

Colossians 2:8

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

The Apostle Paul



Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time

Since 1969

[LISTEN NOW](#)

[0](#)
[800-55-GRACE](#)
[letters@gty.org](#)
[Log In](#)

[ABOUT](#)
[BROADCASTS](#)
[RESOURCES](#)
[STORE](#)
[APPS](#)
[BLOG](#)
[DEVOTIONALS](#)
[SERMONS](#)
[DONATE](#)
[SEARCH](#)

Philosophy or Christ?

[Sermons](#) |
 [Colossians 2:8-10](#) |
 [2141](#) |
 [Jul 11, 1976](#)

PLAY AUDIO

ADD TO PLAYLIST

A+

A-

RESET

Tonight, we're going to look at Colossians chapter 2, verses 8-10 in our study. Colossians chapter 2, verses 8-10. Really this is just the first part of a look at verses 8-15, which should be taken as a composite. You might title our discussion tonight, our study tonight, Philosophy or Christ, because really that's what Paul is dealing with in this passage. The word philosophy which appears in verse 8, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy" the word philosophy is from two Greek words phileo and sophia. Phileo means to love and sophia

MP3 (HIGH QUALITY)

MP3 (LOW QUALITY)

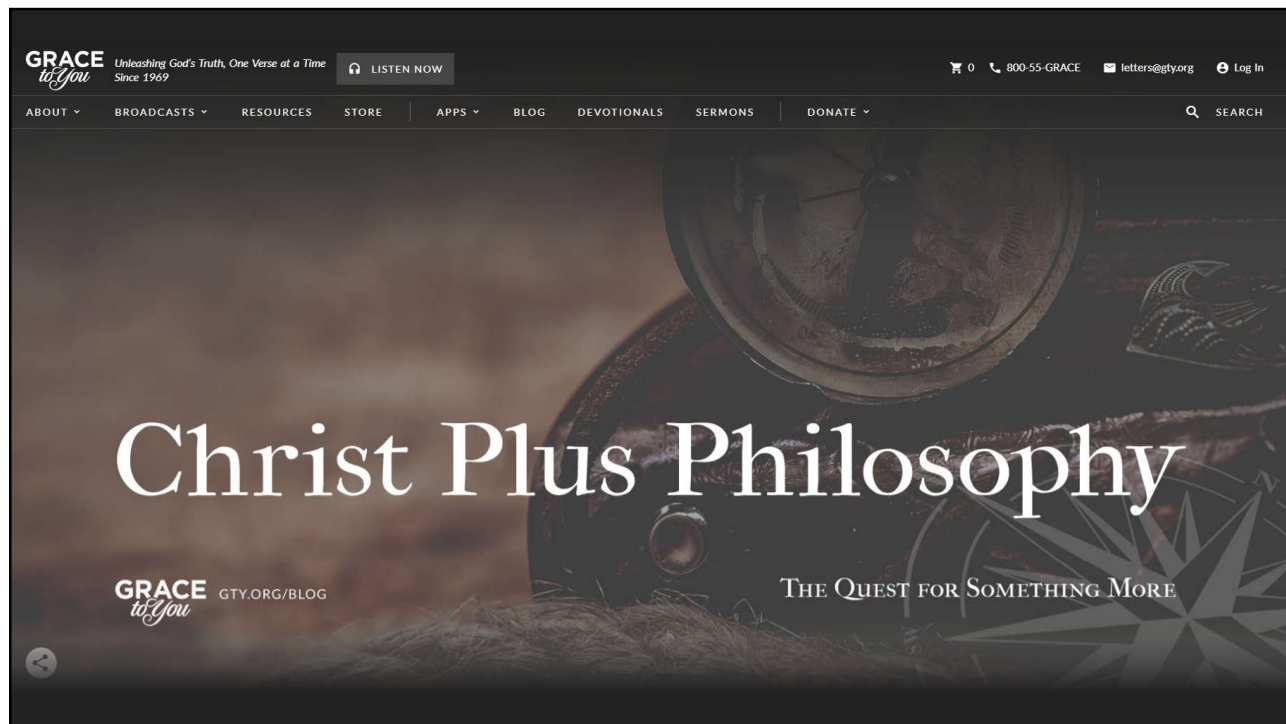
BUY CD

PRINT TRANSCRIPT

TRANSCRIPT PDF

Related Series:

Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time



Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time
Since 1969

LISTEN NOW

0
800-55-GRACE
letters@gty.org
Log In

ABOUT
BROADCASTS
RESOURCES
STORE
APPS
BLOG
DEVOTIONALS
SERMONS
DONATE
SEARCH

Christ Plus Philosophy

by John MacArthur | Wednesday, April 10, 2019

“It seemed like a good idea at the time.” That’s a popular postmortem for a plan that has gone horribly wrong. In fact, well-intentioned ideas are behind almost every financial shipwreck, abandoned project, and foreign policy failure that happens in this world. And yet the quest for better ideas and fool-proof philosophies continues unabated—even making incursions into the church.

Our English word “philosophy” is a transliteration of the Greek word *philosophia*, which literally means “the love of human wisdom.” In its broad sense it is man’s attempt to explain the nature of the universe, including the phenomena of existence, thought, ethics, behavior, aesthetics, and so on.

In Paul’s time “everything that had to do with theories about God and the world and the meaning of human life was called ‘philosophy’ . . . not only in the pagan schools but also in the Jewish schools of the Greek cities.” [1] The first-century Jewish historian Josephus adds that there were three philosophies among the Jews: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. [2]

Comments (11)

A+
A-
RESET

PRINT
PDF
SUBSCRIBE
VIEW ARCHIVE

Blog Guidelines

Respectful

We value your comments, even your disagreements, as long as you are courteous and respectful. We’ll remove anything unwholesome.

Helpful

We appreciate comments that are on topic and contribute to the discussion; expressing appreciation is also welcome.





Evangelical Philosophical Society

Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel


Nov. 15-17, 2022

"Saving Natural Theology from Jeffrey Johnson"

Richard G. Howe, Ph.D.

Tues. Nov. 15, 2022 @ 4:30 PM

Evangelical Philosophical Society B2
Tower Building - Mezzanine Level Gold



VOLUME 17 / Spring 2023

SES | **CHRISTIAN**
Apologetics Journal

Providing a forum for scholarly articles contributing to the defense
of the historic Christian Faith

In this Issue
A Critique of N. T. Wright's *Critical Realism*
An Analysis of Søren Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*
God is a Precondition for Objective Knowledge
An Augustinian Defense of an Eternal Hell
Craig G. Bartholomew "Theology, Philosophy, and Biblical Interpretation" A Review Article
Book Reviews

Copyright © 2023 by Southern Evangelical Seminary ISSN 1936-9074

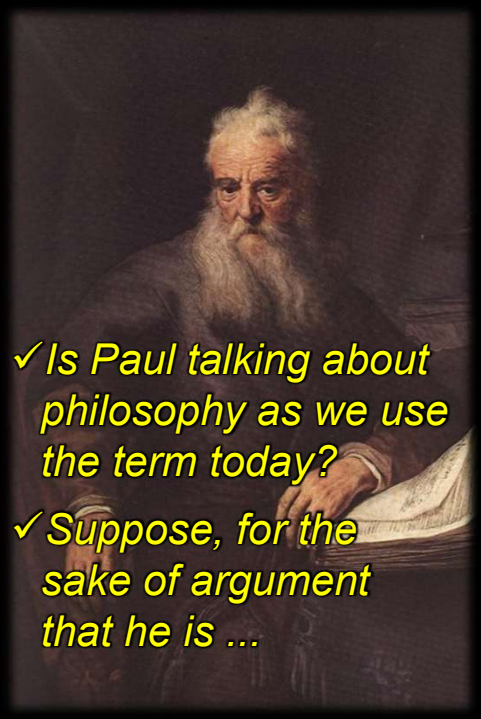
✧ Colossians 2:8 ✧

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

The Apostle Paul

✓ *Is Paul talking about philosophy as we use the term today?*

✓ *Suppose, for the sake of argument that he is ...*



"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

The Apostle Paul
Epistle to the Colossians



"Beware lest anyone
cheat you through
philosophy and empty
deceit, according to the
tradition of men,
according to the basic
principles of the world,
and not according to
Christ."

The Apostle Paul
Epistle to the Colossians

✓ *Though infectious diseases are not to be trifled with, we are grateful that physicians learn about them in order to help us avoid getting sick or to help us get cured.*

"Beware lest anyone
cheat you through
philosophy and empty
deceit, according to the
tradition of men,
according to the basic
principles of the world,
and not according to
Christ."

The Apostle Paul
Epistle to the Colossians

✓ *By analogy, even if Paul was warning us to avoid philosophy, we can be grateful that Christian philosophers learn about philosophy in order to help us avoid getting "sick" or to help us get "cured."*

"Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered."

[*"Learning in War-Time"* in *The Weight of Glory: A Collection of Lewis's Most Moving Addresses* (London: Harper Collins, 2013), 59]

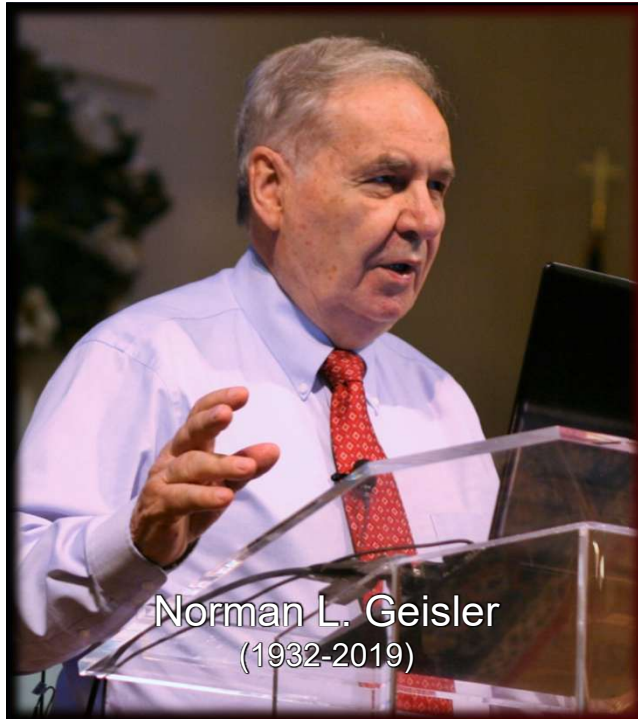
C. S. Lewis
(1898-1963)

"But seeing that a teacher of sacred Scripture must at times oppose the philosophers, it is necessary for him to make use of philosophy."

[Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, Q. 2, art. 3.6, published as *Faith, Reason and Theology: Questions I-IV of His Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, trans. Armand Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1987), p. 48]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)




"We cannot properly **beware of philosophy unless we **be aware** of philosophy."**

Norman L. Geisler
(1932-2019)

[Norman L. Geisler, "Beware of Philosophy: A Warning to Biblical Scholars," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42/1 (March 1999): 3-19 (18)]

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

The Apostle Paul
Epistle to the Colossians



**"Beware lest anyone
cheat you through
philosophy and empty
deceit, according to the
tradition of men,
according to the basic
principles of the world,
and not according to
Christ."**

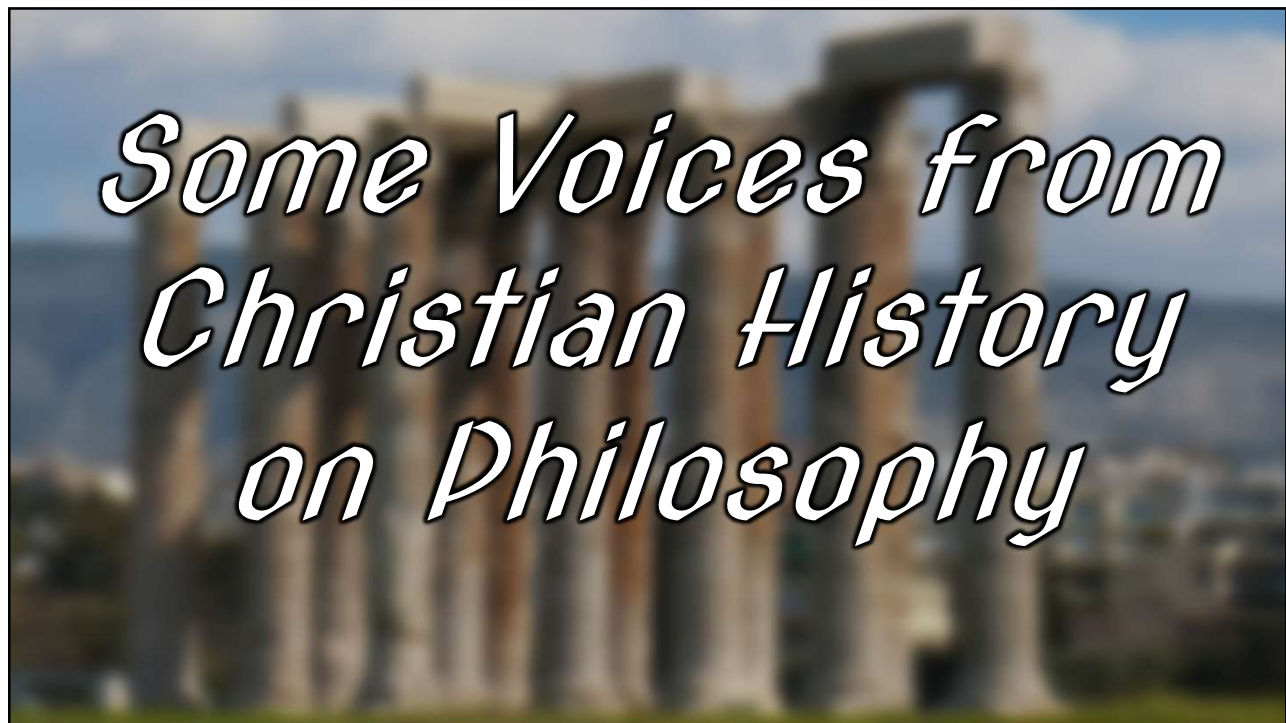
The Apostle Paul
Epistle to the Colossians

✓ *I do not believe that Paul had philosophy in mind as we use the term today.*

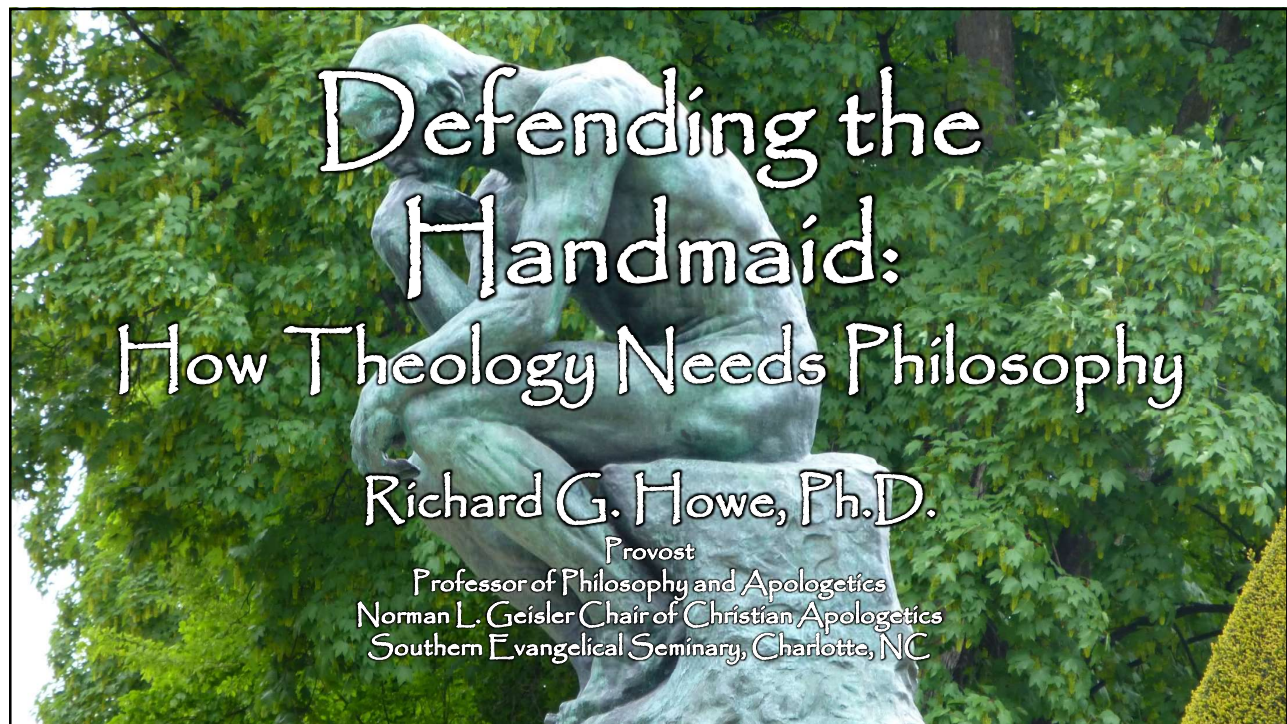
**"Beware lest anyone
cheat you through
philosophy and empty
deceit, according to the
tradition of men,
according to the basic
principles of the world,
and not according to
Christ."**

