the
necessary foundation
of 'proof' itself."**

["My Credo" in *Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Philosophy and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971), 21]



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

***unless its truth is
presupposed there is
no possibility of
'proving' anything at all.
actual state of
affairs***



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

*unless its truth is
presupposed there is
no possibility of
'proving' anything at all
actual state of
affairs*

epistemological
ontological

*unless its truth is
presupposed there is
no possibility of
'proving' anything at all
actual state of
affairs*

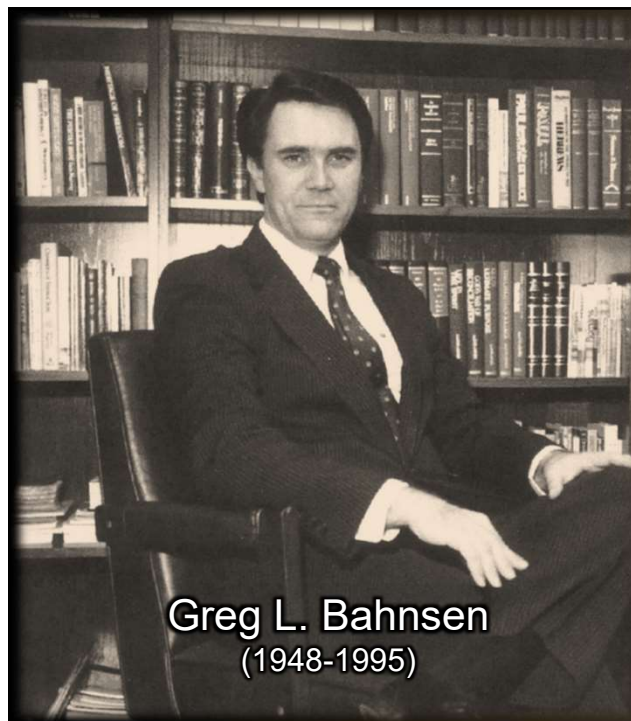
The difference is between
"the truth"
(ontological)
and "presupposing the truth"
(epistemological).

Bahnsen / Sproul Debate



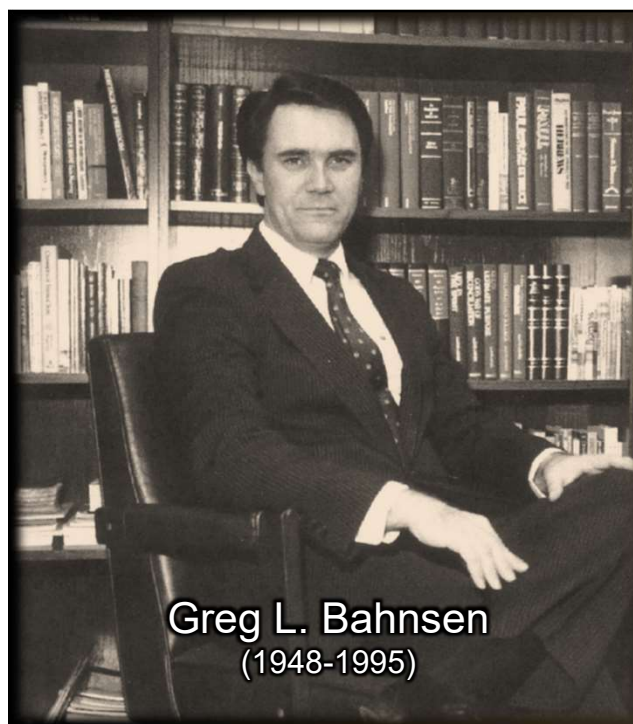
Greg Bahnsen
(1948-1995)

R. C. Sproul
(1939-2017)



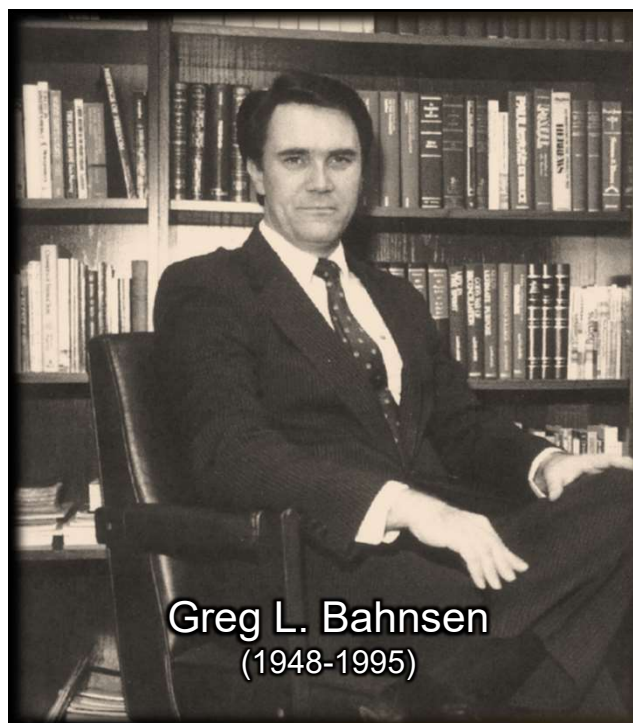
Greg L. Bahnsen
(1948-1995)

"Now RC is saying that he wants to start with epistemology and move to ontology, or metaphysics. Let's just start with the law of non-contradiction, the basic reliability of sense perception and the law of causality. And from those epistemological platforms, from that platform, move to the existence of God."



Greg L. Bahnsen
(1948-1995)

"What I want to say is you can't begin even with that platform if you don't already have the existence of God. And that's not an ontological statement because we would agree ontologically that there wouldn't be any logic or sense experience if God hadn't created the world and was a coherent God."



Greg L. Bahnsen
(1948-1995)

*"I am making an epistemological point— that it doesn't even make sense to use mathematics or empiricism or natural science of any sort **without already knowing that there is a God** that is the context in which interpretation and predication is possible. That's the transcendental argument, saying that **the precondition of intelligibility and knowledge is already the existence of God**. And that does not purport to be a probable argument for God's existence but a certain argument, a necessary argument, an inescapable argument."*



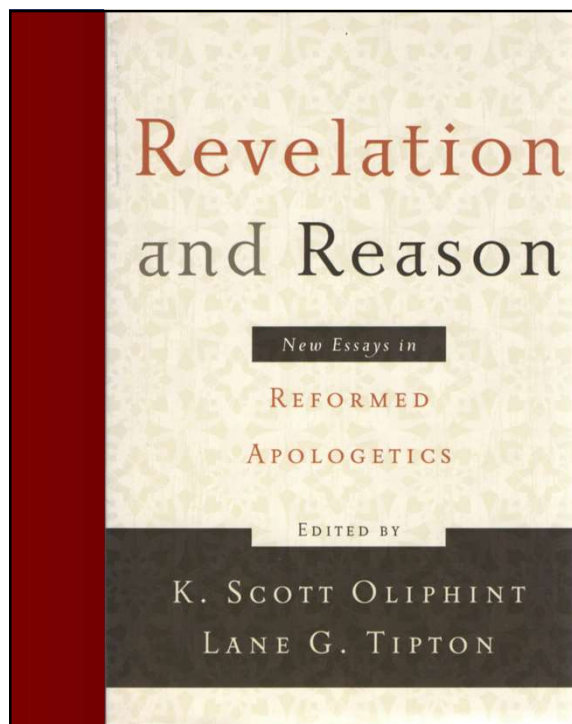
epistemology

ontology

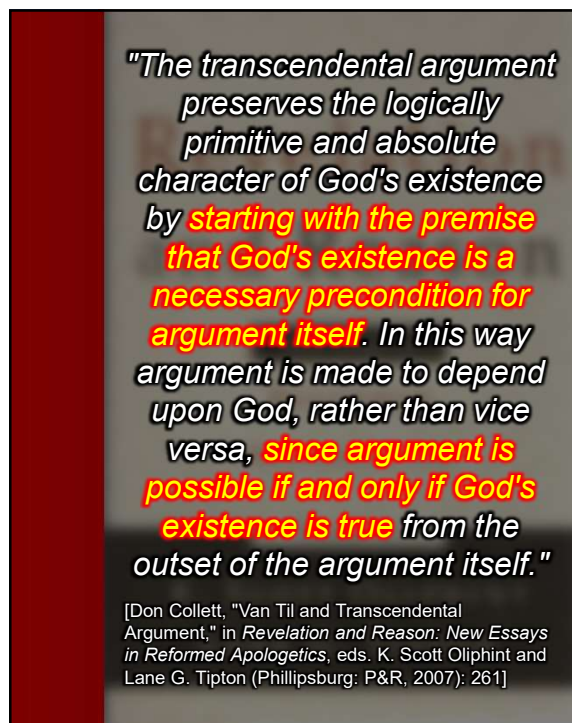
"I am making an epistemological point— that it doesn't even make sense to use mathematics or empiricism or natural science of any sort **without already knowing that there is a God** that is the context in which interpretation and predication is possible. That's the transcendental argument, saying that **the precondition of intelligibility and knowledge is already the existence of God**. And that does not purport to be a probable argument for God's existence but a certain argument, a necessary argument, an inescapable argument."

"And that's not an ontological statement because we would agree ontologically that there wouldn't be any logic or sense experience if God hadn't created the world and was a coherent God."

"I am making an epistemological point— that it doesn't even make sense to use mathematics or empiricism or natural science of any sort **without already knowing that there is a God** that is the context in which interpretation and predication is possible. That's the transcendental argument, saying that **the precondition of intelligibility and knowledge is already the existence of God**. And that does not purport to be a probable argument for God's existence but a certain argument, a necessary argument, an inescapable argument."



Don Collett



Don Collett

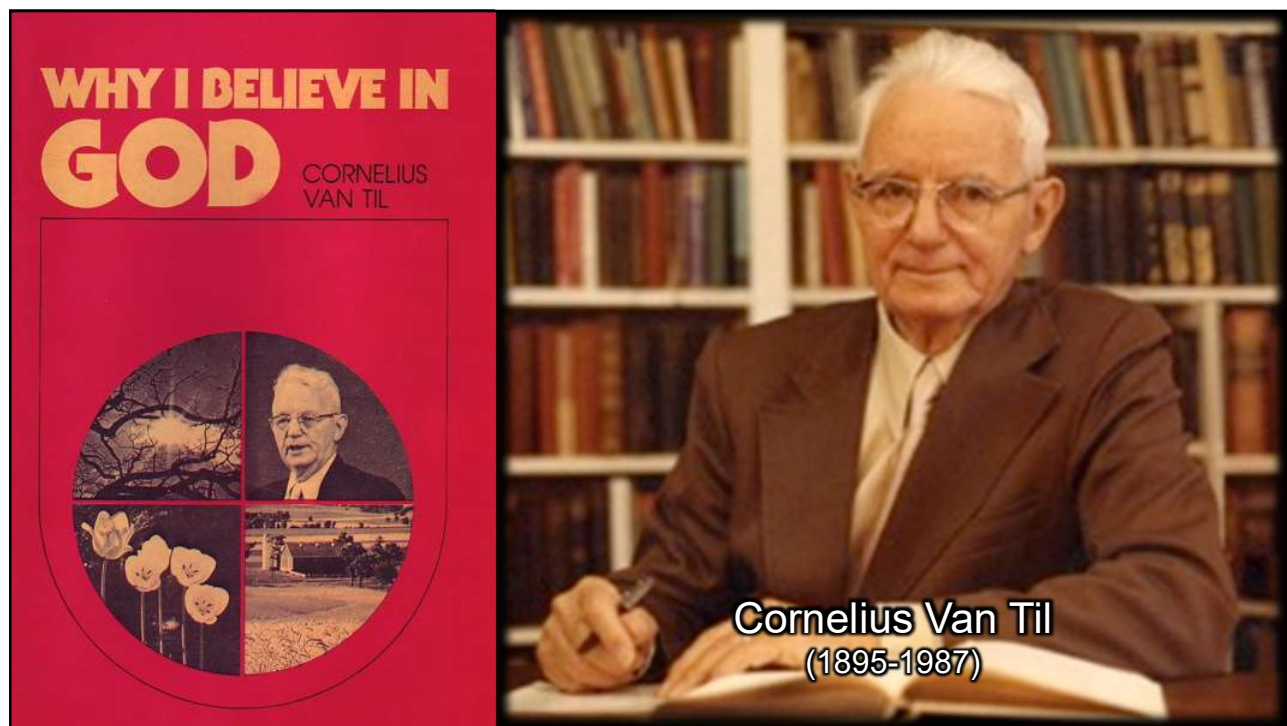
"The transcendental argument preserves the logically primitive and absolute character of God's existence by **starting with the premise that God's existence is a necessary precondition for argument itself**. In this way argument is made to depend upon God, rather than vice versa, **since argument is possible if and only if God's existence is true** from the outset of the argument itself."

[Don Collett, "Van Til and Transcendental Argument," in *Revelation and Reason: New Essays in Reformed Apologetics*, eds. K. Scott Oliphint and Lane G. Tipton (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2007): 261]