The Apostle Paul
Epistle to the Colossians

- ❑ *Another way to translate the Greek could be "the philosophy which is empty deceit."*
- ❑ *Josephus used the term 'philosophy' to refer to the doctrines of the Jewish sects.*
- ❑ *The context is a warning about an insidious legalism that threatened the Colossians' liberty in Christ.*
- ❑ *This legalism had an outward form of piety but was useless in developing an inward character of righteousness.*

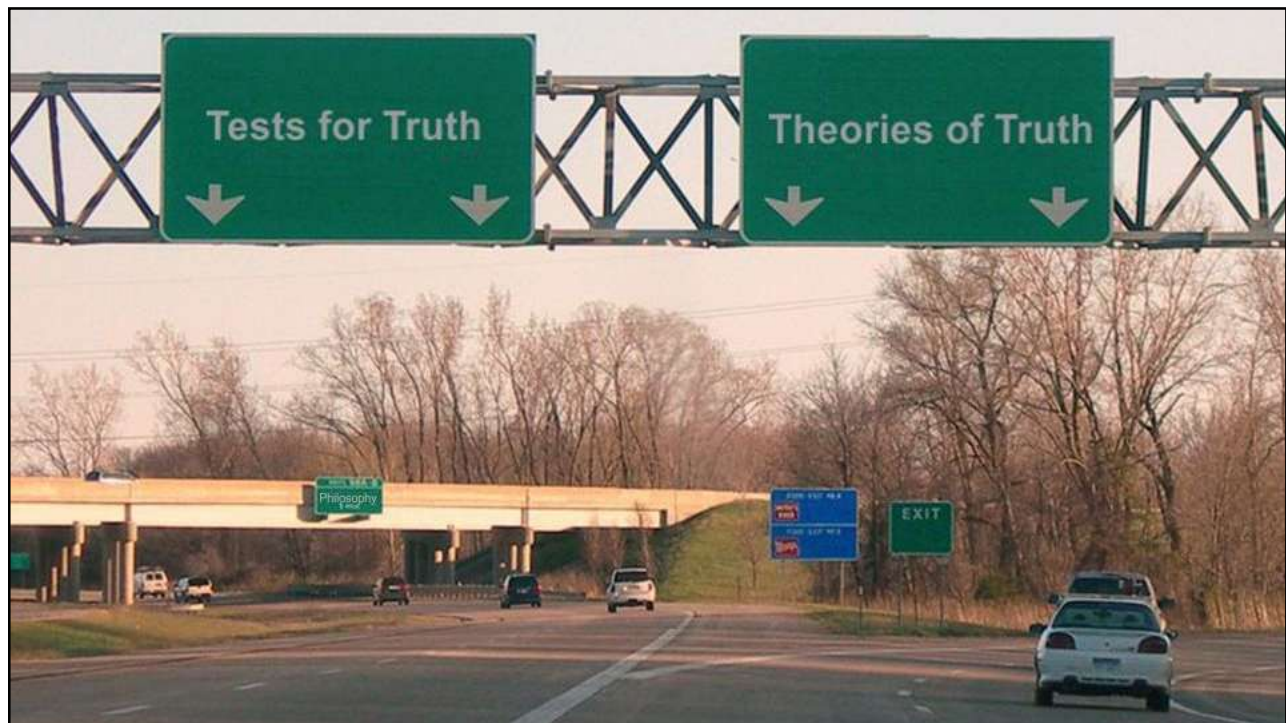
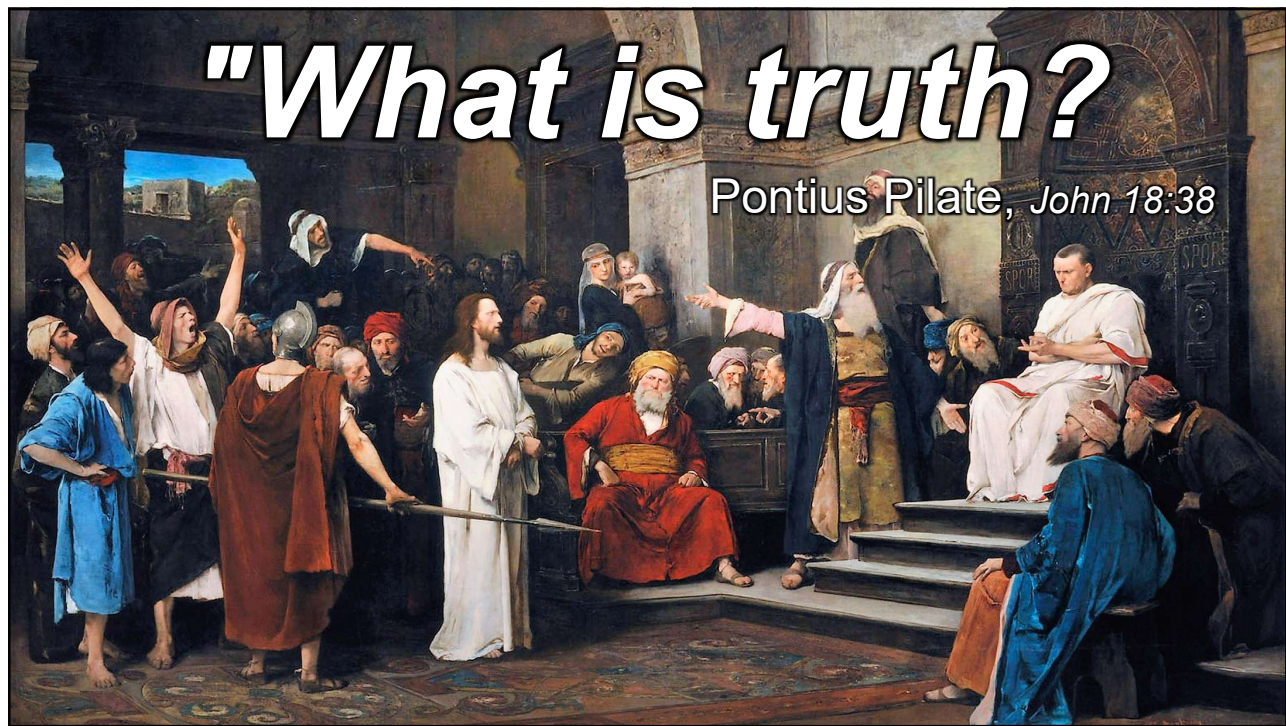


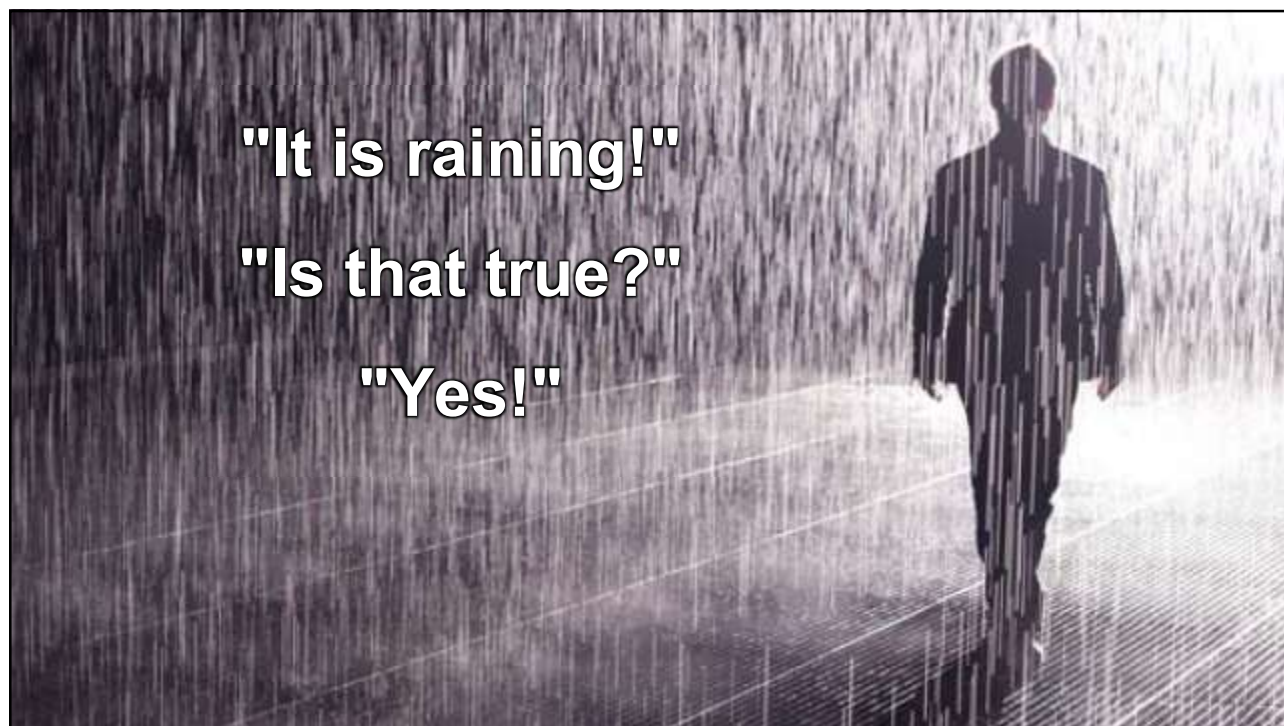




**Theology is the Queen
of the sciences and
philosophy is her
handmaid.**



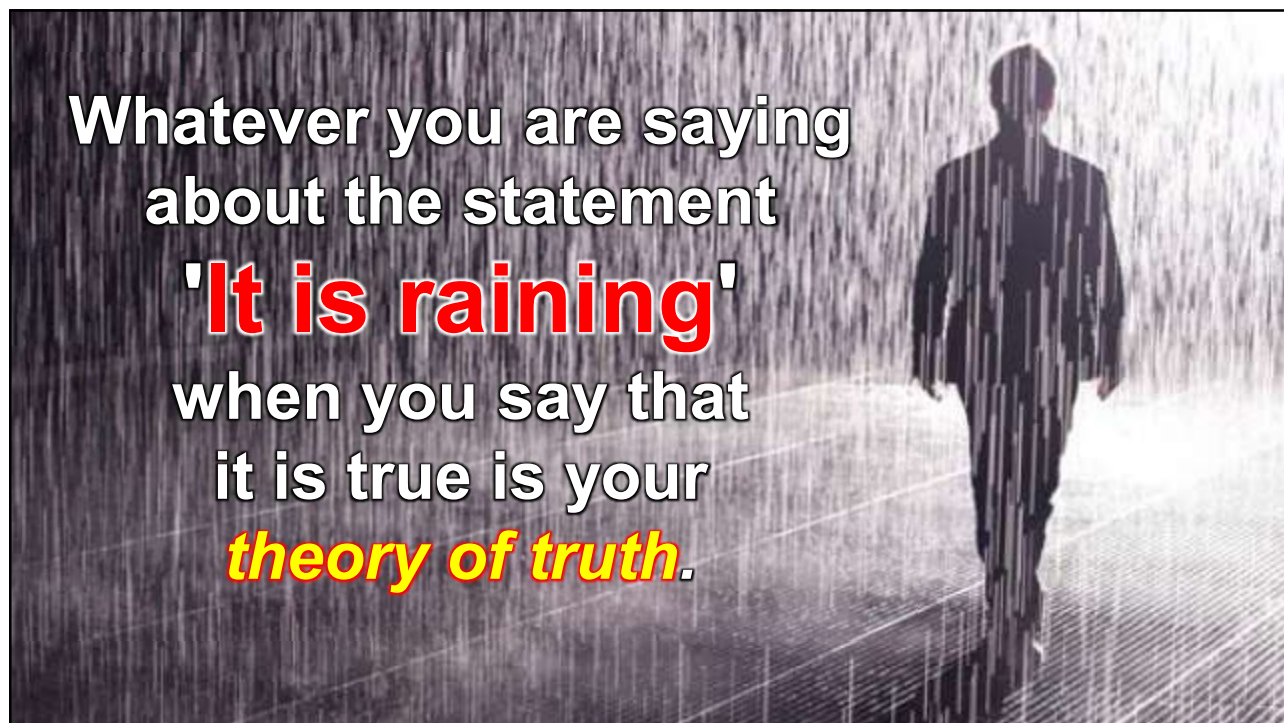




"It is raining!"

"Is that true?"

"Yes!"



Whatever you are saying
about the statement

'It is raining'

when you say that
it is true is your

theory of truth.

How you know whether it
is raining is your
test for truth.

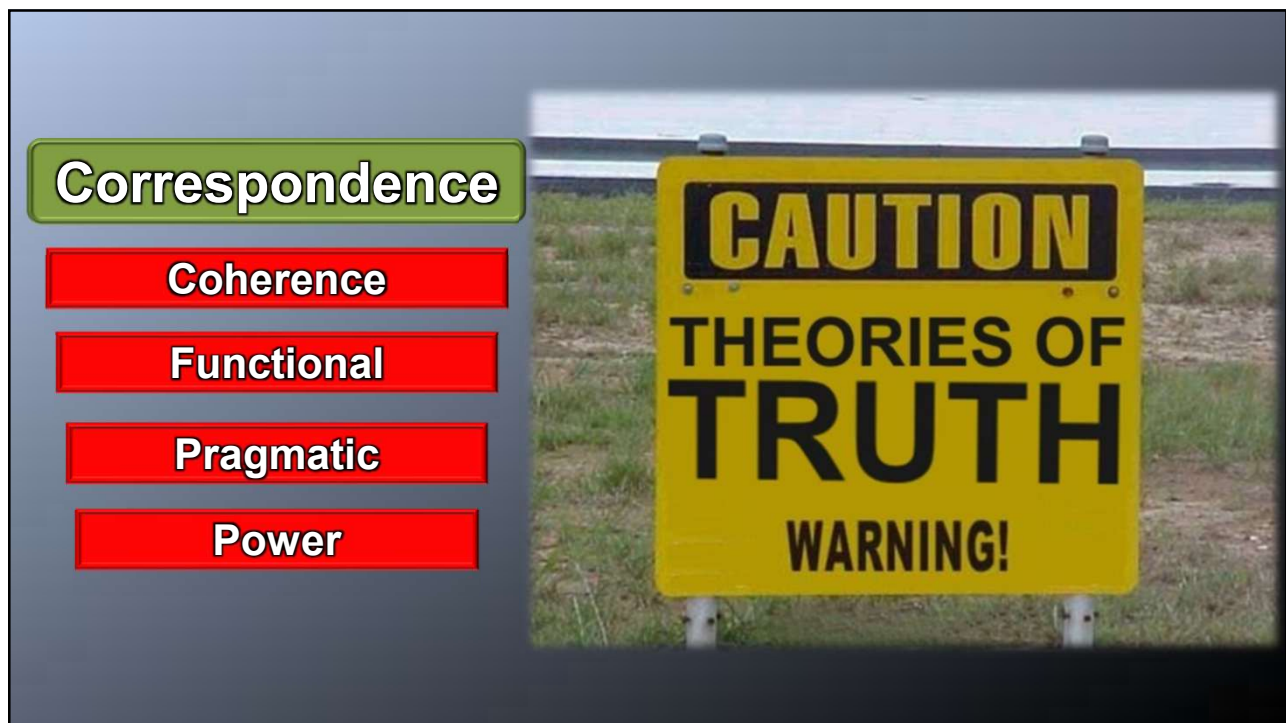


∞ Theory of Truth ∞

*how one **defines** the
terms 'true' and 'truth'
when saying that a
statement is true*

∞ Test for Truth ∞

*how one **discovers**
whether a statement is
true, regardless of
one's theory of truth*



Correspondence



Correspondence

Truth is correspondence to reality.

- This says that a statement is true in as much as it corresponds to reality.
- Thus, the statement 'It is raining.'

'It is raining'

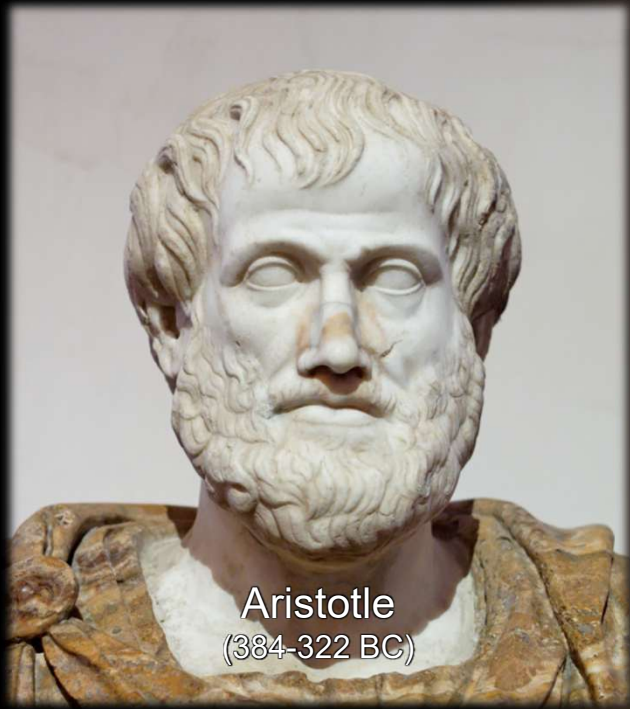
would be a true
statement if it is in
fact raining
in reality.