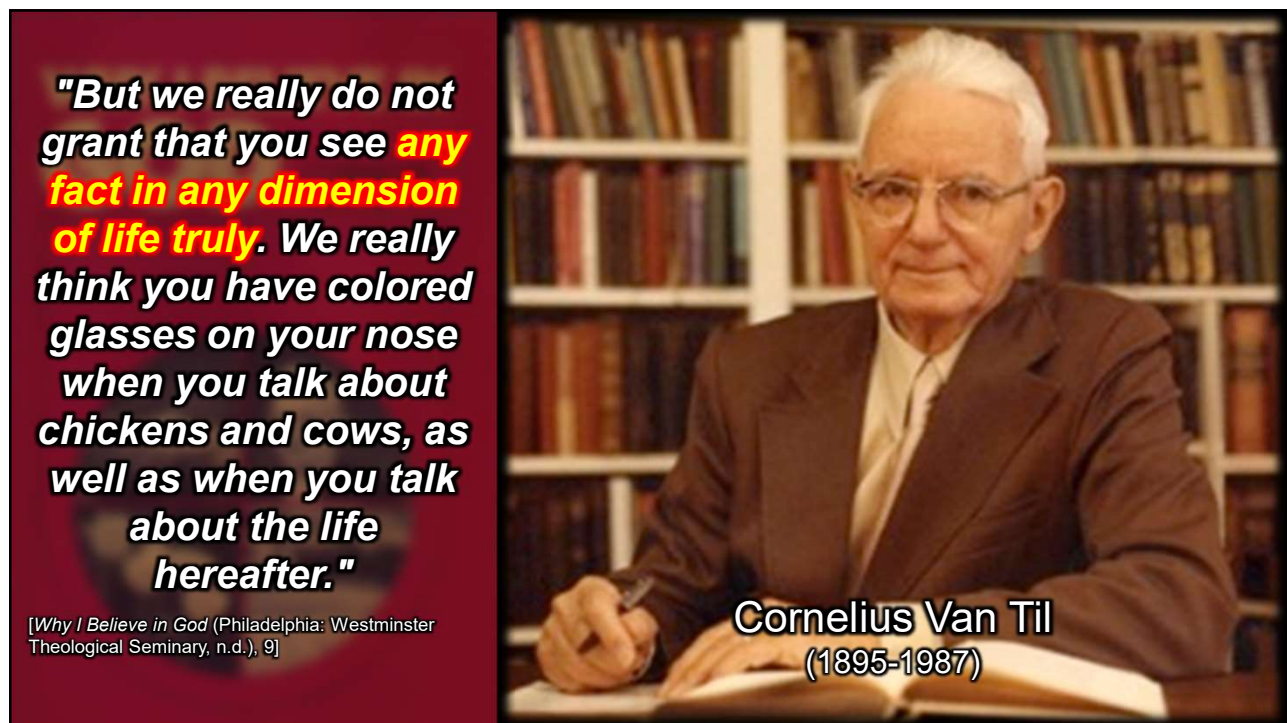
epistemology

ontology

*The Problem of
Confusing
Knowing Truly vs.
Knowing Exhaustively*



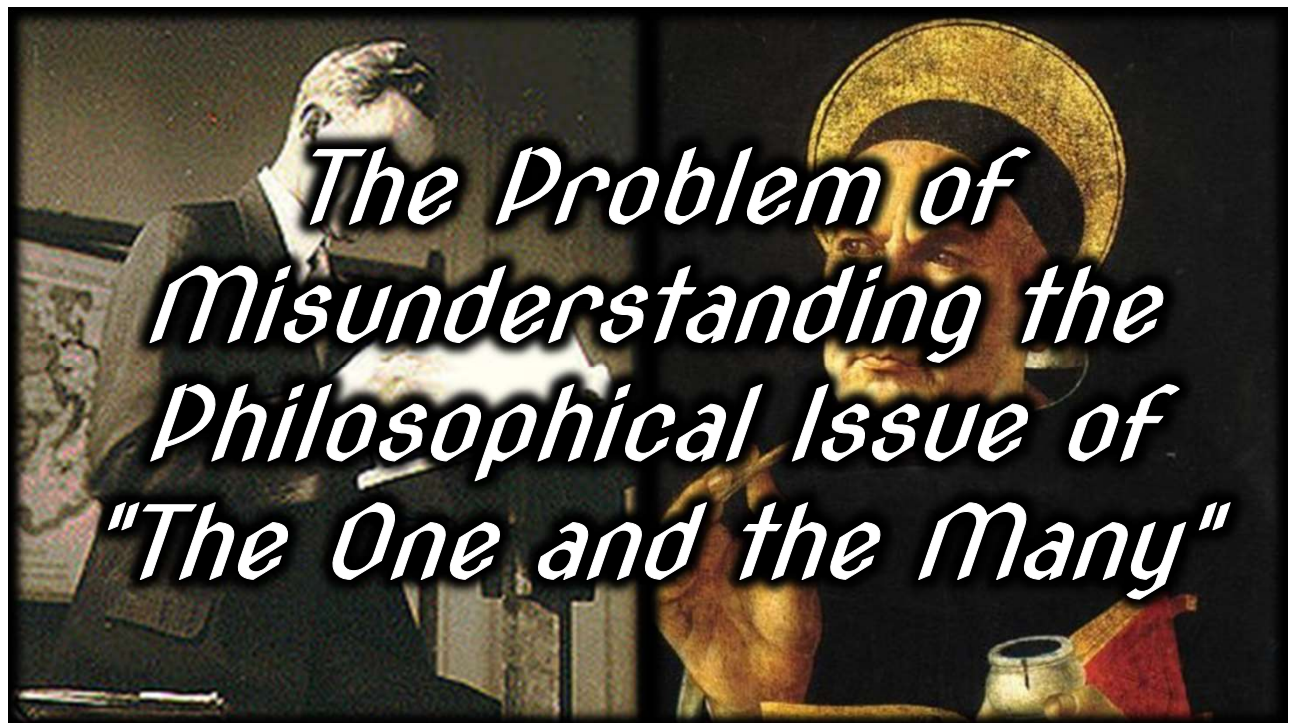
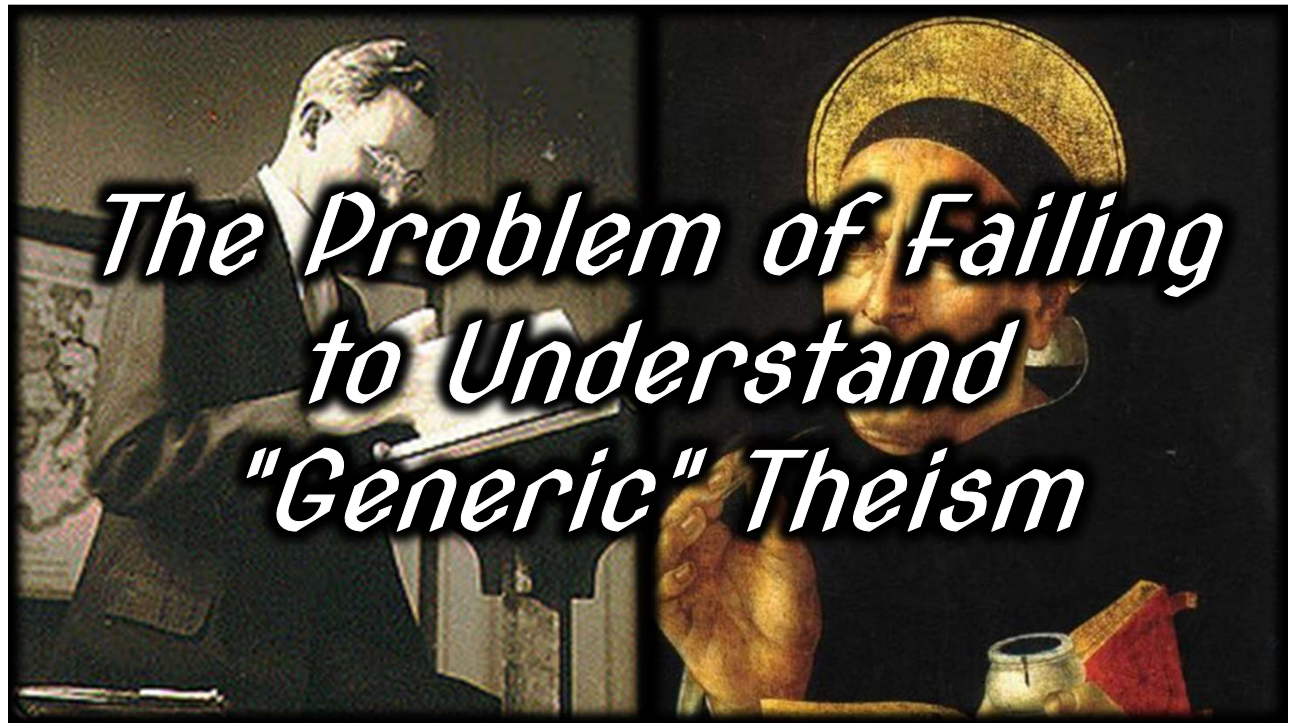
Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

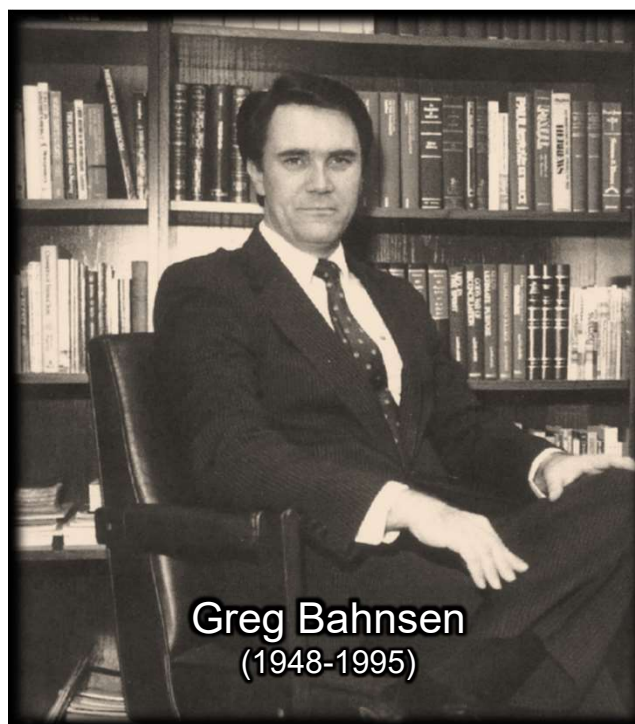


"But we really do not grant that you see *any fact in any dimension of life truly*. We really think you have colored glasses on your nose when you talk about chickens and cows, as well as when you talk about the life hereafter."

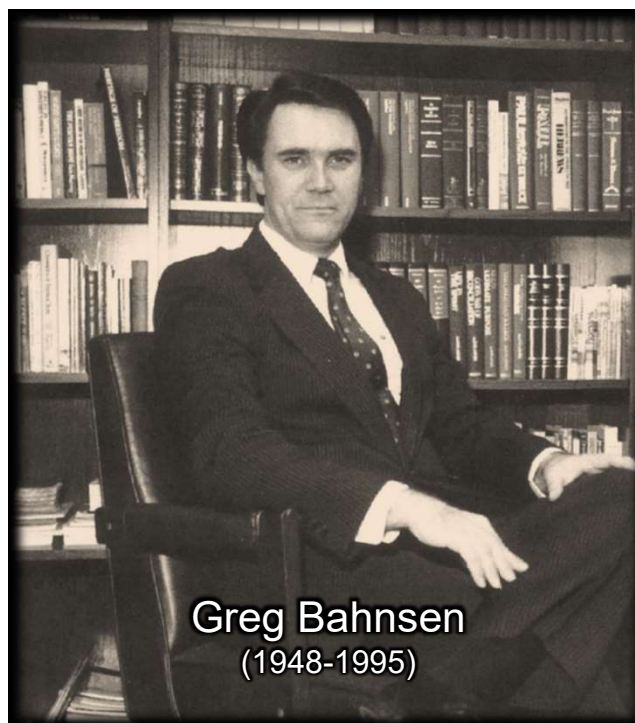
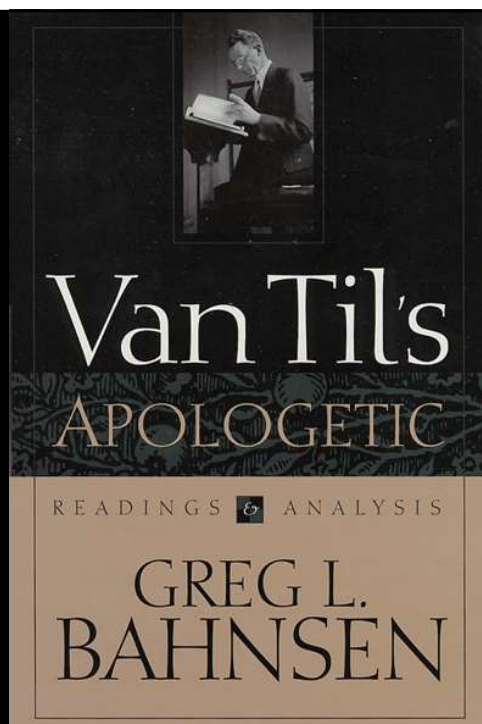
[*Why I Believe in God* (Philadelphia: Westminster Theological Seminary, n.d.), 9]

Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)





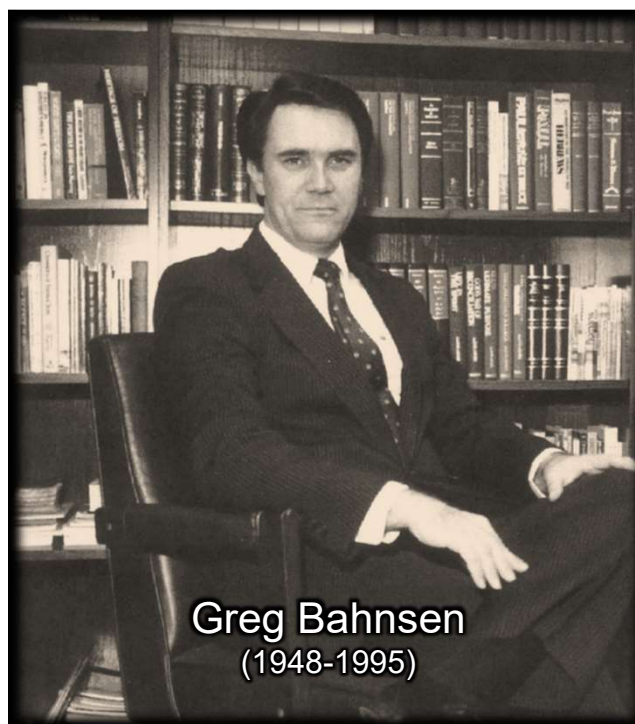
Greg Bahnsen
(1948-1995)



Greg Bahnsen
(1948-1995)

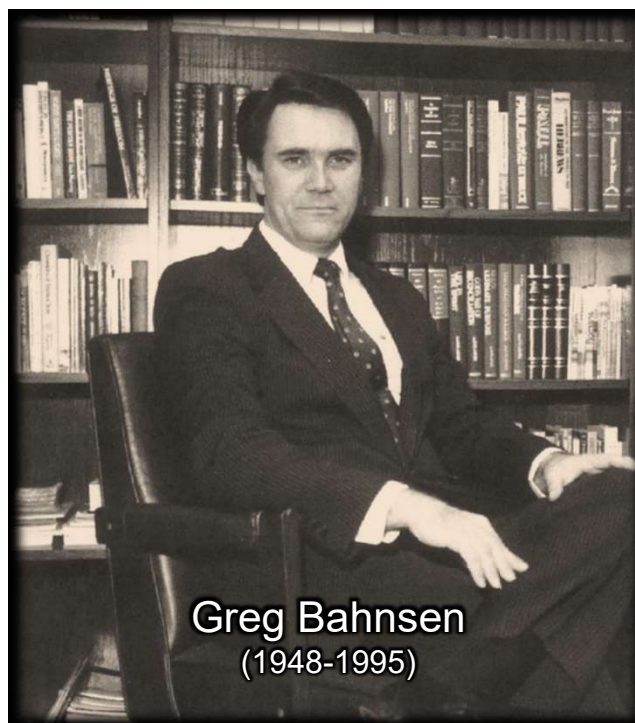
The traditional approach does not challenge the autonomy of the natural man's thinking, but naively assumes that his experience and understanding of causal relations is intelligible. If everything has a cause, it is argued, then he should admit that this world also has a cause—which can only be God."

[Van Til's Apologetic: Readings and Analysis
(Phillipsburg: P&R, 1998), 617, 618]



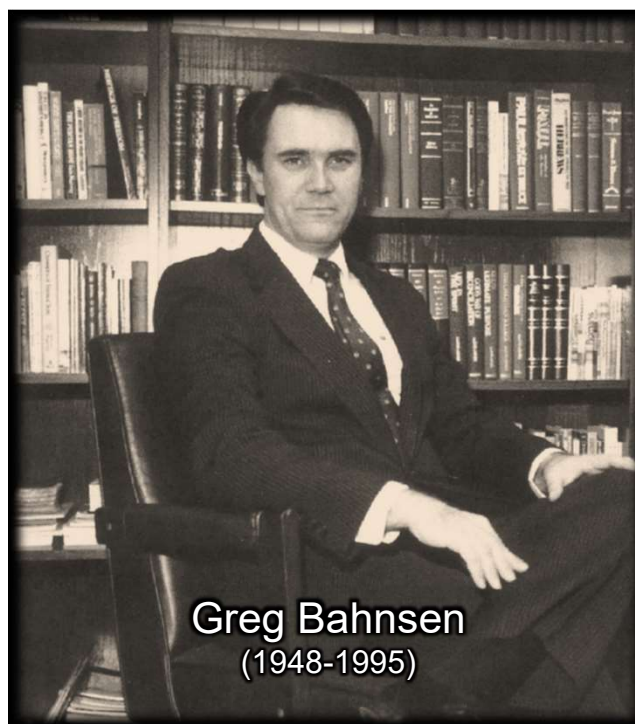
*The traditional approach does not challenge the autonomy of the natural man's thinking, but naively assumes that his experience and understanding of causal relations is intelligible. If **everything has a cause**, it is argued, then he should admit that this world also has a cause—which can only be God."*

[Van Til's *Apologetic: Readings and Analysis* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1998), 617, 618]

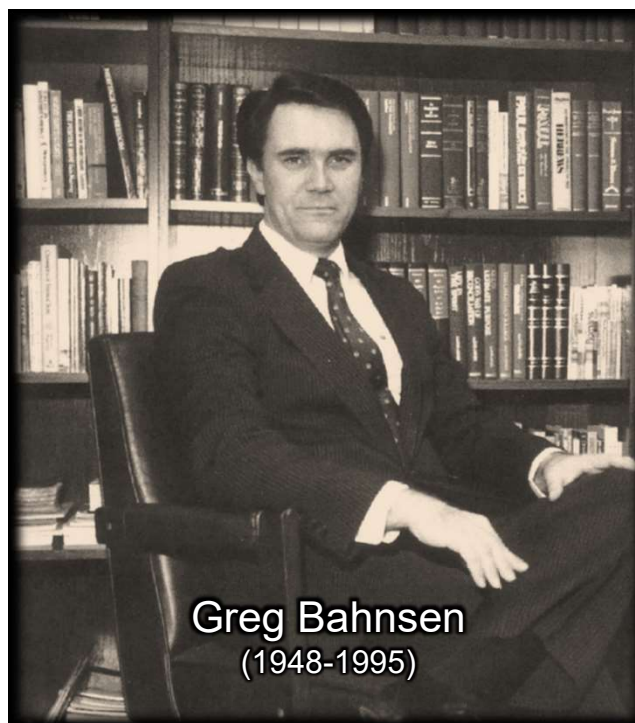


The traditional approach does not challenge the autonomy of the natural man's thinking, but naively assumes that his experience and understanding of causal relations is intelligible. If **everything has a cause**, it is argued, then he should admit that this world also has a cause—which can only be God."

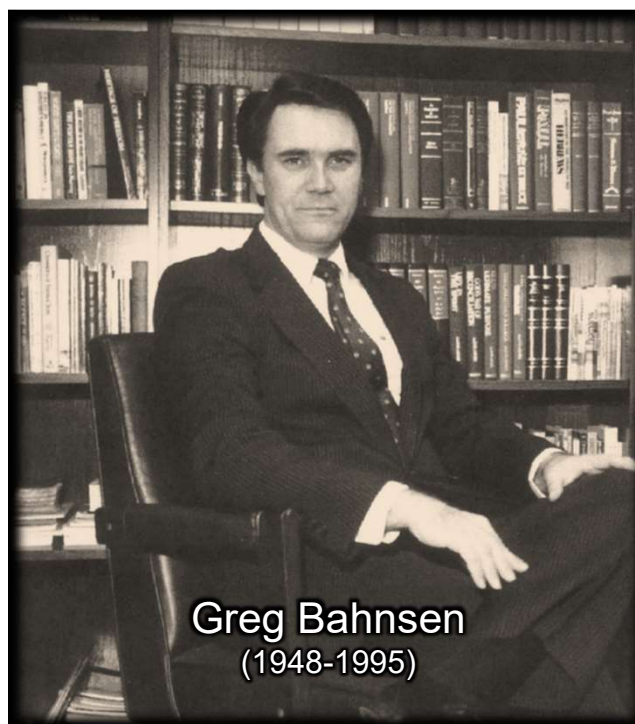
[Van Til's *Apologetic: Readings and Analysis* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1998), 617, 618]



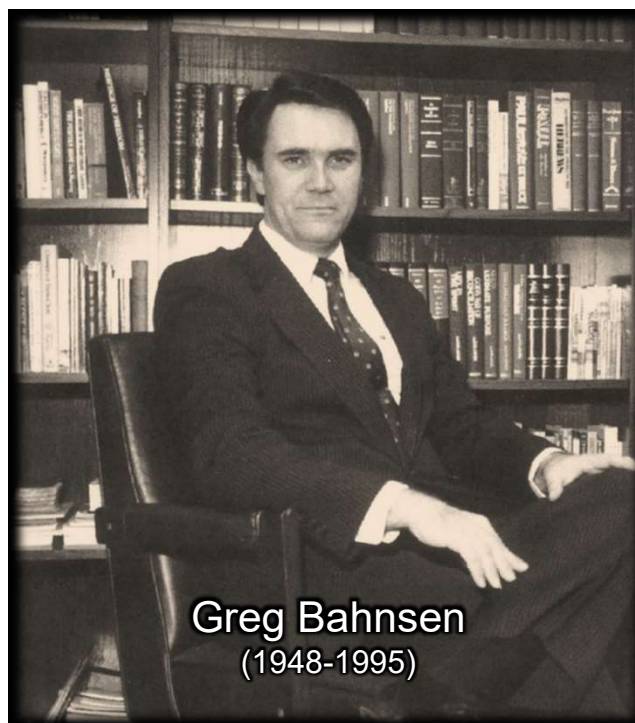
Traditional formulations of the cosmological proof for God's existence have always been, as autonomously conceived and interpreted, philosophically embarrassing.



How should we understand the fundamental premise in the cosmological argument, 'Everything has a cause' (or 'Every object has an origin,' or, better 'Every even has a cause')?



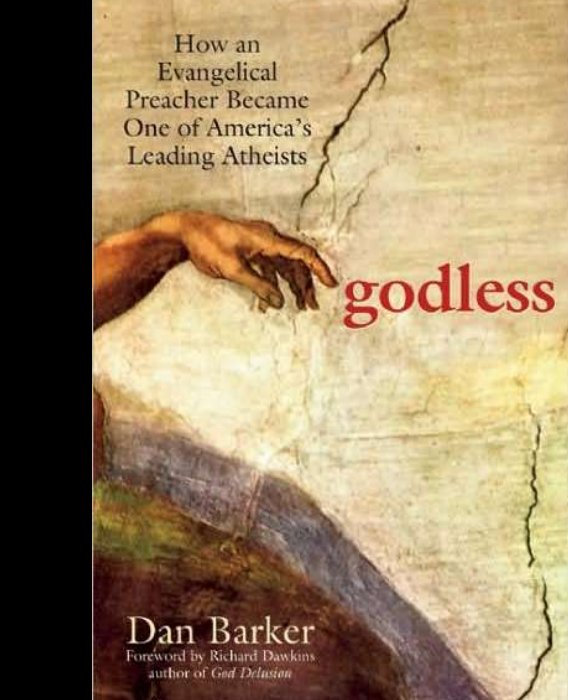
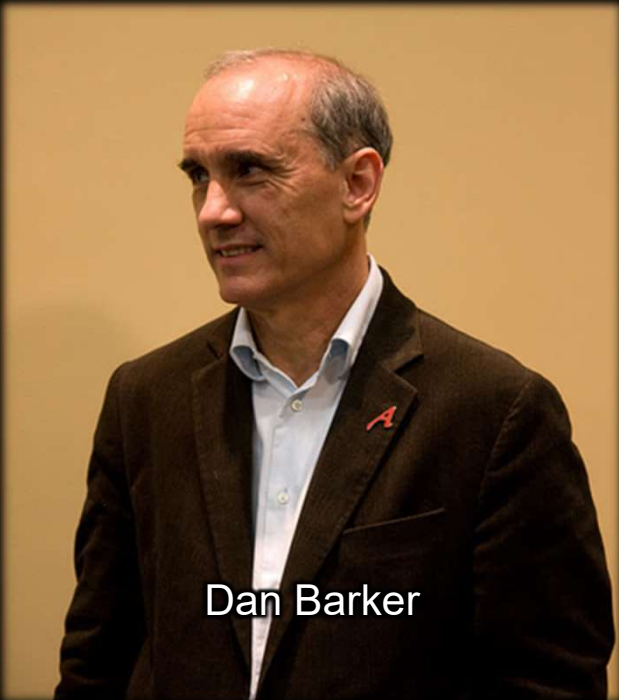
*How should we understand the fundamental premise in the cosmological argument, **'Everything has a cause'** (or 'Every object has an origin,' or, better 'Every even has a cause')?*