'It is raining'

would be a false
statement if it is in
fact not raining
in reality.





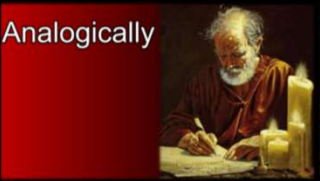








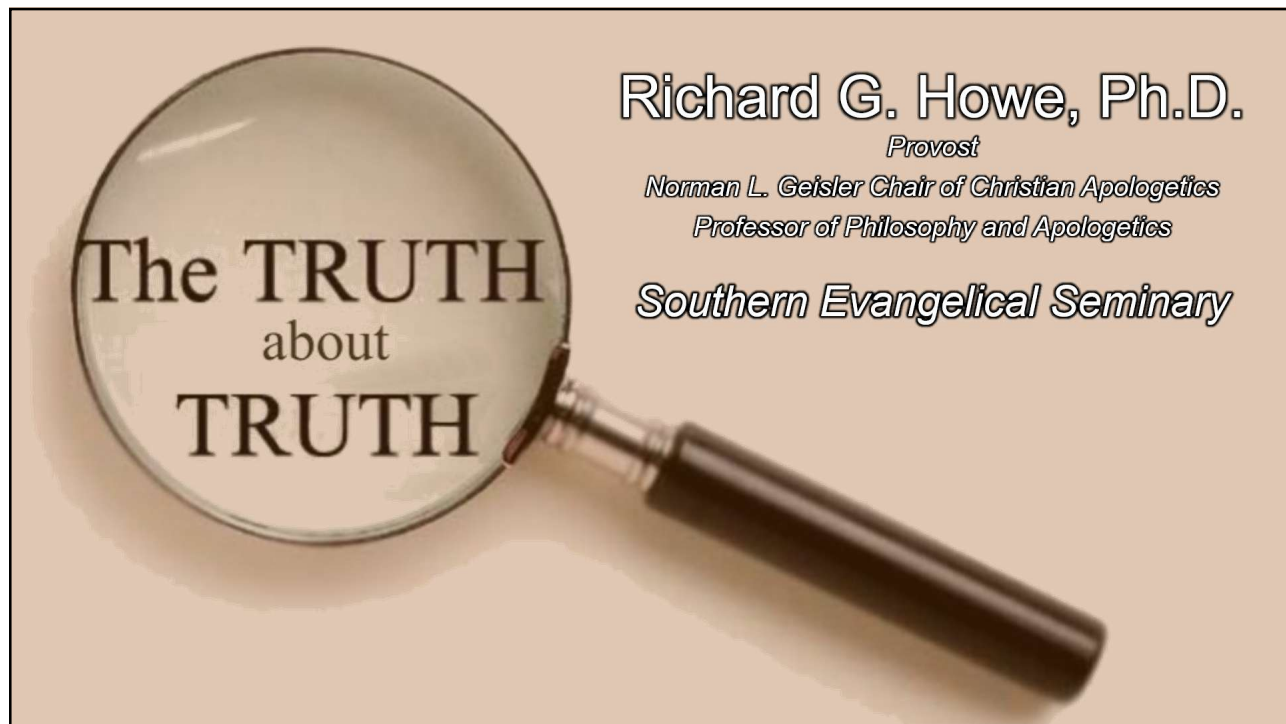


Aristotle
(384-322 BC)

***"To say of what is,
that it is not, or of
what is not, that it is,
is false, while to say
of what is, that it is
and of what is not,
that it is not, is true."***

Metaphysics, IV, 7, 1011^b26-29 Translation by W. D. Ross in Richard McKeon, *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House, 1941). τὸ μὲν γὰρ λέγειν τὸ ὄν μὴ εἶναι ἢ τὸ μὴ ὄν εἶναι ψεῦδος, τὸ δὲ τὸ ὄν εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν μὴ εἶναι ἀληθές.

 Literally	 Allegorically	 Metaphorically	 Similarly
 Analogically	 Symbolically	 Hyperbolically	 Phenomenologically
 Informally	 Synecdochically	 Metonymically	





∞ The Laws of Logic ∞

- ✓ *The Law of Non-Contradiction*
- ✓ *The Law of Excluded Middle*
- ✓ *The Law of Identity*

❧ The Law of Non-Contradiction ❧

- essence ➤ A thing cannot be both 'A' and 'non-A' at the same time and in the same sense.
- existence ➤ A thing cannot both exist and not exist at the same time and in the same sense.
- truth value ➤ A statement cannot be both true and not true at the same time and in the same sense.



Think Like You Mean It!

Richard G. Howe, Ph.D.

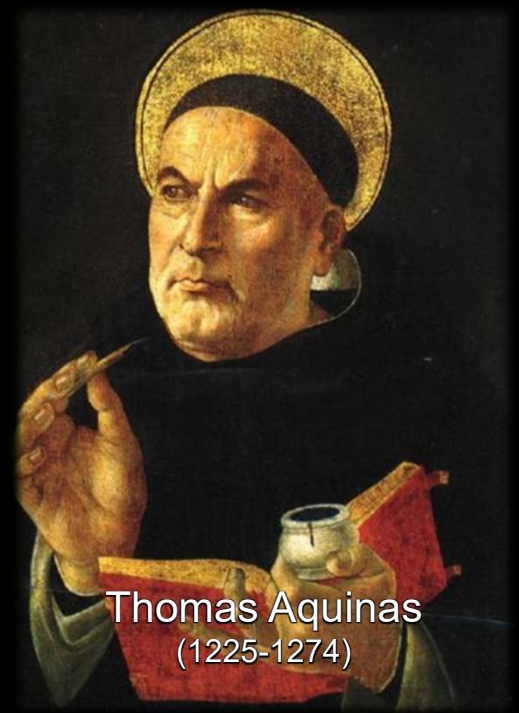
Provost

Professor of Philosophy and Apologetics
Norman L. Geisler Chair of Christian Apologetics
Southern Evangelical Seminary

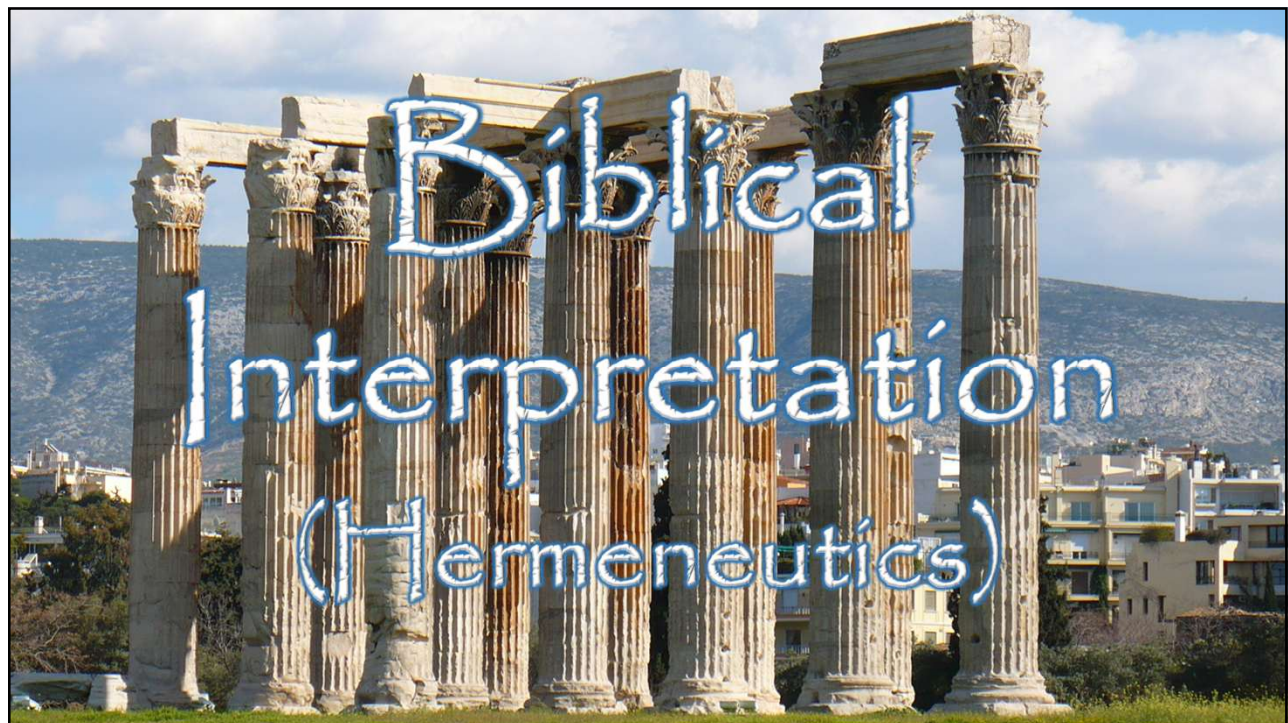
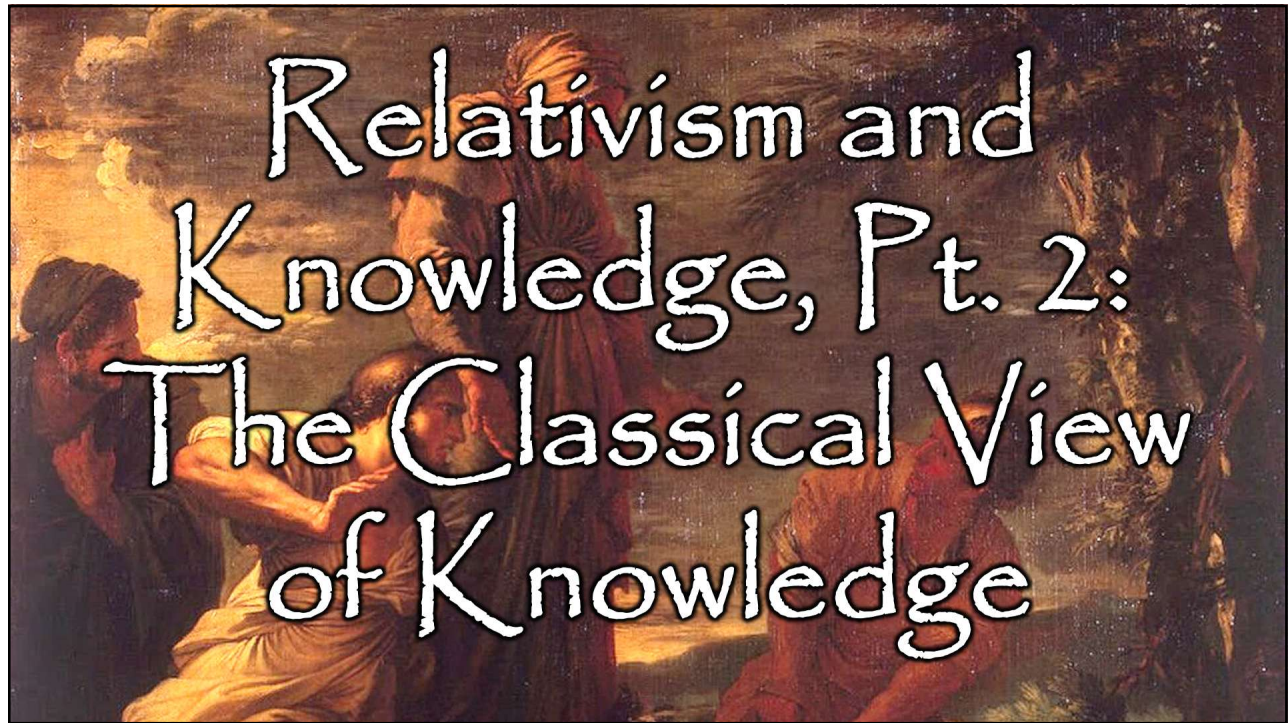


***"Our knowledge, taking
its start from things,
proceeds in this order.
First, it begins in
sense; second, it is
completed in the
intellect."***

[Thomas Aquinas, *Truth*, I, 11, trans. Mulligan, 48, in *Truth* (3 vols), vol. 1 trans. Robert W. Mulligan (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1952); vol. 2 trans. James V. McGlynn (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953); vol. 3, trans. Robert W. Schmidt (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1954). The three volumes were reprinted as *Truth* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994)]

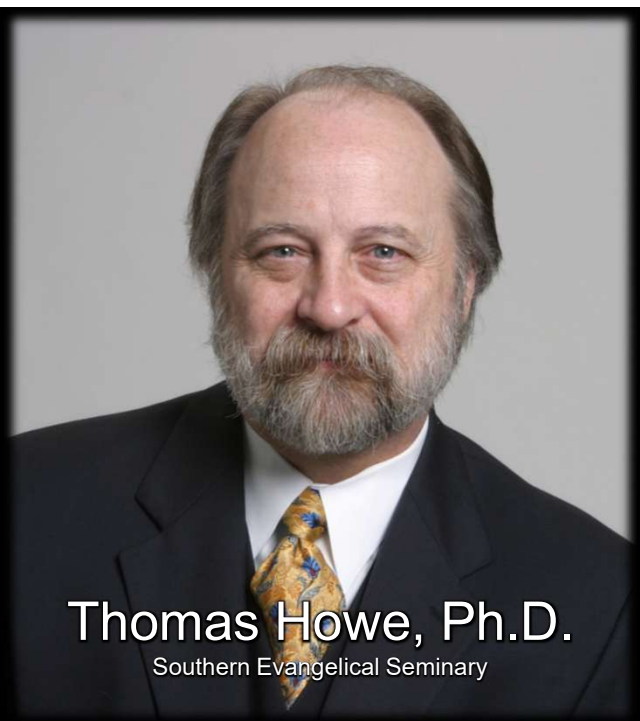
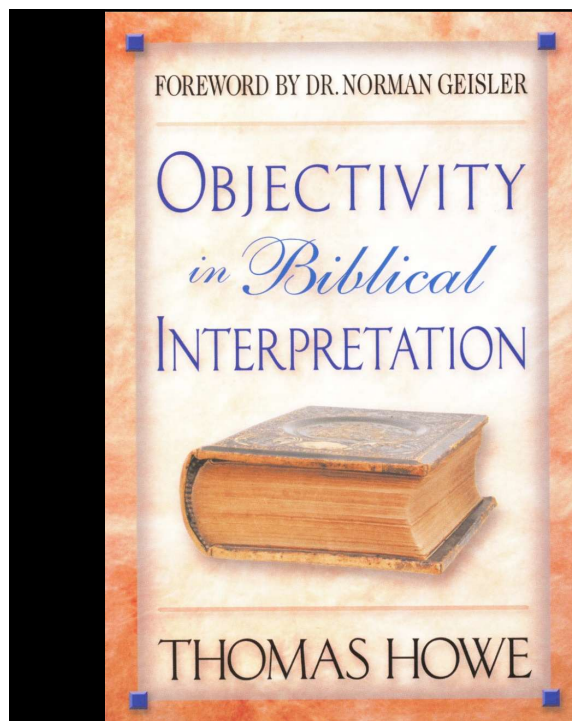


Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)



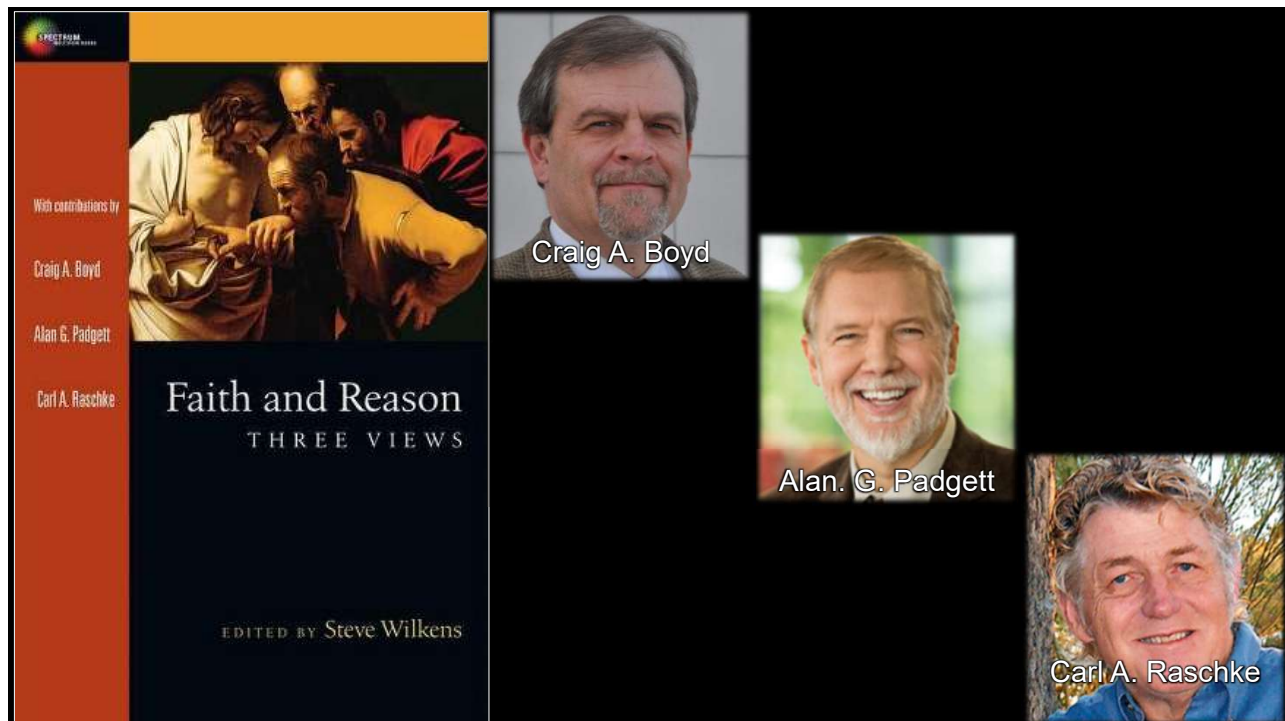
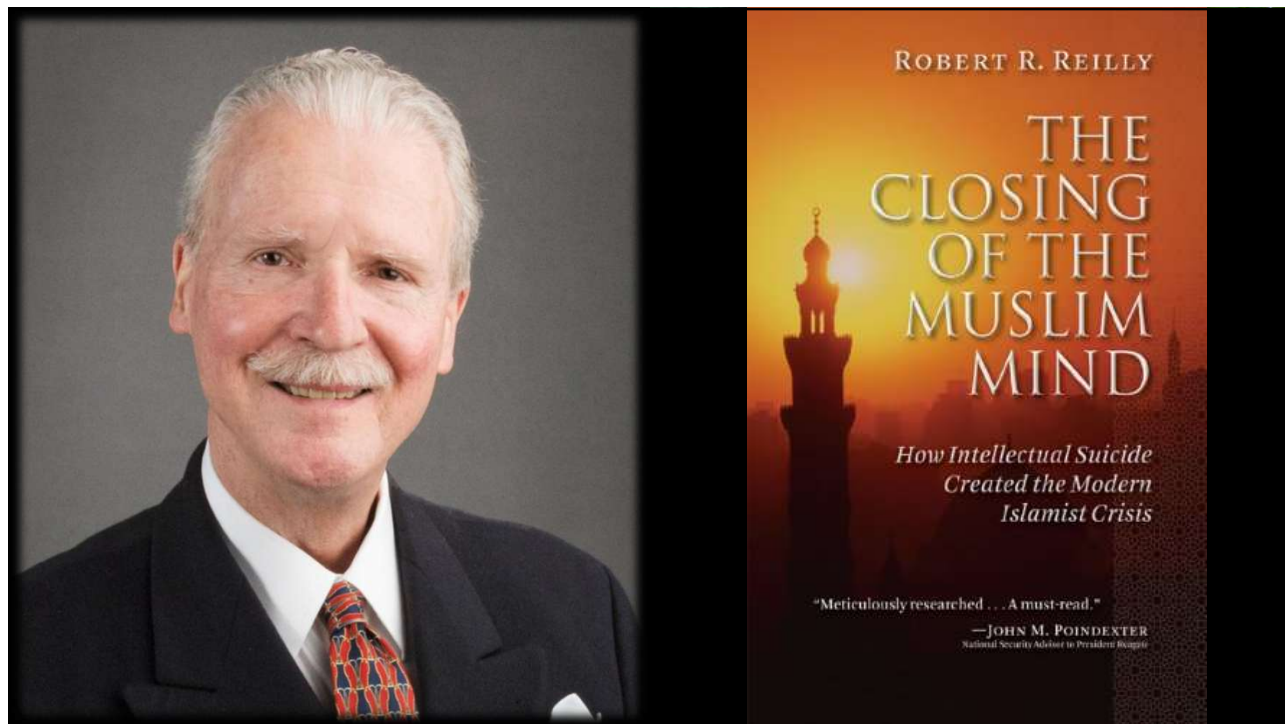
**"We must get our
hermeneutics
from the Bible
otherwise we're
lost in
relativism!"**

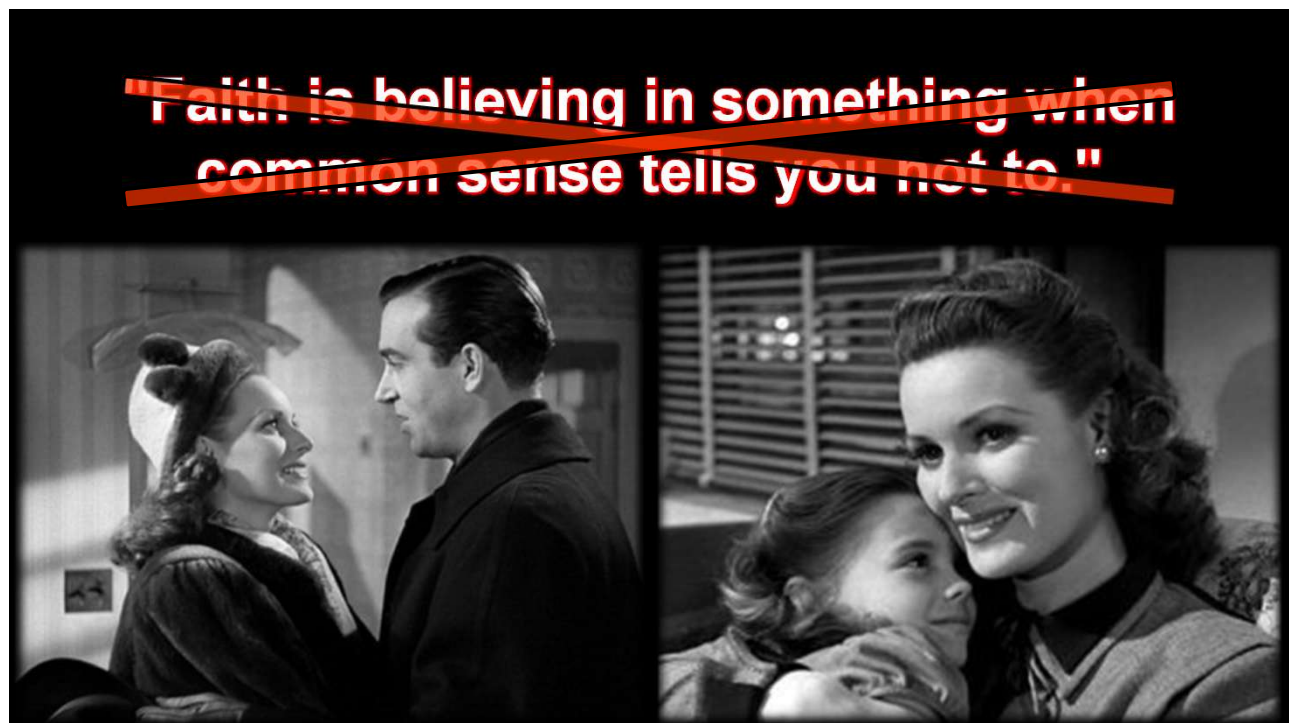
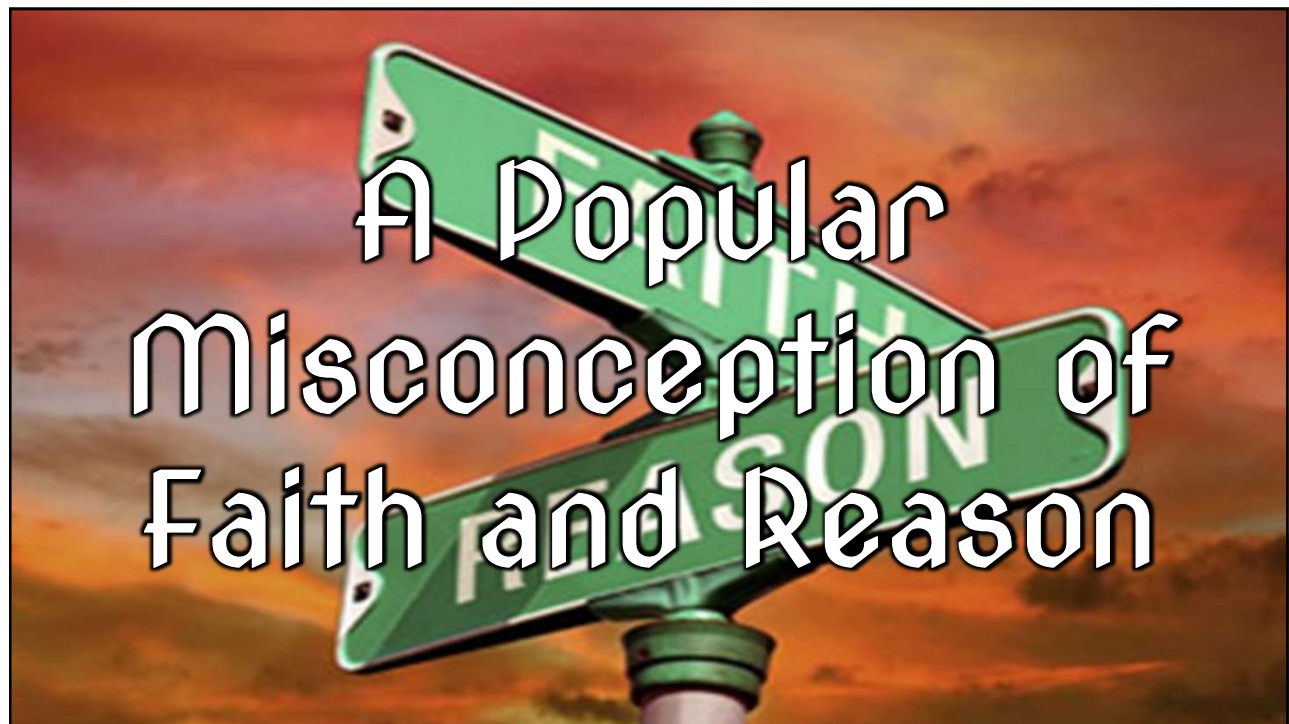
(caller to radio talk show)



Thomas Howe, Ph.D.
Southern Evangelical Seminary





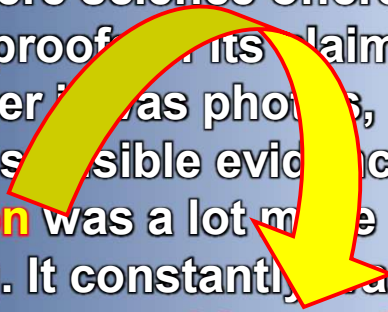


"I really wasn't sure where to turn. Where science offered exciting proofs of its claims, whether it was photos, equations, visible evidence, **religion** was a lot more demanding. It constantly wanted me to **accept everything on faith**. As I'm sure you're aware, faith takes a fair amount of effort."



Dan Brown

"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."



Do we as
Christians
maintain that
Christianity (as a
religion) wants
one to "accept
everything on
faith"?

Dan Brown

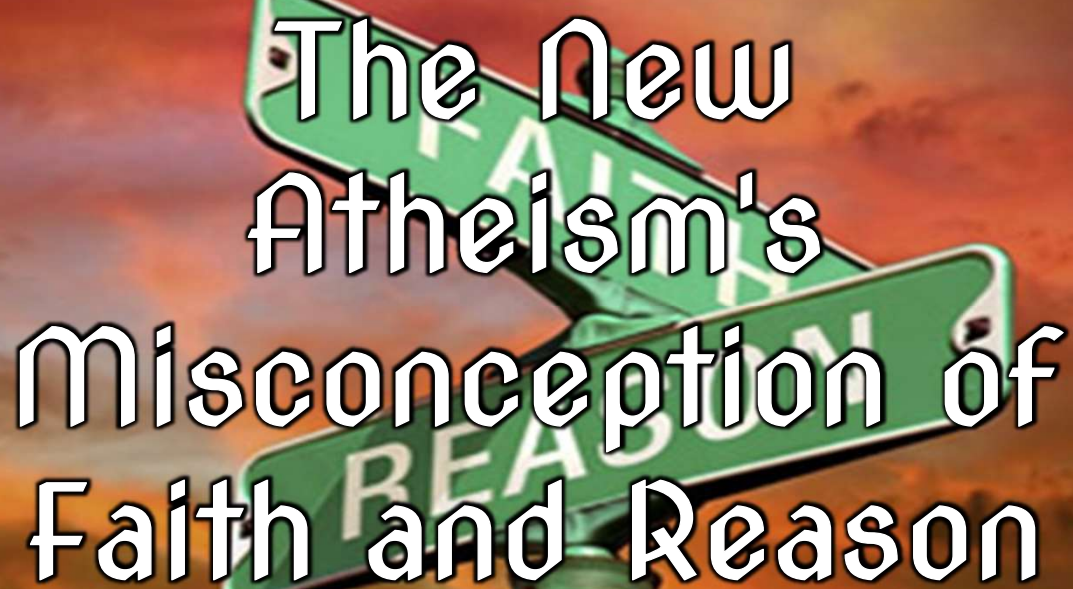
Popular Misconception

Reason

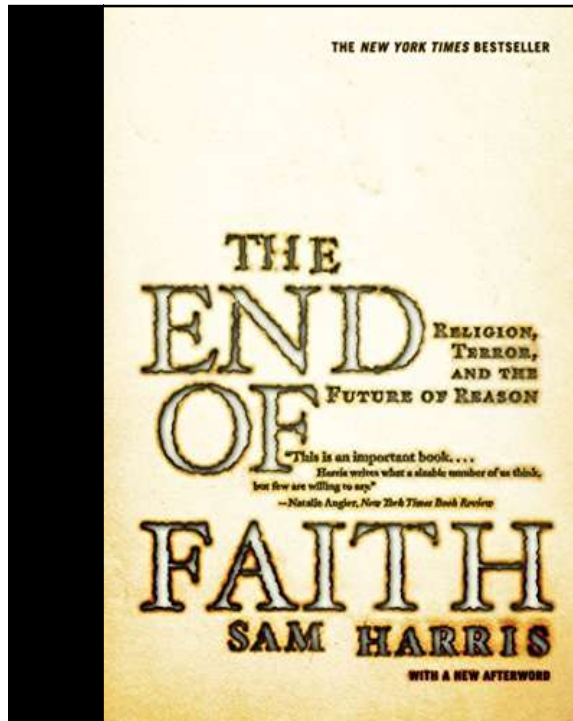
truth
facts
outer
public
rational
thoughts
objective
science
true for all

Faith

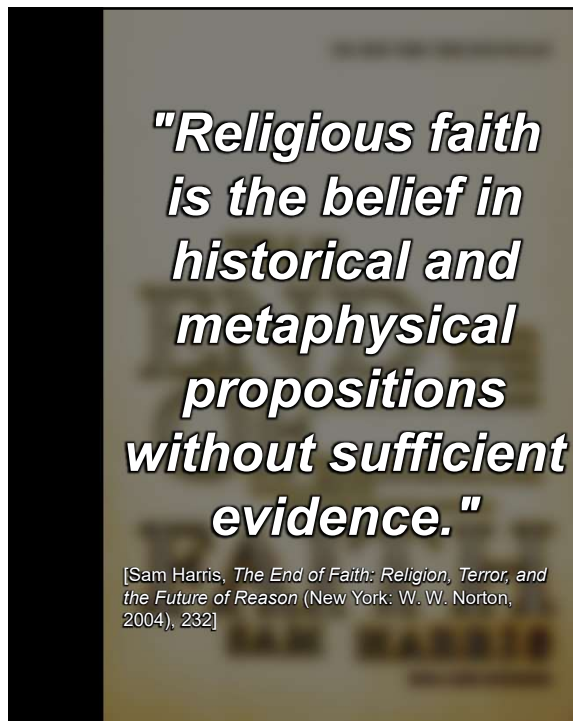
opinion
values
inner
private
emotional
feelings
subjective
religion
true for me