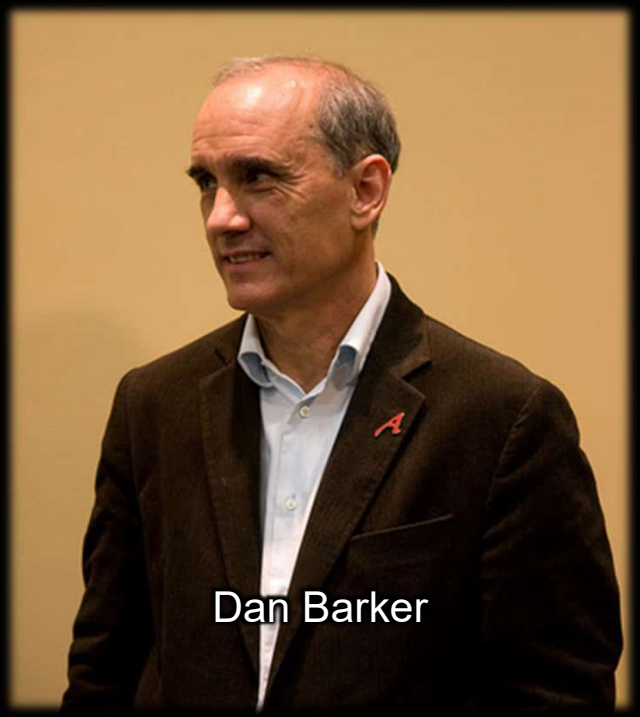
If this is taken as a universal metaphysical principle ... then the embarrassing conclusion reached by the apologist would be that God too has a cause or origin."

[Van Til's *Apologetic: Readings and Analysis* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1998), 617, 618]

 <p>Greg Bahnsen (1948-1995)</p>	<p>The traditional approach does not challenge the autonomy of the natural man's thinking, but naively assumes that his experience and understanding of causal relations is intelligible. If everything has a cause, it is argued, then he should admit that this world also has a cause—which can only be God."</p> <p><small>[Van Til's Apologetic: Readings and Analysis (Phillipsburg: R&R, 1998), 617-618]</small></p>	 <p>Greg Bahnsen (1948-1995)</p>	<p>Traditional formulations of the cosmological proof for God's existence have always been, as autonomously conceived and interpreted, philosophically embarrassing.</p>
 <p>Greg Bahnsen (1948-1995)</p>	<p>The traditional approach does not challenge the autonomy of the natural man's thinking, but naively assumes that his experience and understanding of causal relations is intelligible. If everything has a cause, it is argued, then he should admit that this world also has a cause—which can only be God."</p> <p><small>[Van Til's Apologetic: Readings and Analysis (Phillipsburg: R&R, 1998), 617-618]</small></p>	 <p>Greg Bahnsen (1948-1995)</p>	<p>How should we understand the fundamental premise in the cosmological argument, 'Everything has a cause' (or 'Every object has an origin,' or, better 'Every even has a cause')?</p>

 <p>How an Evangelical Preacher Became One of America's Leading Atheists</p> <p>godless</p> <p>Dan Barker Foreword by Richard Dawkins author of <i>God Delusion</i></p>	 <p>Dan Barker</p>
---	--

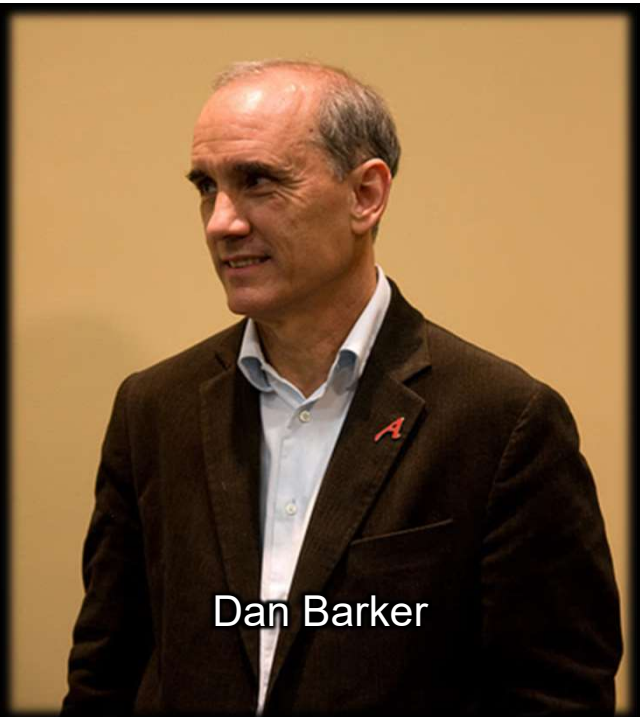
"Everything had a cause, and every cause is the effect of a previous cause. Something must have started it all. God ... is the eternal first cause ... the creator and sustainer of the universe.



Dan Barker

"The major premise of this argument 'everything had a cause,' is contradicted by the conclusion that 'God did not have a cause.' You can't have it both ways. If everything had to have a cause, then there could not be a first cause."

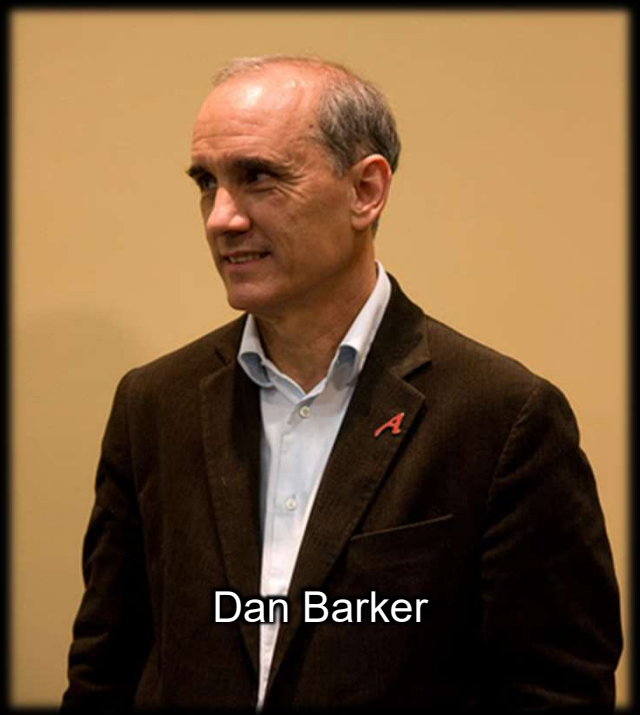
[Dan Barker, *Godless: How an Evangelical Preacher Became One of America's Leading Atheists* (Berkeley: Ulysses Press, 2008), 113-114]



Dan Barker

"The major premise of this argument 'everything had a cause,' is contradicted by the conclusion that 'God did not have a cause.' You can't have it both ways. If everything had to have a cause, then there could not be a first cause."