The New
Atheism's
Misconception of
Faith and Reason



Sam Harris



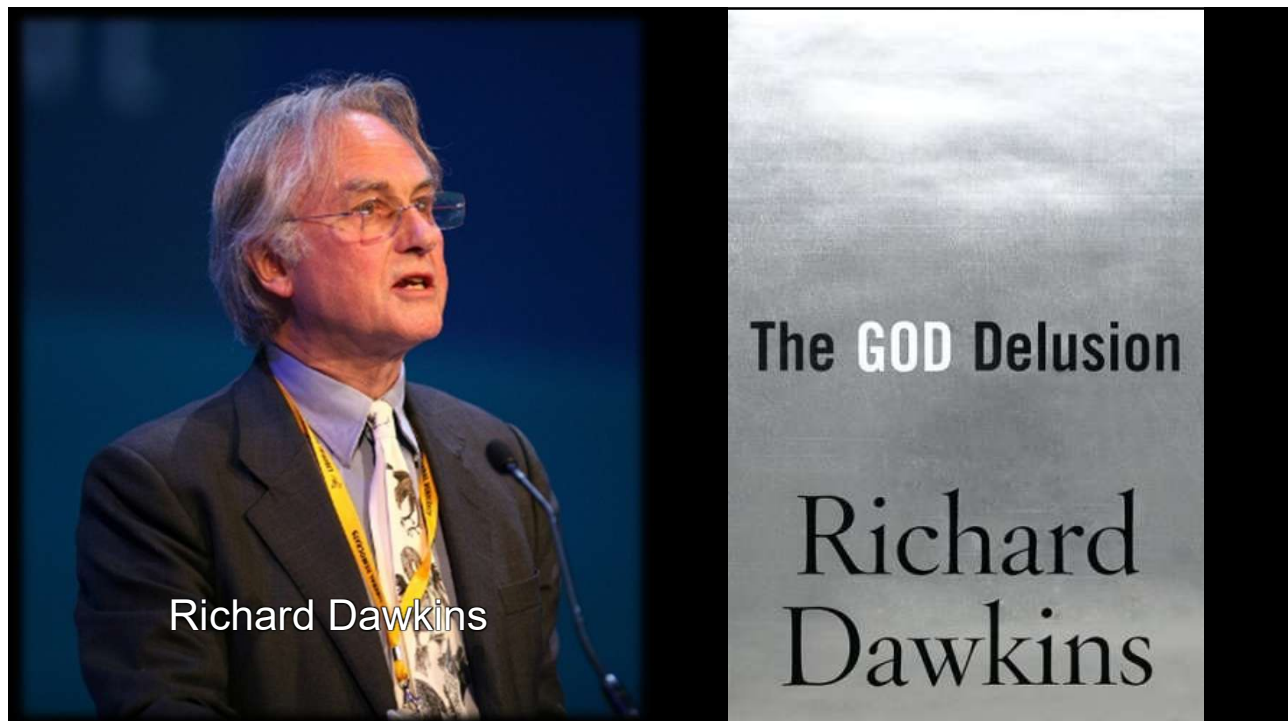
Sam Harris

***"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]



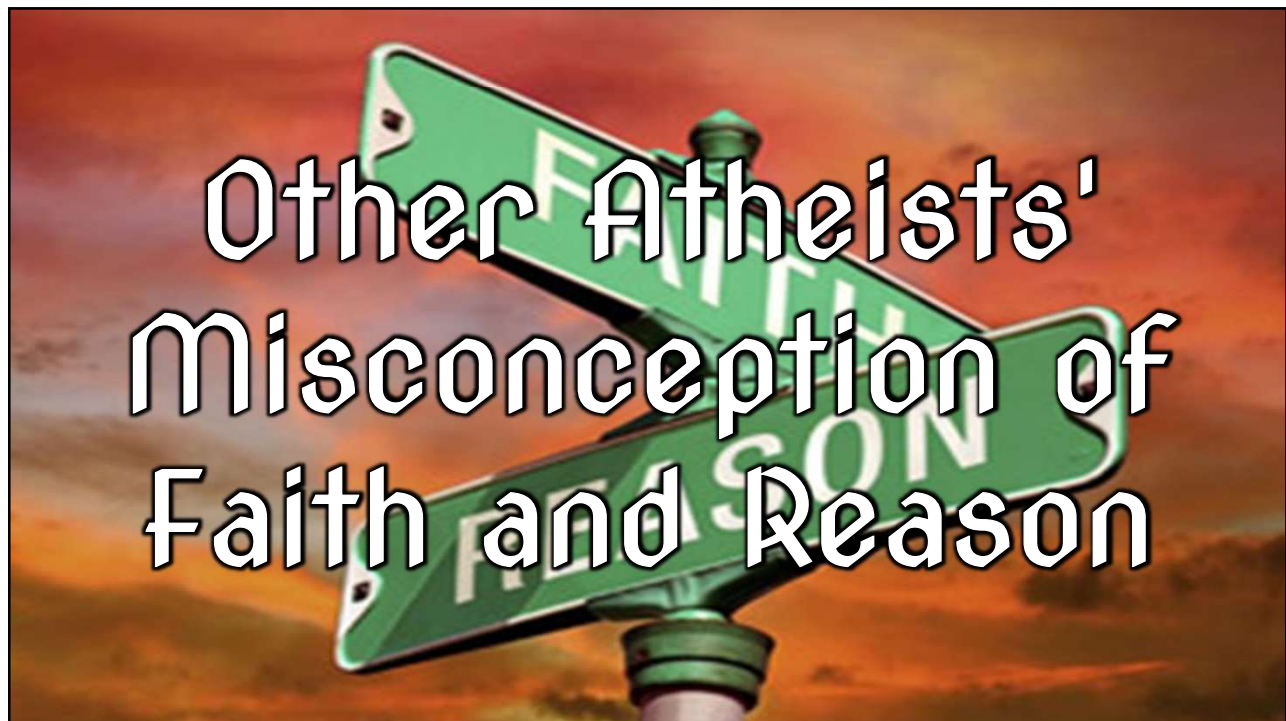
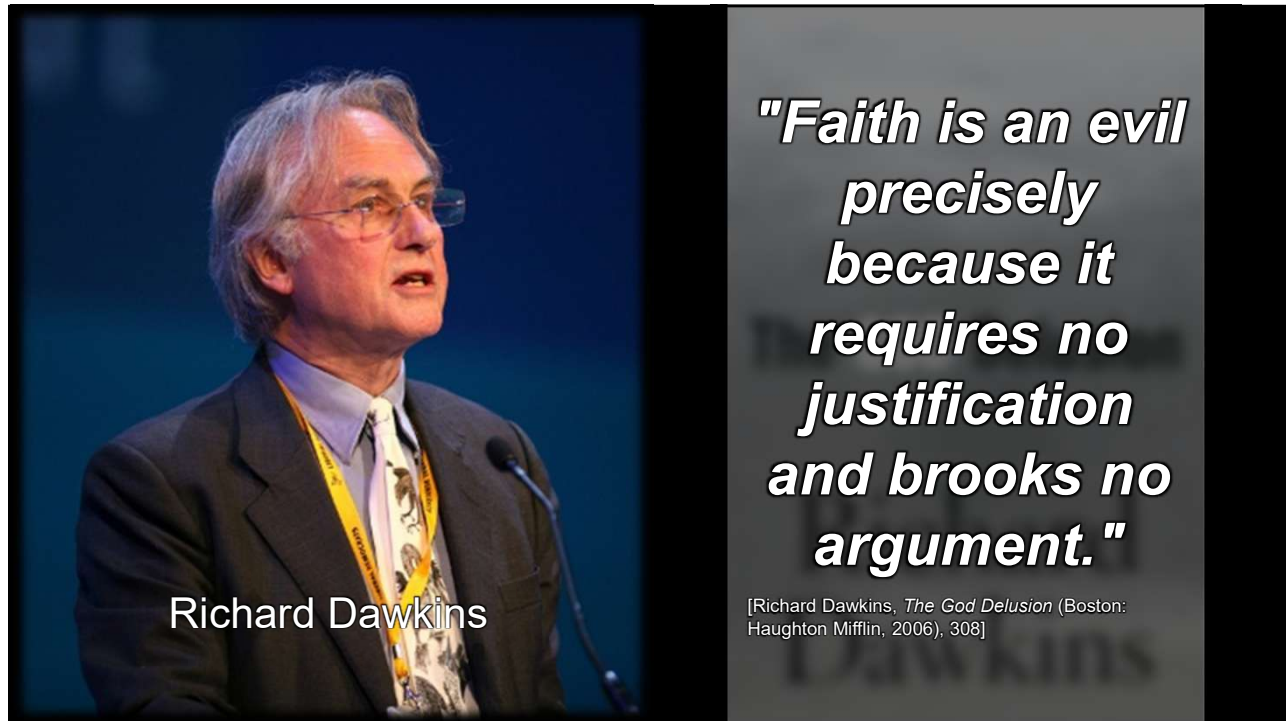
Sam Harris

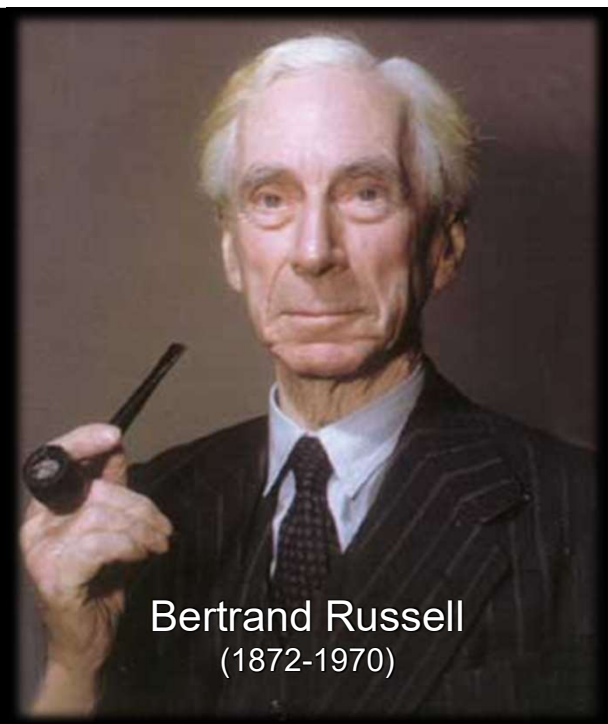
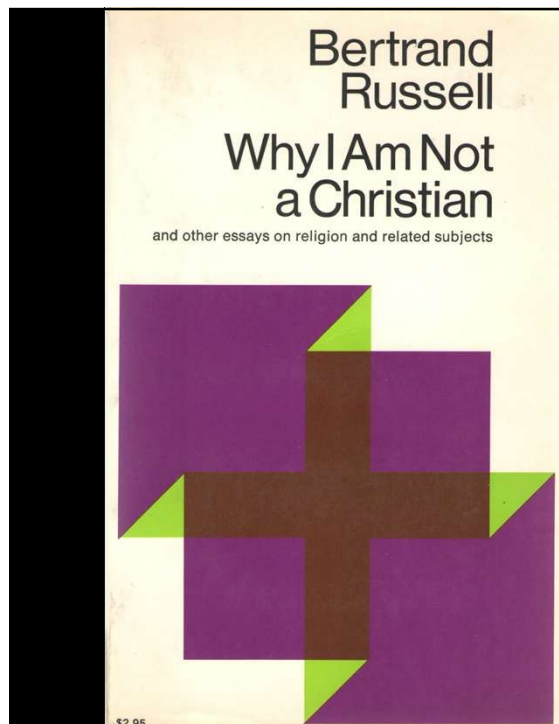


Richard Dawkins

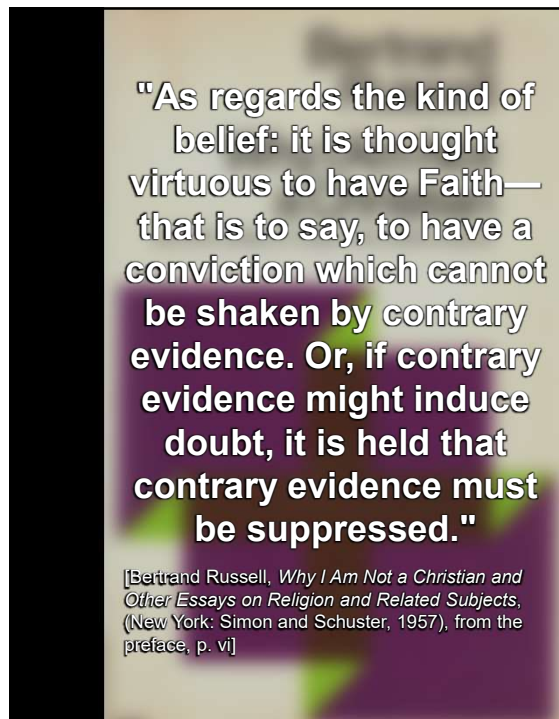
The **GOD** Delusion

Richard
Dawkins



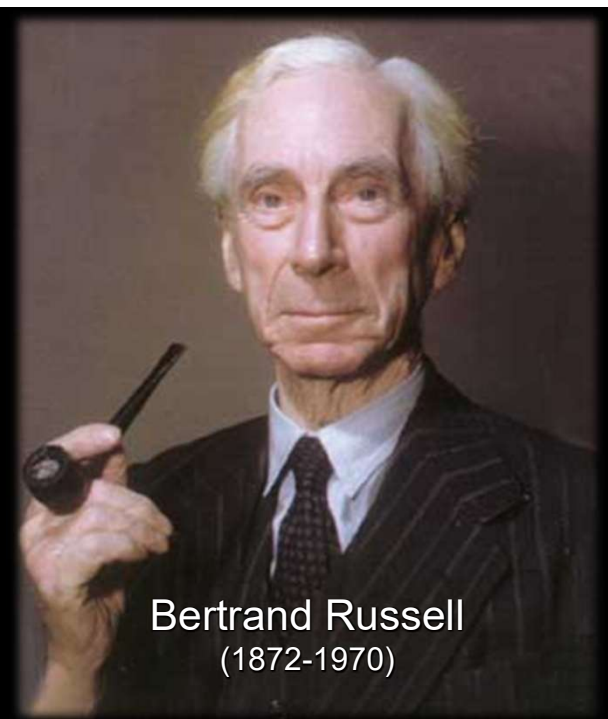


Bertrand Russell
(1872-1970)

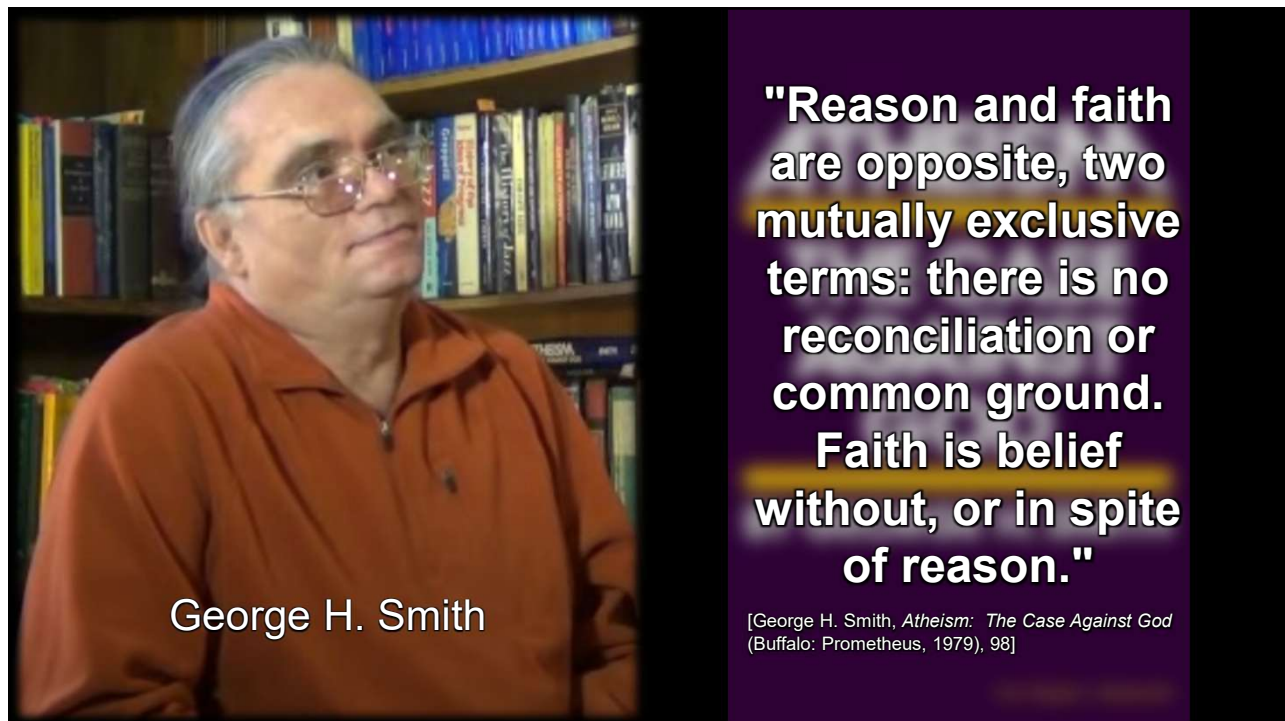
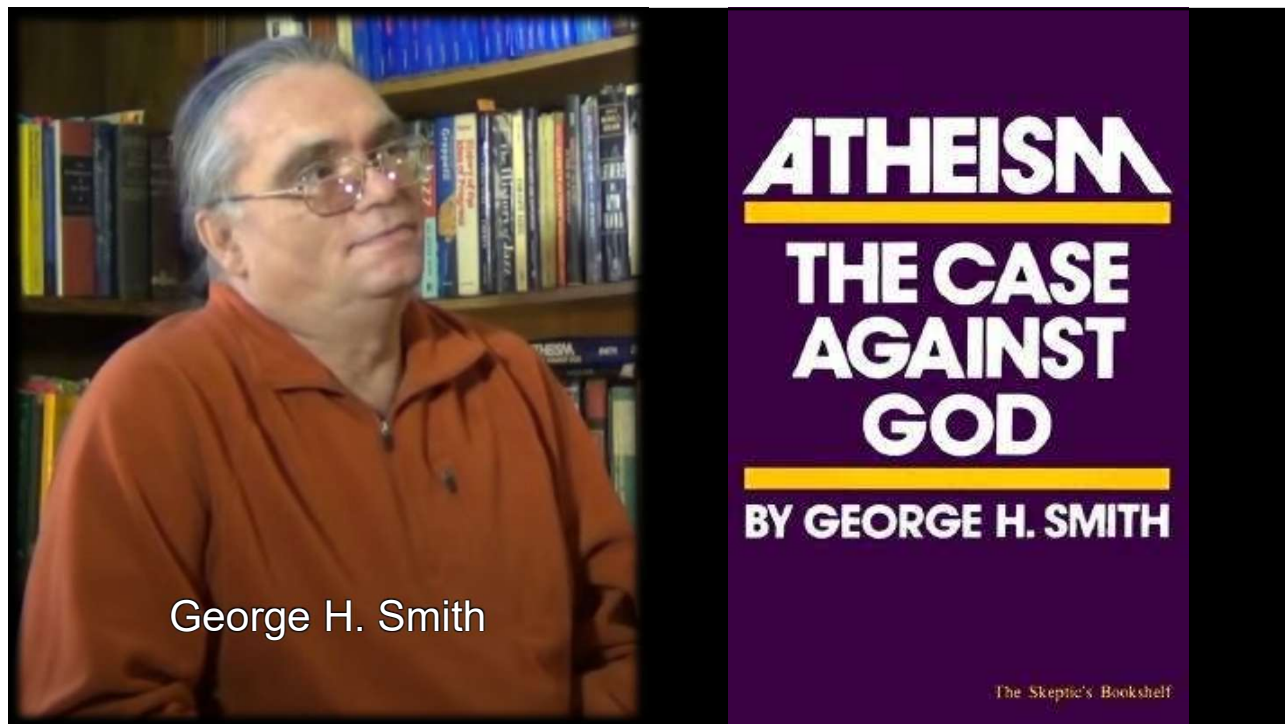


"As regards the kind of belief: it is thought virtuous to have Faith—that is to say, to have a conviction which cannot be shaken by contrary evidence. Or, if contrary evidence might induce doubt, it is held that contrary evidence must be suppressed."

[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]



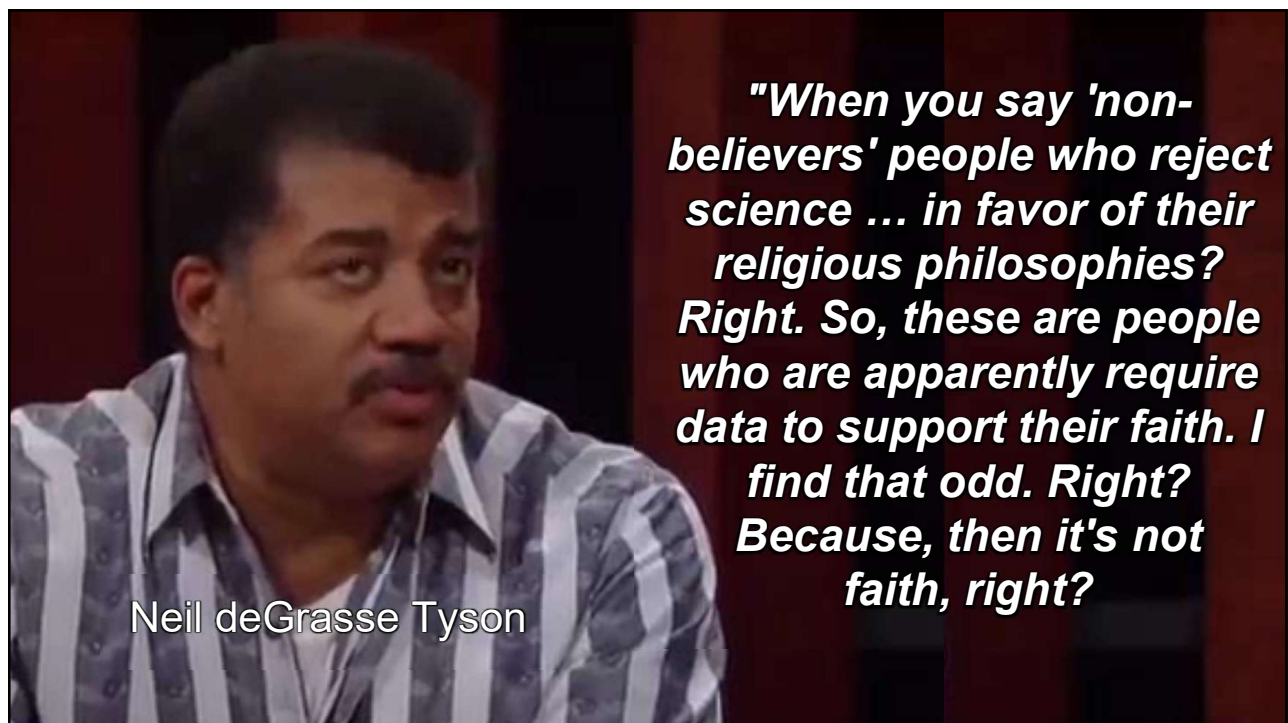
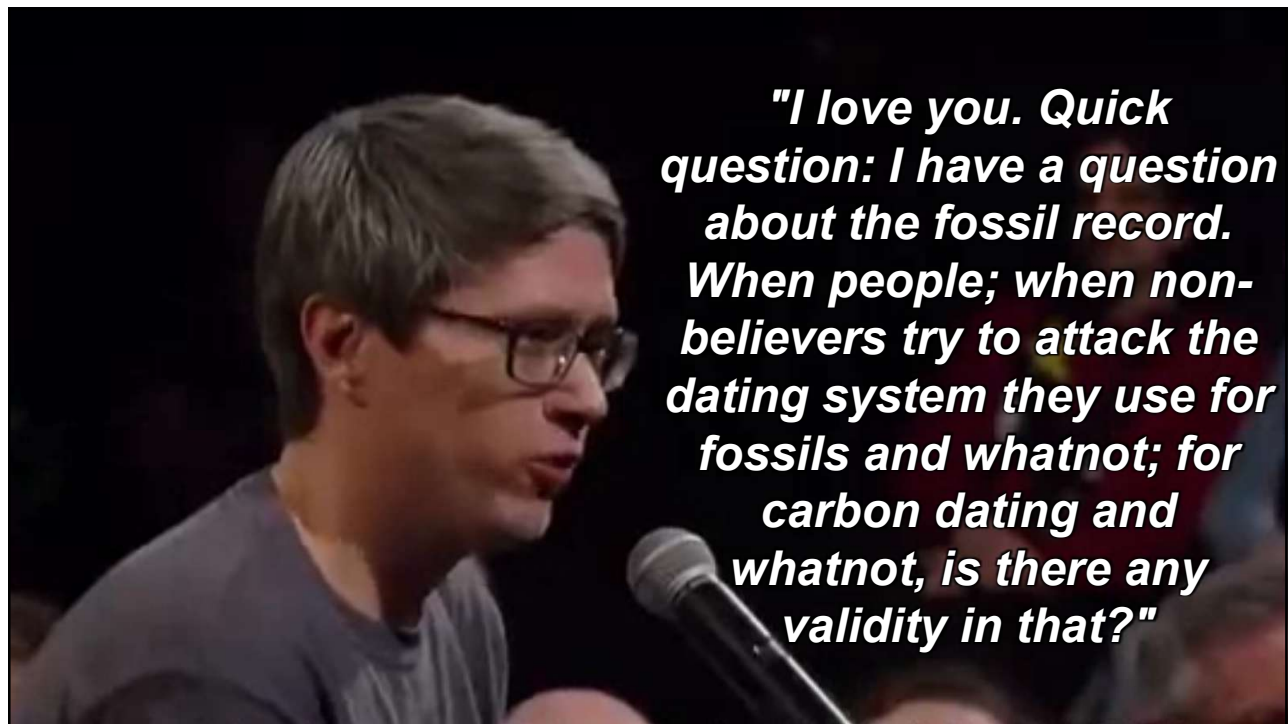
Bertrand Russell
(1872-1970)

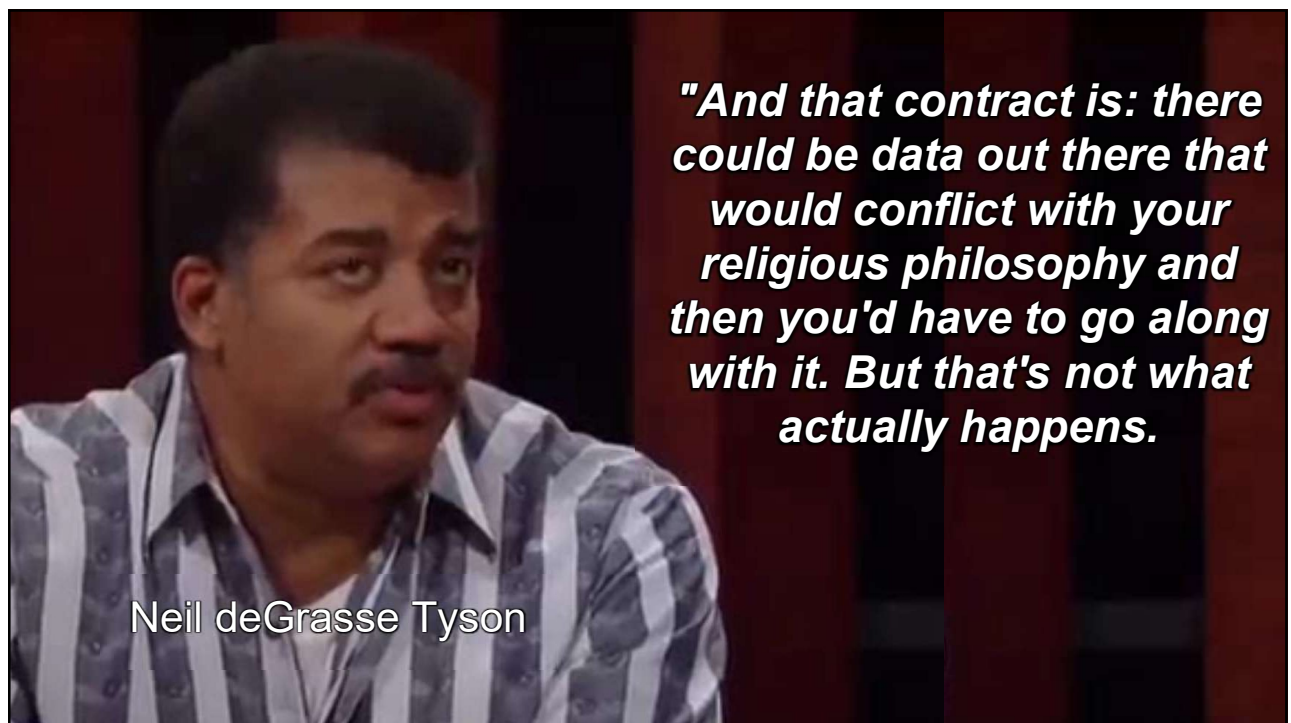
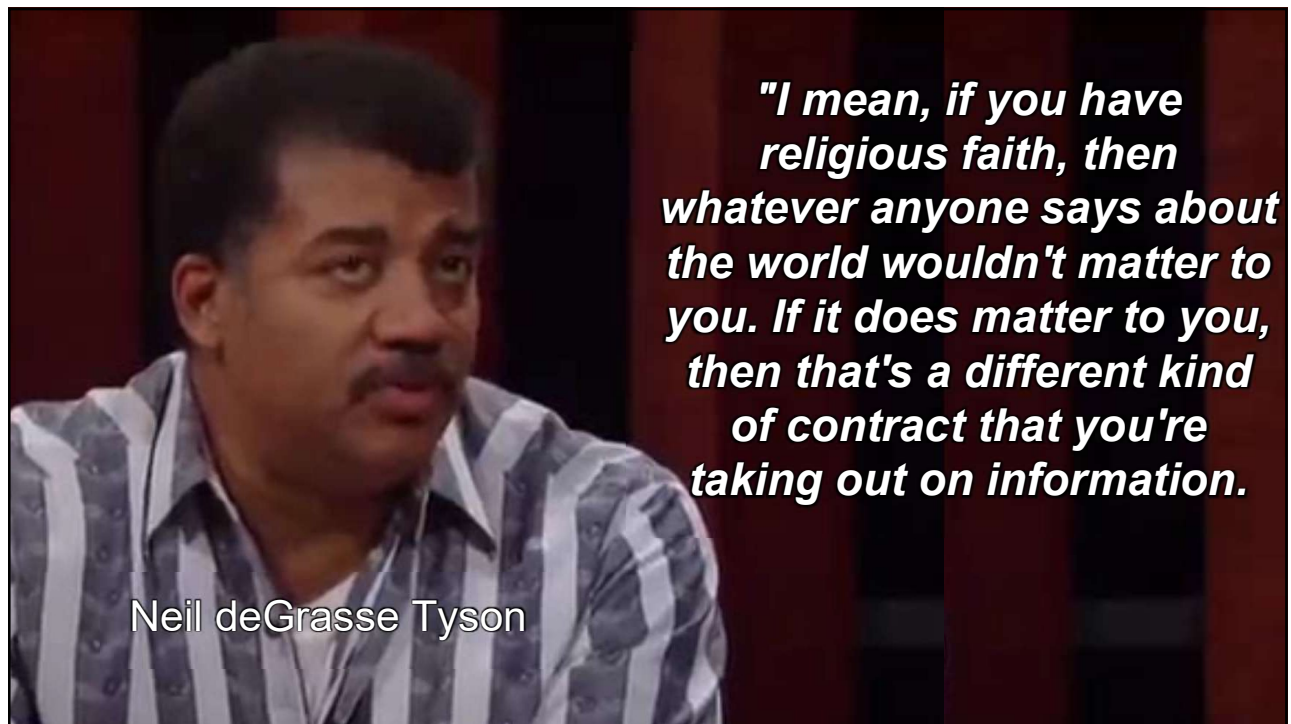