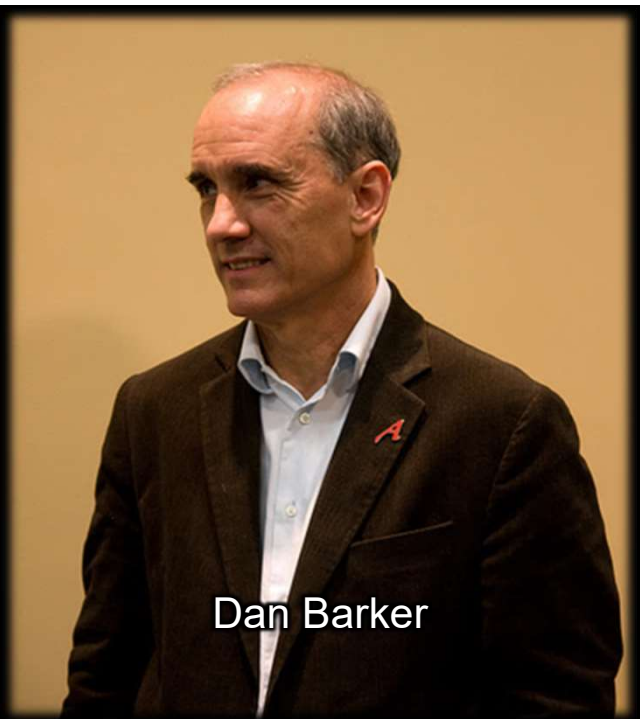
[Dan Barker, *Godless: How an Evangelical Preacher Became One of America's Leading Atheists* (Berkeley: Ulysses Press, 2008), 113-114]



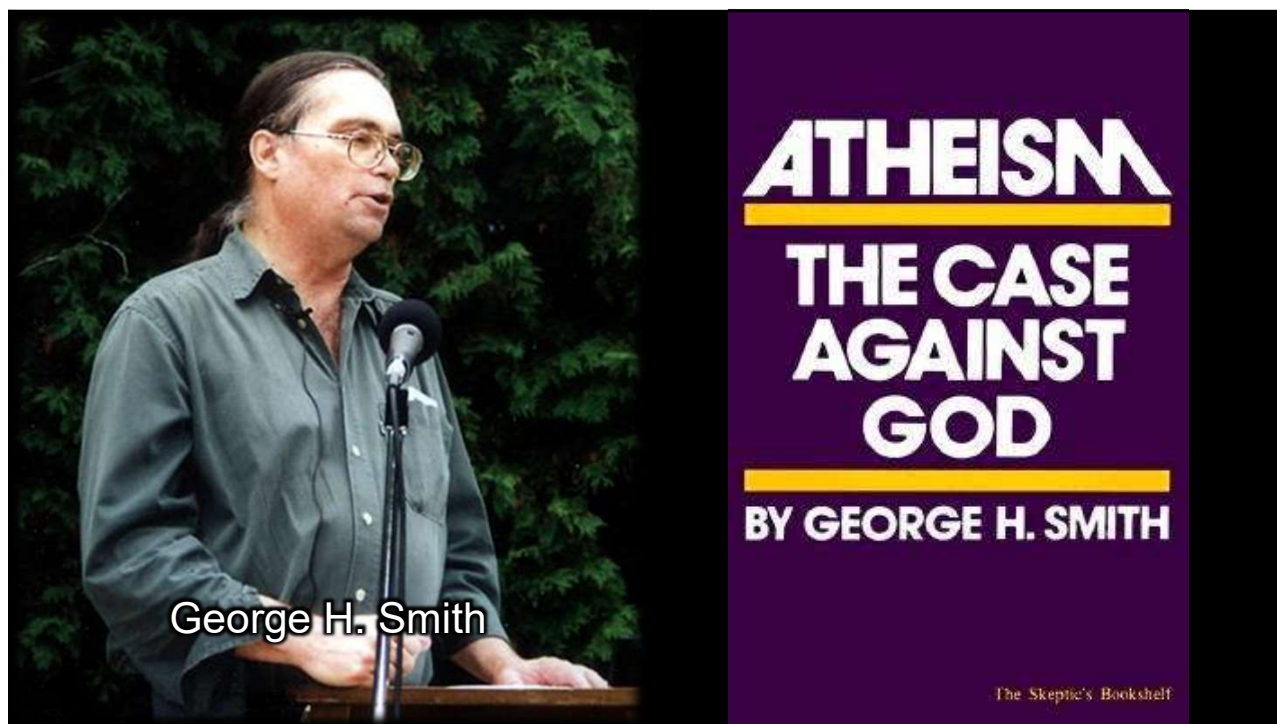
Dan Barker

"The major premise of this argument 'everything had a cause,' is contradicted by the conclusion that 'God did not have a cause.' You can't have it both ways. If everything had to have a cause, then there could not be a first cause."

[Dan Barker, *Godless: How an Evangelical Preacher Became One of America's Leading Atheists* (Berkeley: Ulysses Press, 2008), 113-114]



Dan Barker



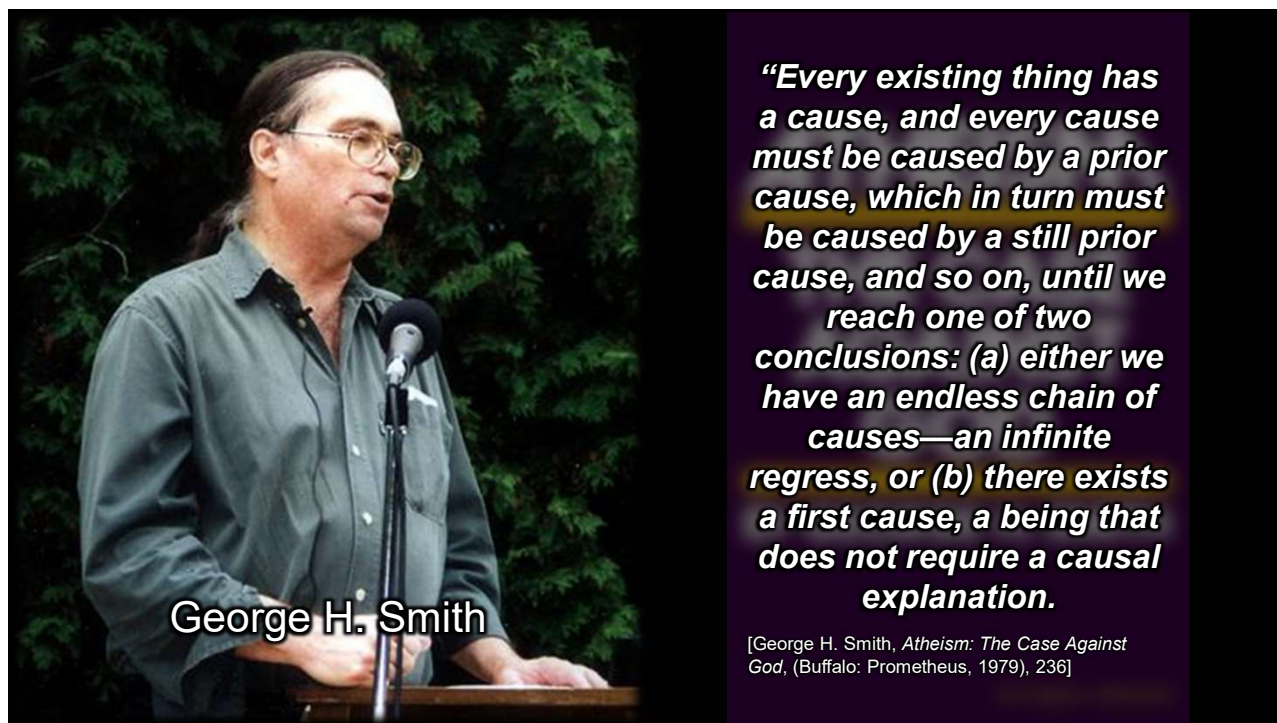
George H. Smith

ATHEISM

THE CASE AGAINST GOD

BY GEORGE H. SMITH

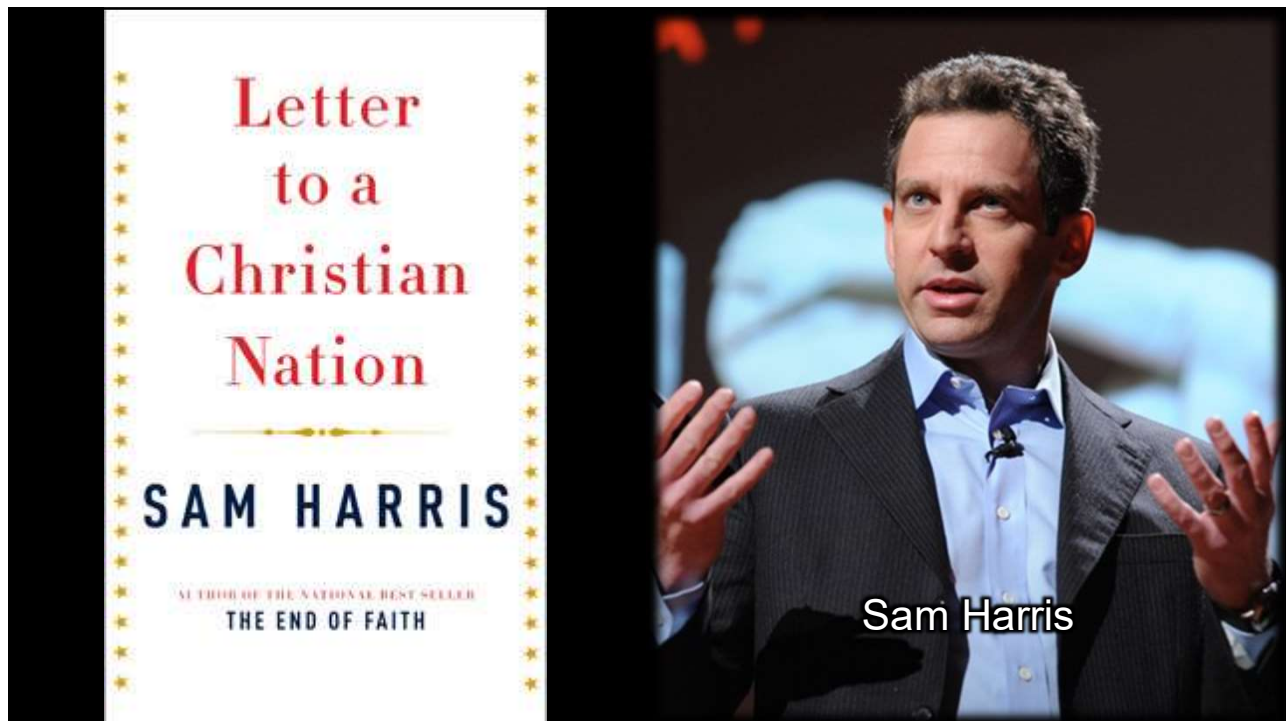
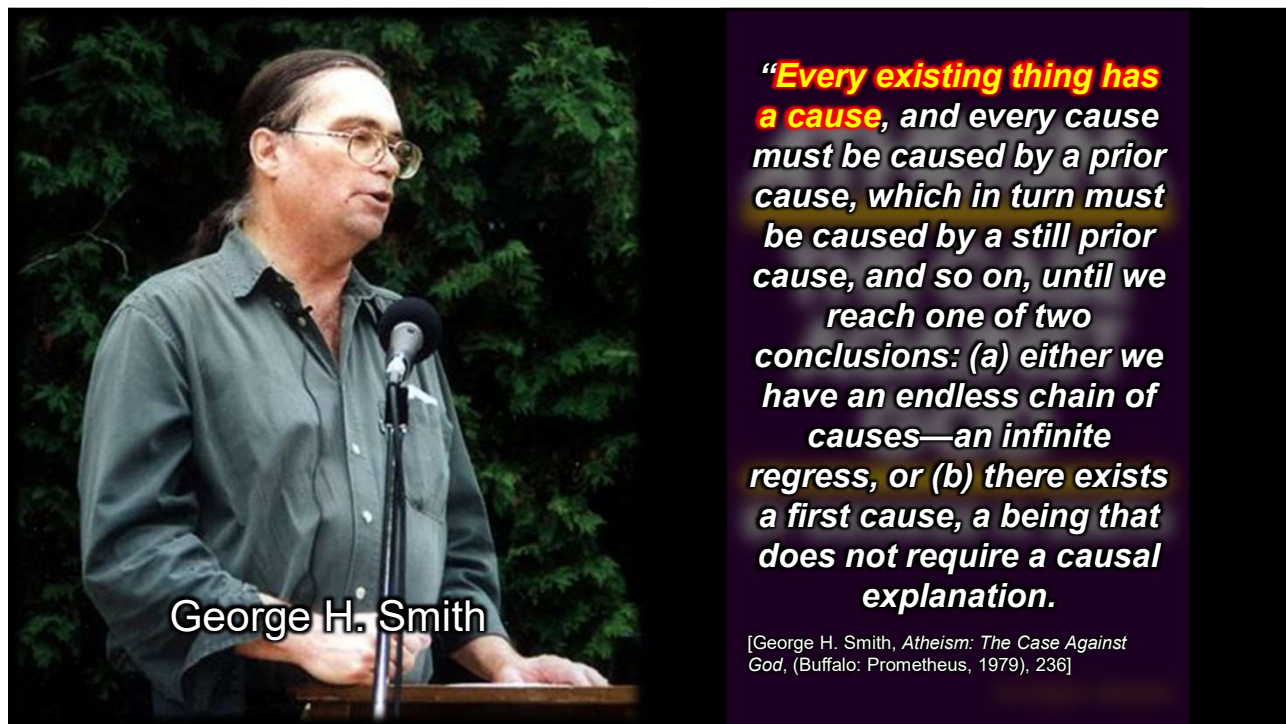
The Skeptic's Bookshelf



George H. Smith

"Every existing thing has a cause, and every cause must be caused by a prior cause, which in turn must be caused by a still prior cause, and so on, until we reach one of two conclusions: (a) either we have an endless chain of causes—an infinite regress, or (b) there exists a first cause, a being that does not require a causal explanation."

[George H. Smith, *Atheism: The Case Against God*, (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1979), 236]



"Everything that exists has a cause; space and time exist; space and time must, therefore, have been caused by something that stands outside of space and time, and the only thing that transcends space and time, and yet retains the power to create, is God."

[Sam Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 72]



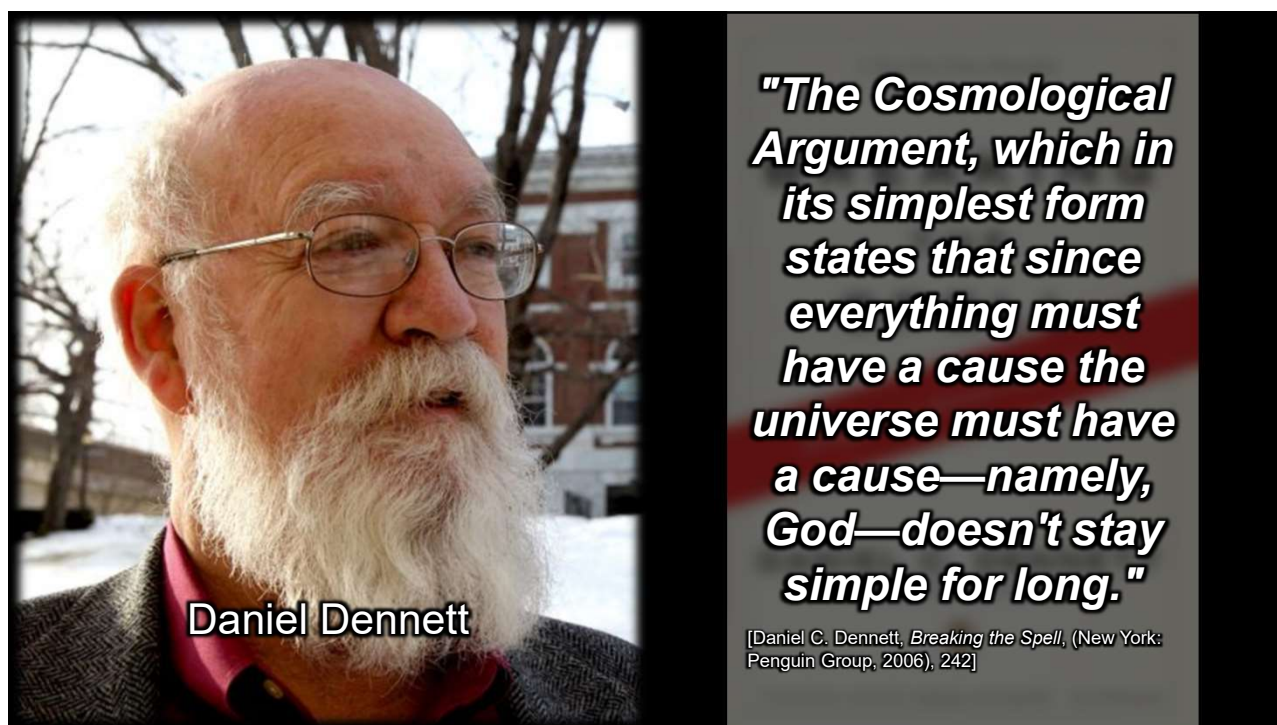
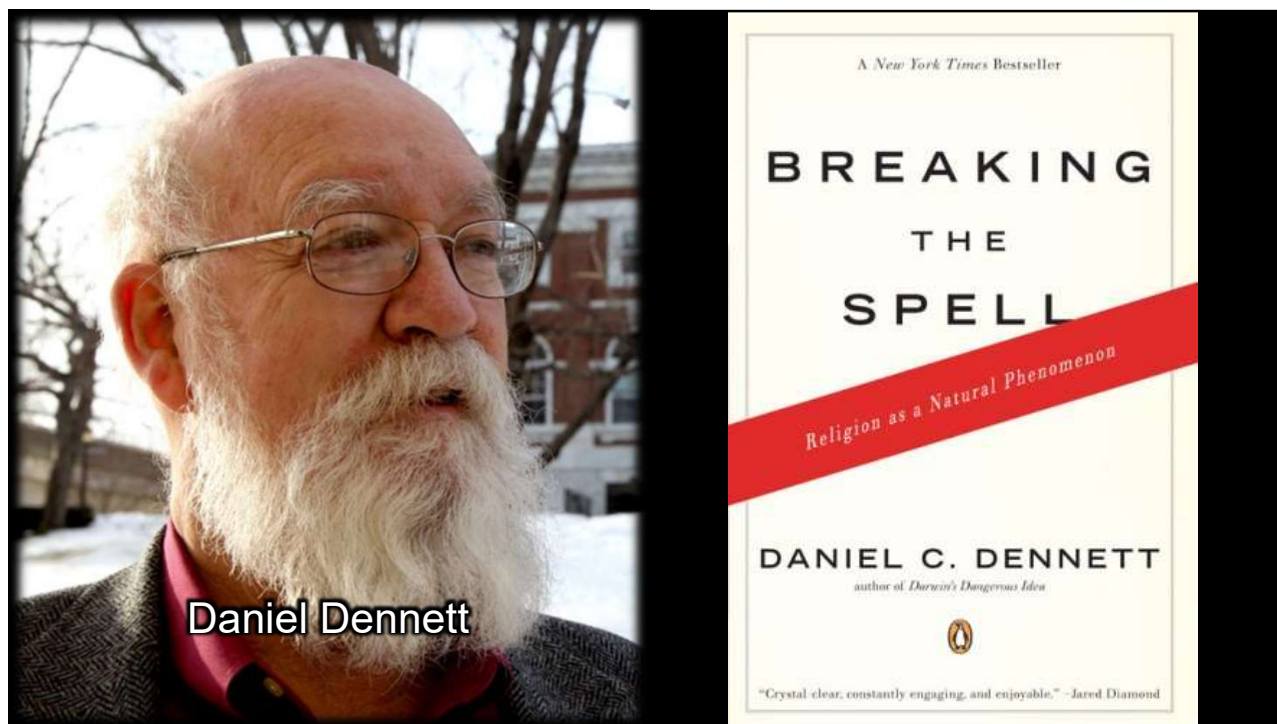
Sam Harris