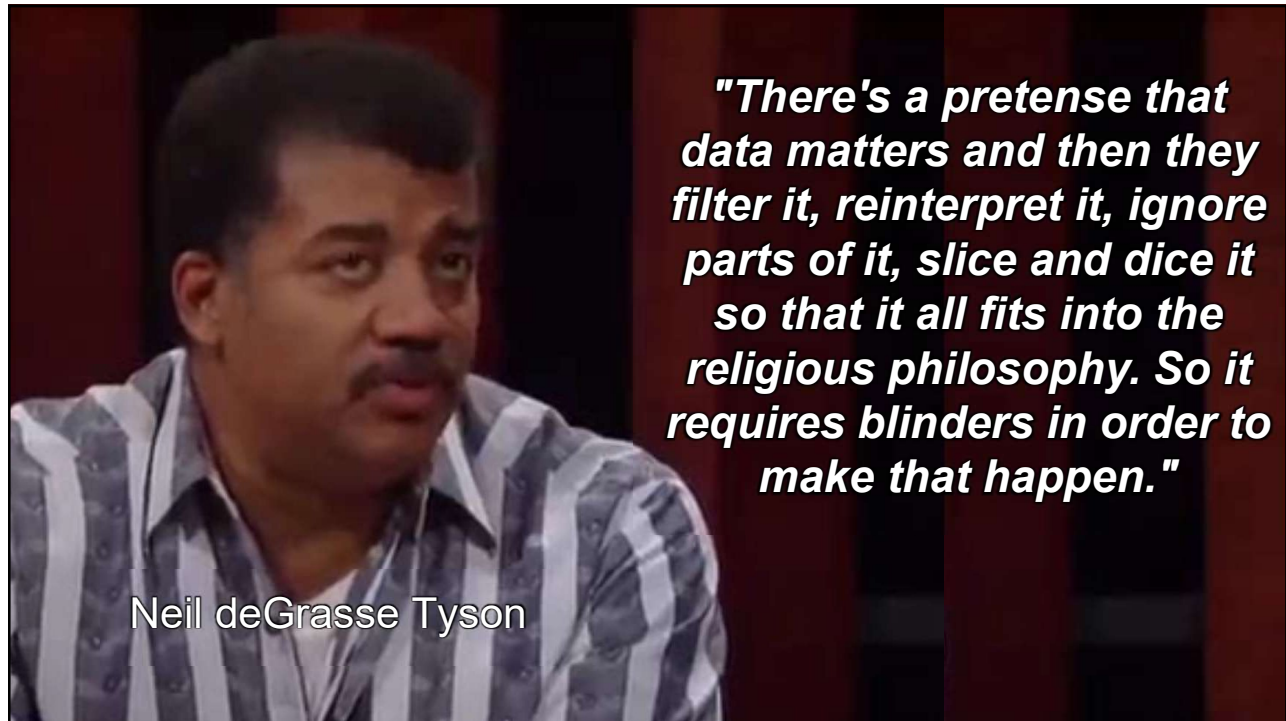


Neil deGrasse Tyson on Religion and Faith



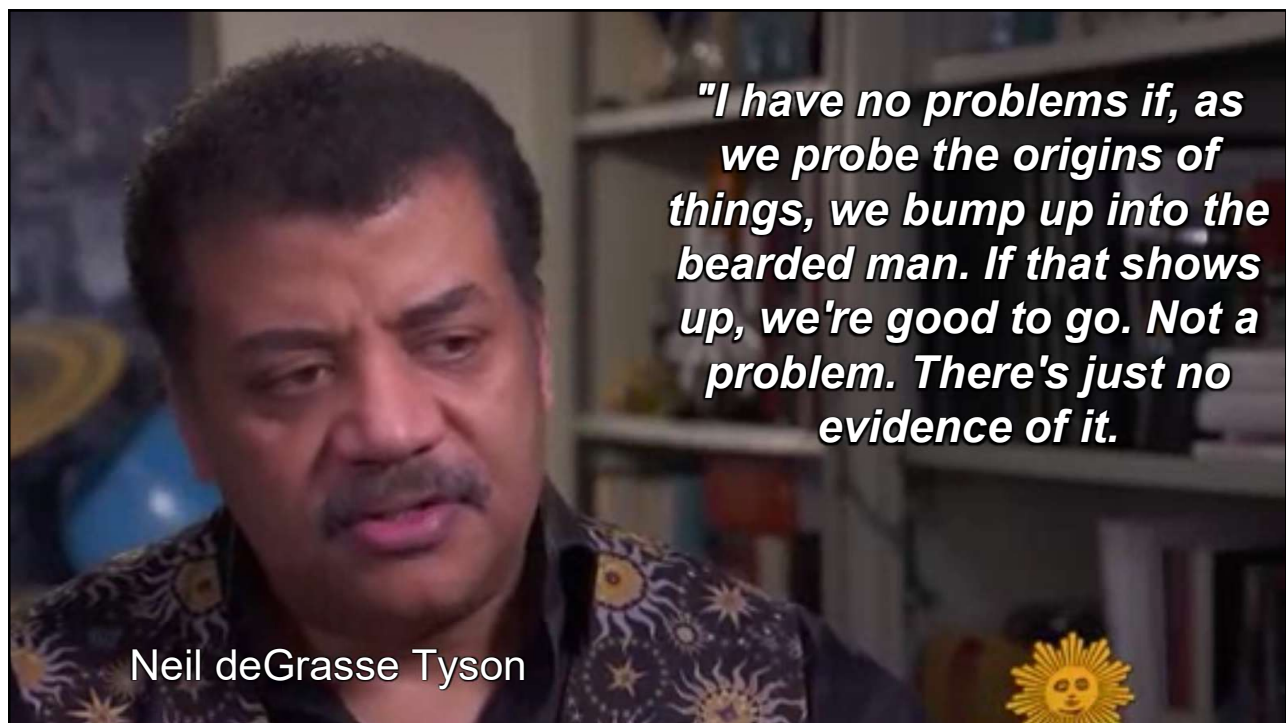
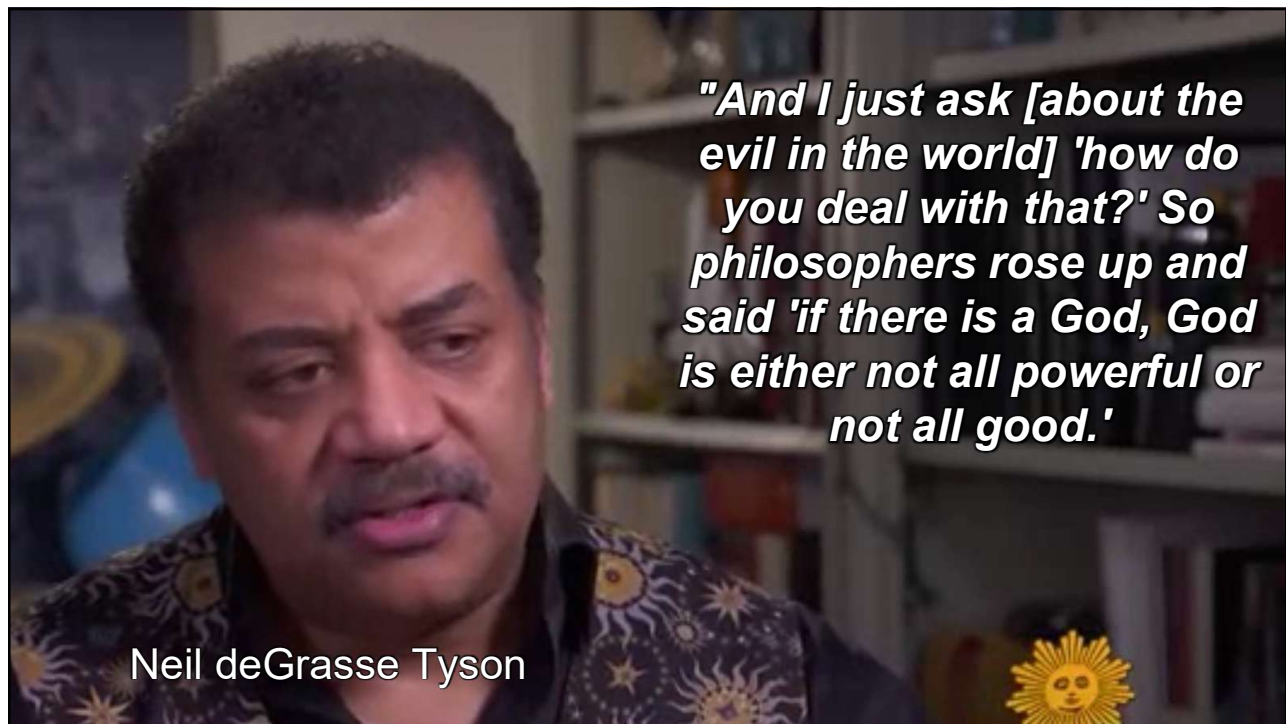


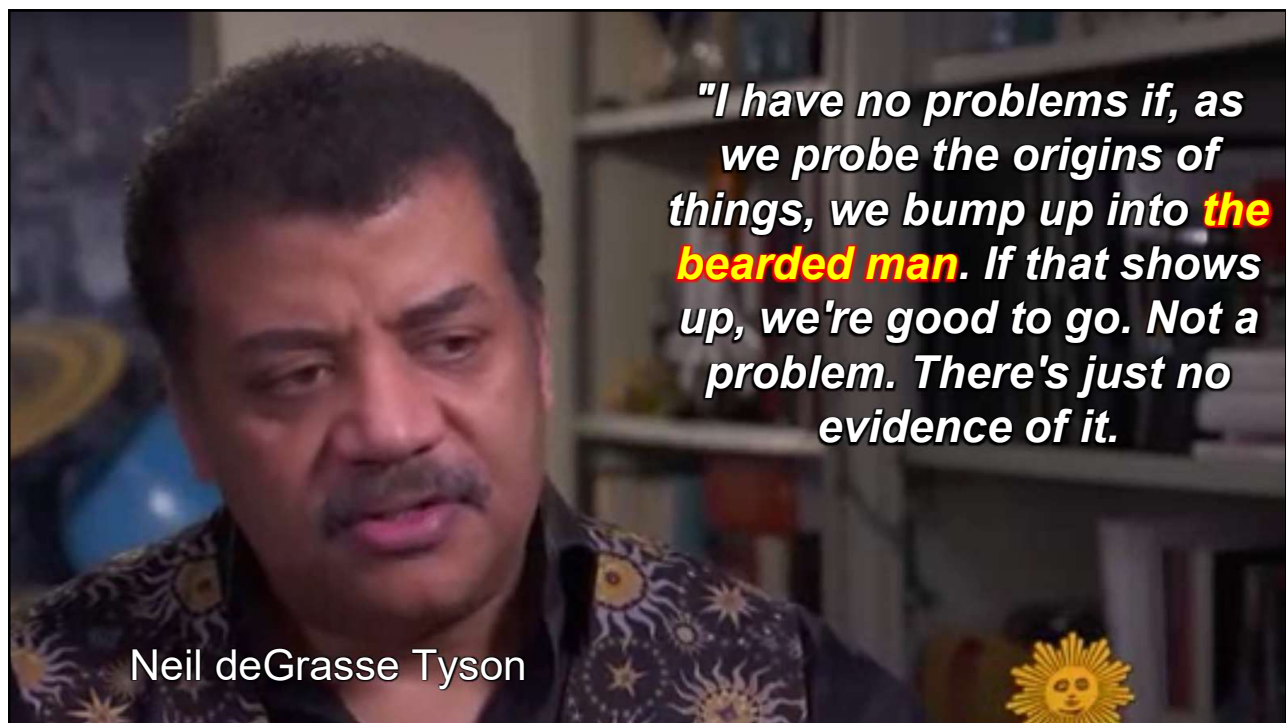
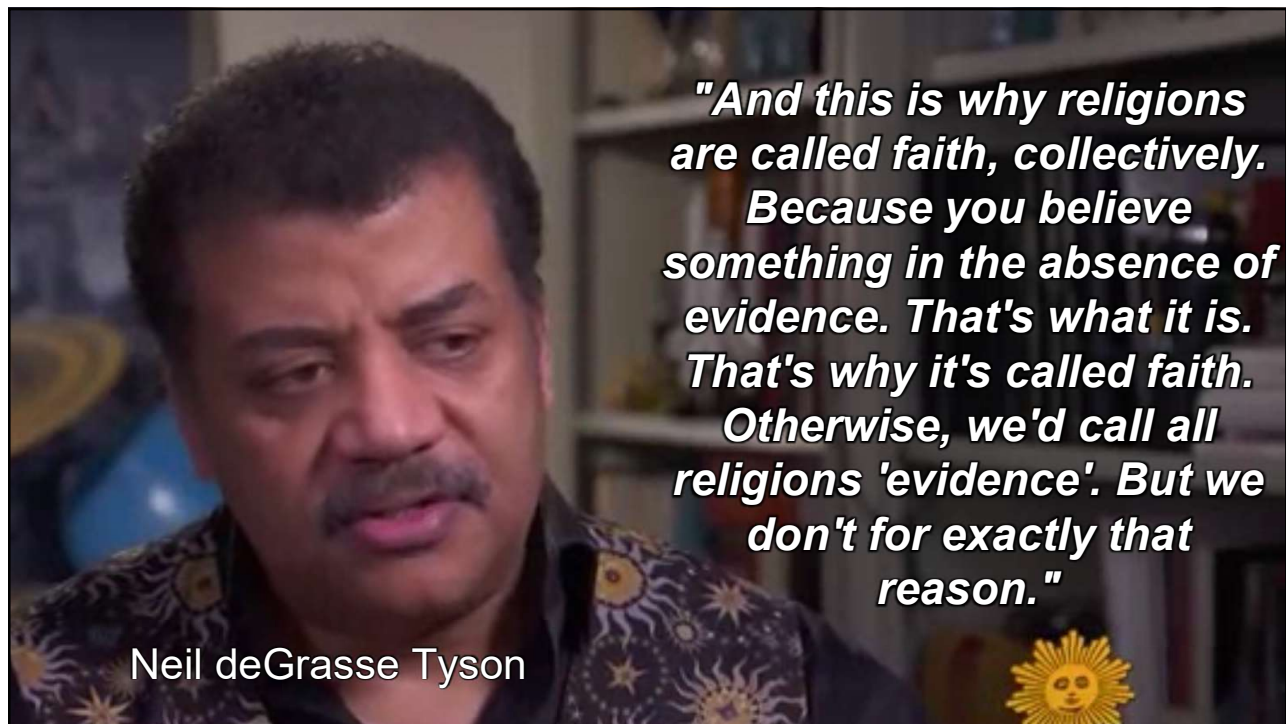




Neil deGrasse Tyson on God







Notice the ad hominem / straw man fallacy. The argument Christian apologists are making has nothing to do with the existence of any "bearded man."

Imagine how offended Tyson would be if a Christian tried to refute evolution with the silly argument "if humans evolved from monkeys, why are there still monkeys!?"

Christians no more contend for the existence of a "bearded man" than evolutionists contend that humans evolved from monkeys.

*"I have no problems if, as we probe the origins of things, we bump up into **the bearded man**. If that shows up, we're good to go. Not a problem. There's just no evidence of it."*

*"And this is why religions are called faith, collectively. Because **you believe something in the absence of evidence**. That's what it is. That's why it's called faith. Otherwise, we'd call all religions 'evidence'. But we don't for exactly that reason."*

Neil deGrasse Tyson

Granted Tyson may very well have engaged Christians who have the view that the Christian notion of 'faith' means believing in something in the absence of evidence.

I hope to show that the classical / traditional view of faith says no such thing.

As a scholar, Tyson should have taken the time to try to understand the best and strongest version of the Christian notion of faith before he tried to give any critique.

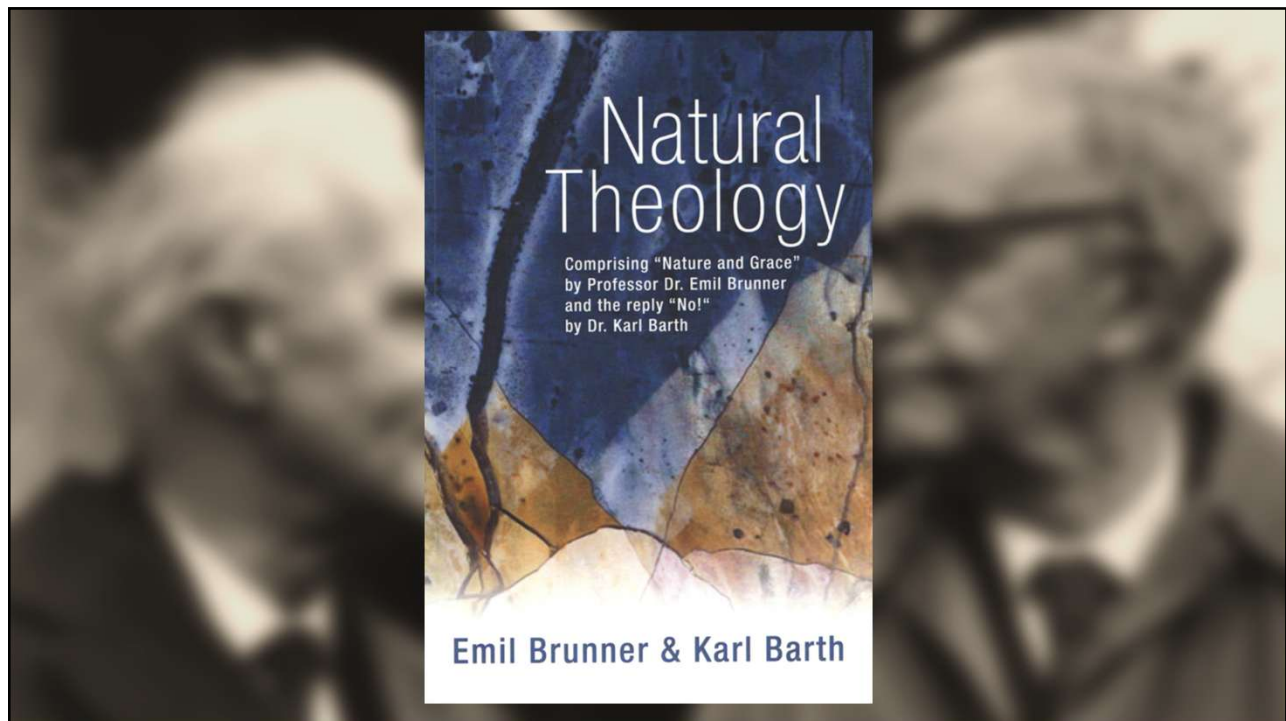
"And this is why religions are called faith, collectively.