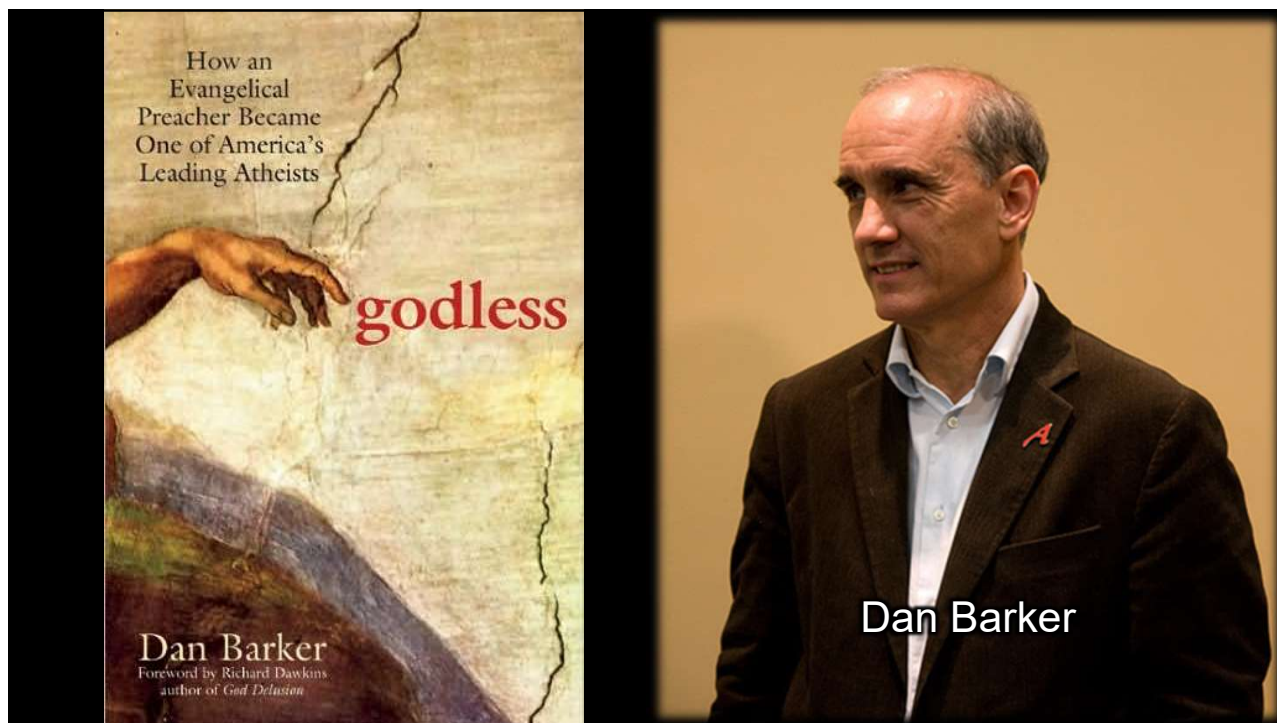
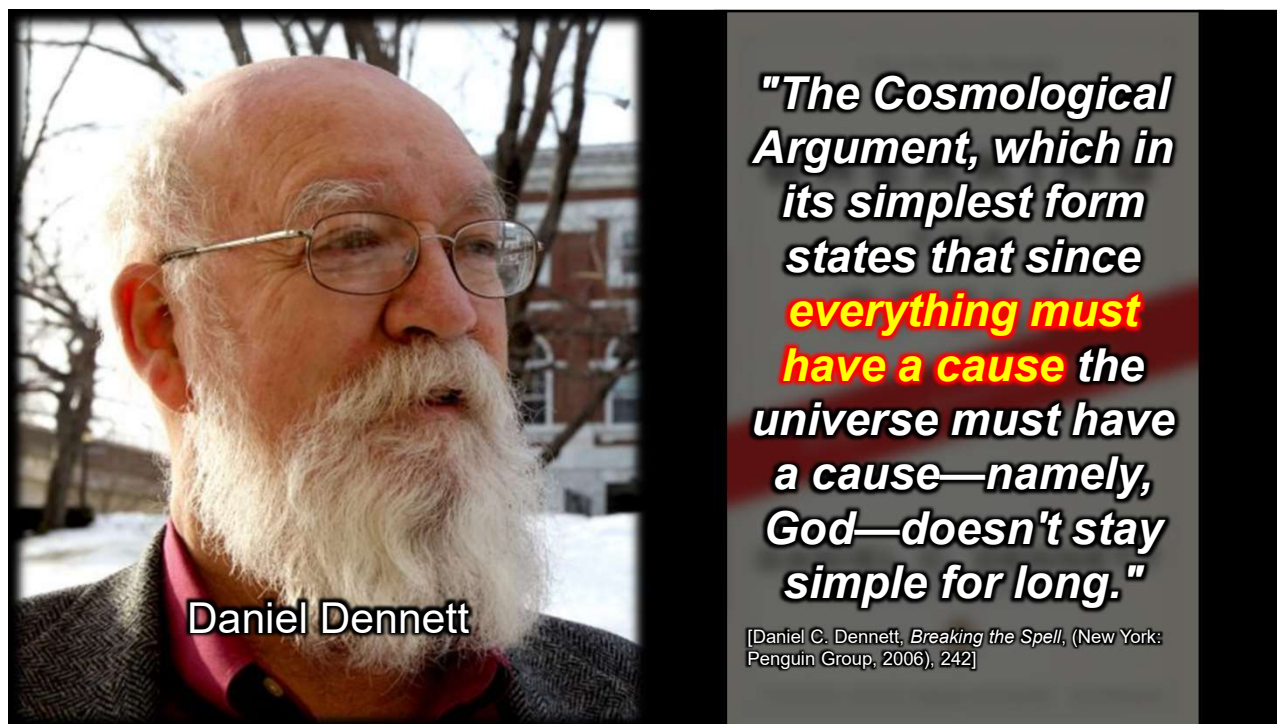
"Everything that exists has a cause; space and time exist; space and time must, therefore, have been caused by something that stands outside of space and time, and the only thing that transcends space and time, and yet retains the power to create, is God."

[Sam Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 72]



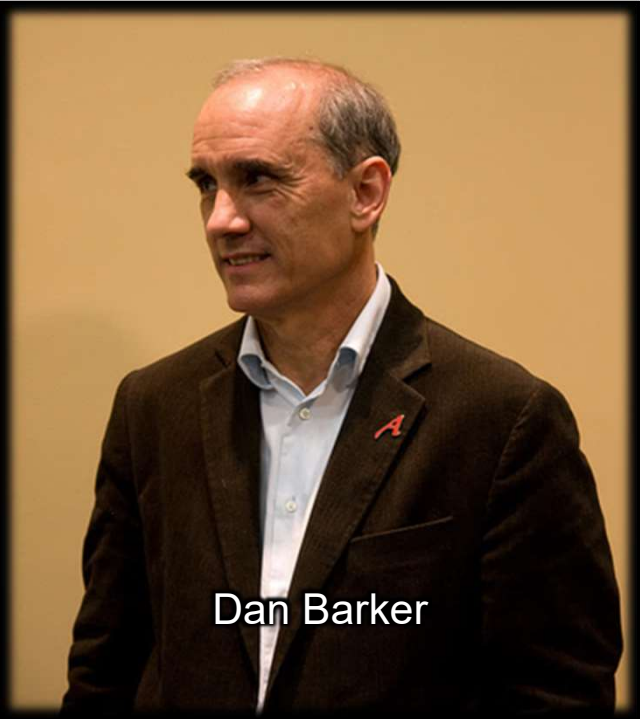
Sam Harris





*"The old cosmological argument claimed that since **everything has a cause**, there must be a first cause, an 'unmoved first mover.' Today no theistic philosophers defend that primitive line because if everything needs a cause, so does God."*

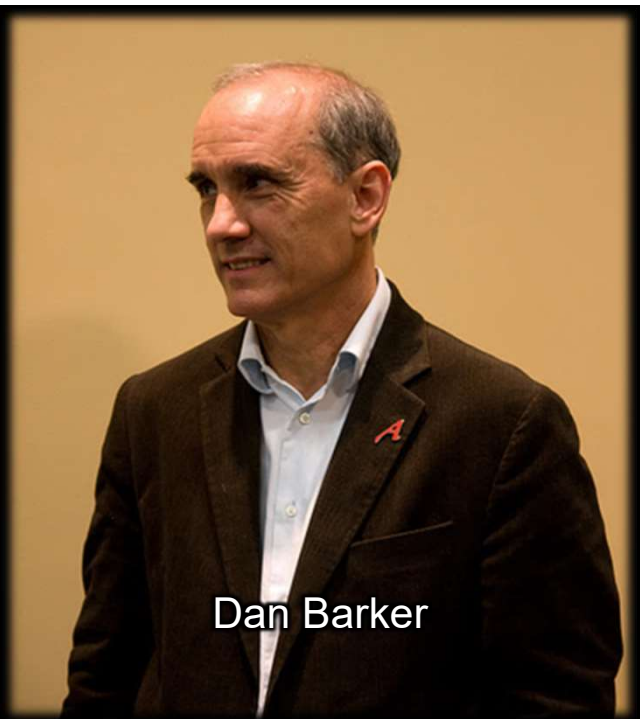
[Dan Barker, *Godless*, 130]



Dan Barker

*"The old cosmological argument claimed that since **everything has a cause**, there must be a first cause, an 'unmoved first mover.' Today no theistic philosophers defend that primitive line because if everything needs a cause, so does God."*

[Dan Barker, *Godless*, 130]



Dan Barker