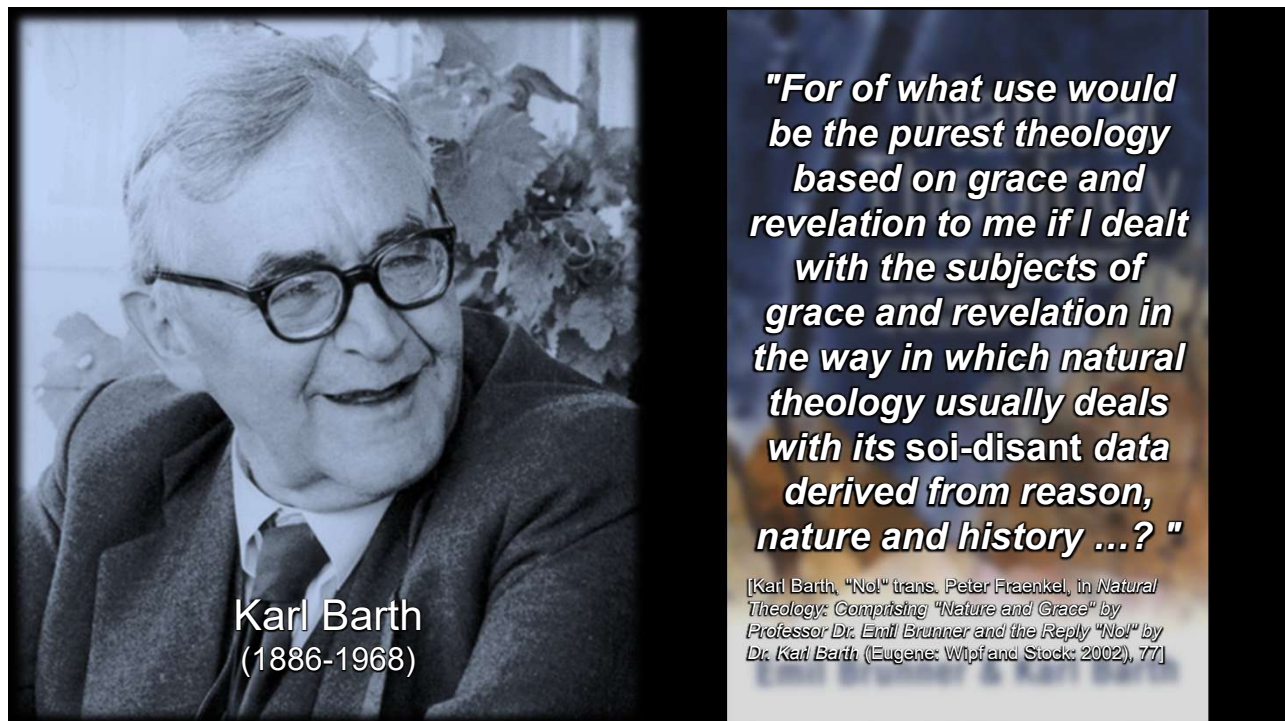
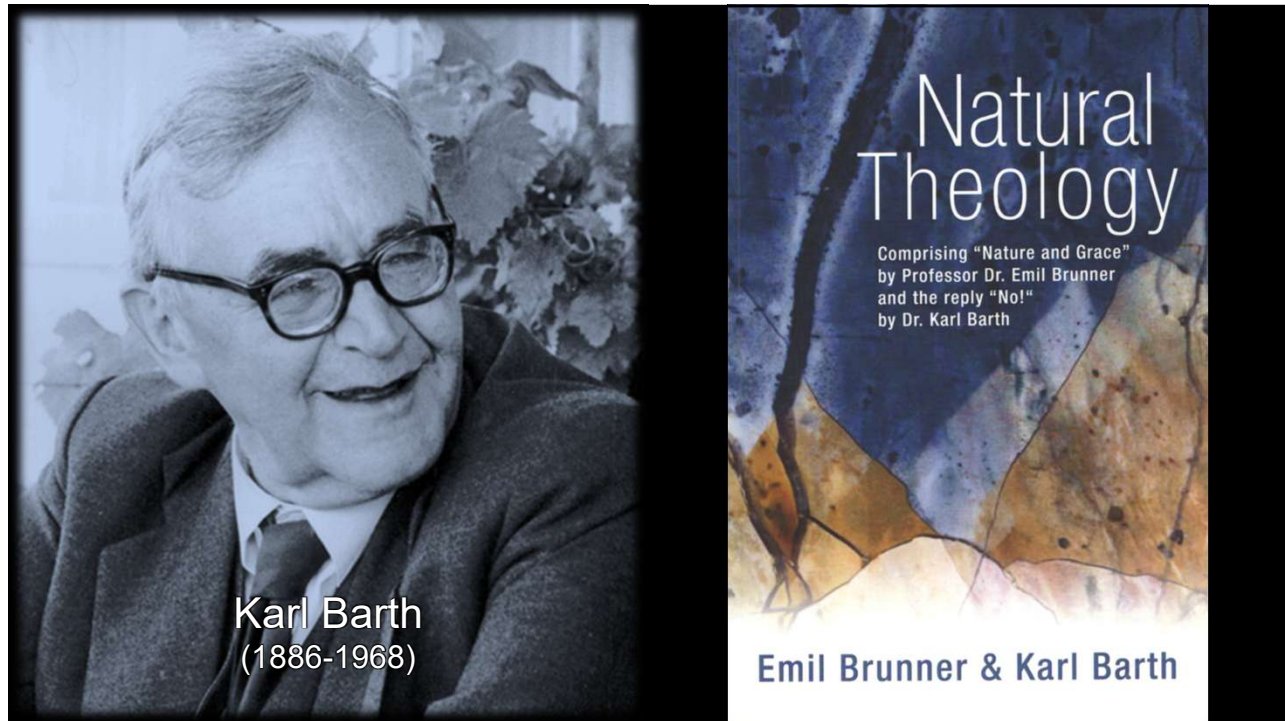
*Because **you believe something in the absence of evidence**. That's what it is.*

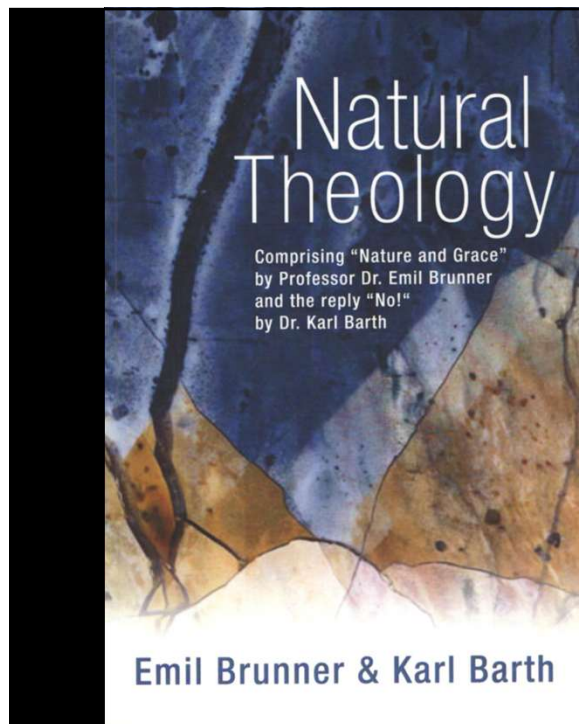
That's why it's called faith.

Otherwise, we'd call all religions 'evidence'. But we don't for exactly that reason."

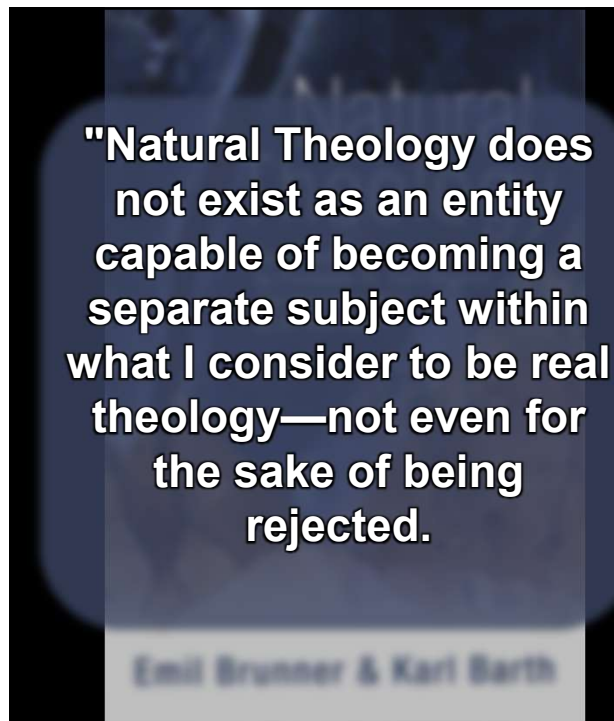
Neo-Orthodoxy's Misconception of Faith and Reason







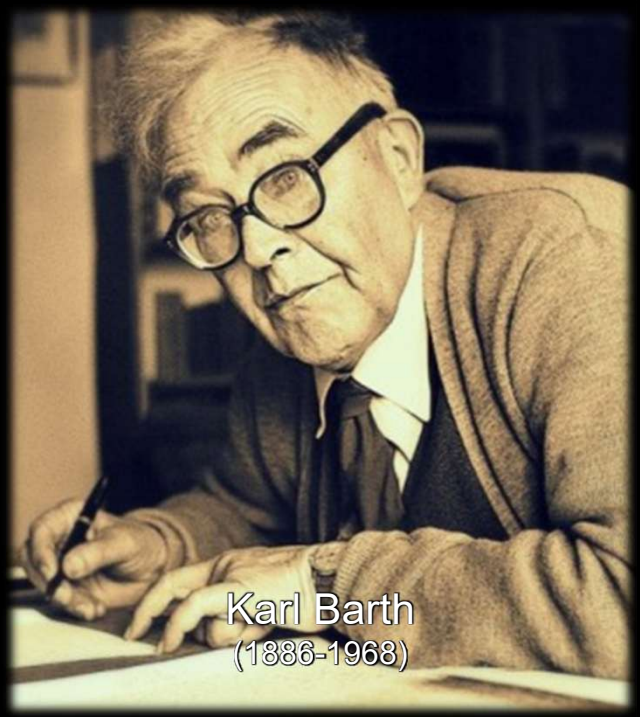
Karl Barth
(1886-1968)



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.

Emil Brunner & Karl Barth



Karl Barth
(1886-1968)

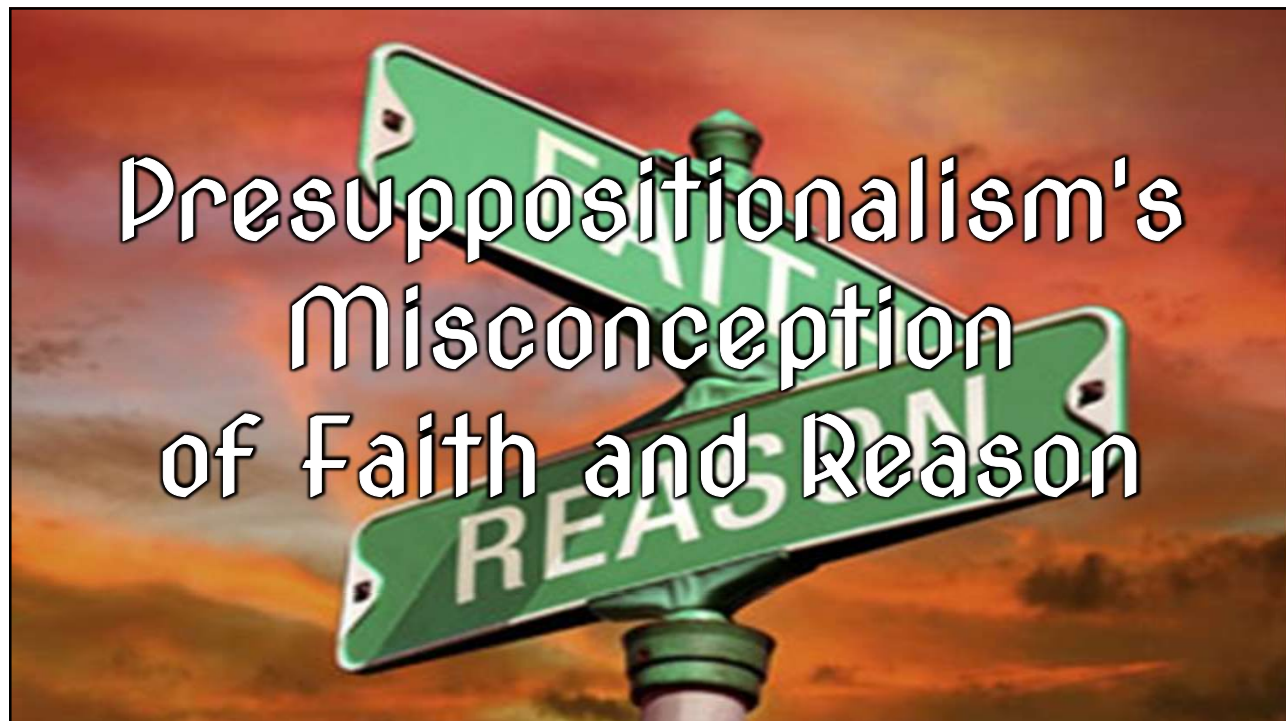
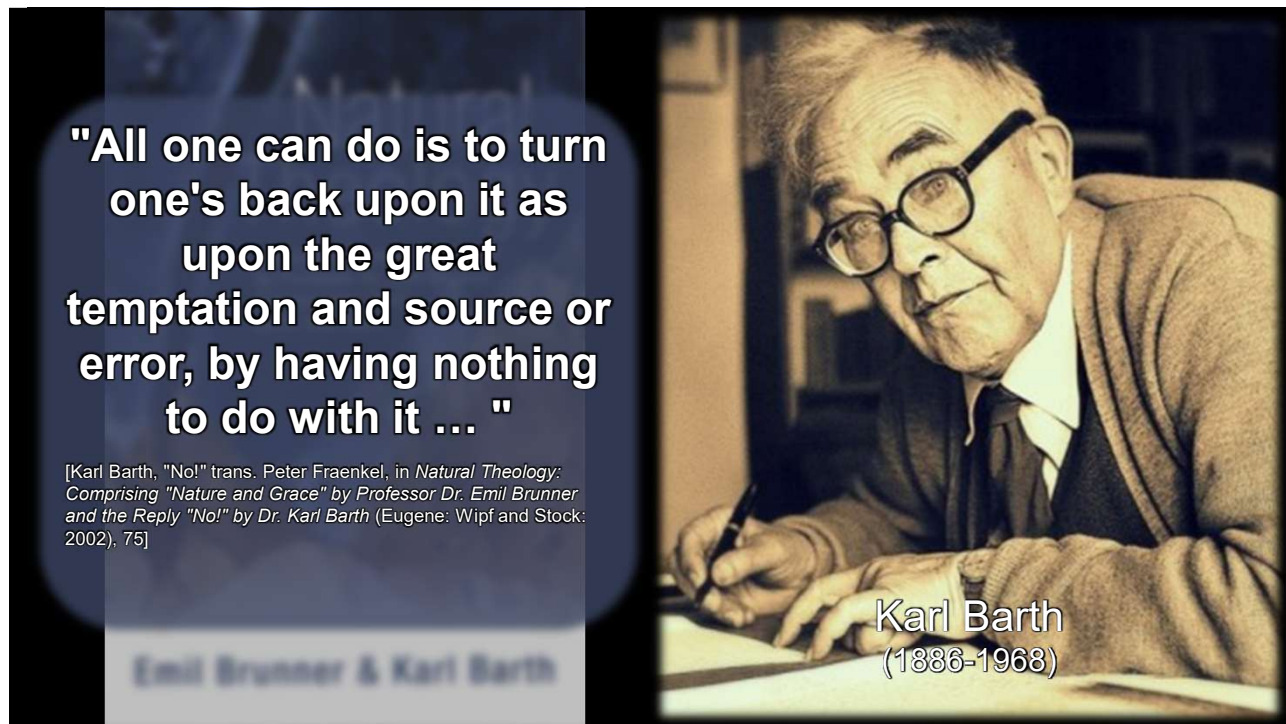
"If one occupies oneself with real theology one can pass by so-called **natural theology** only as one would pass by an abyss into which it is inadvisable to step if one does not want to fall.

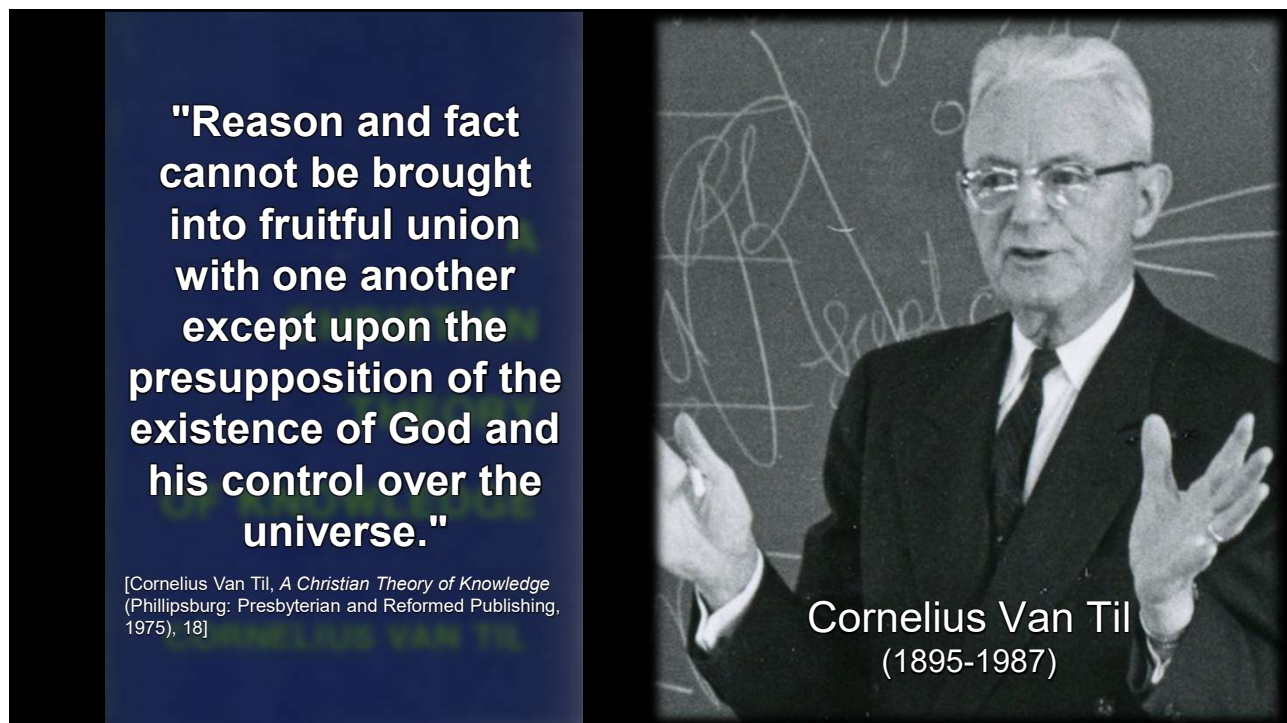
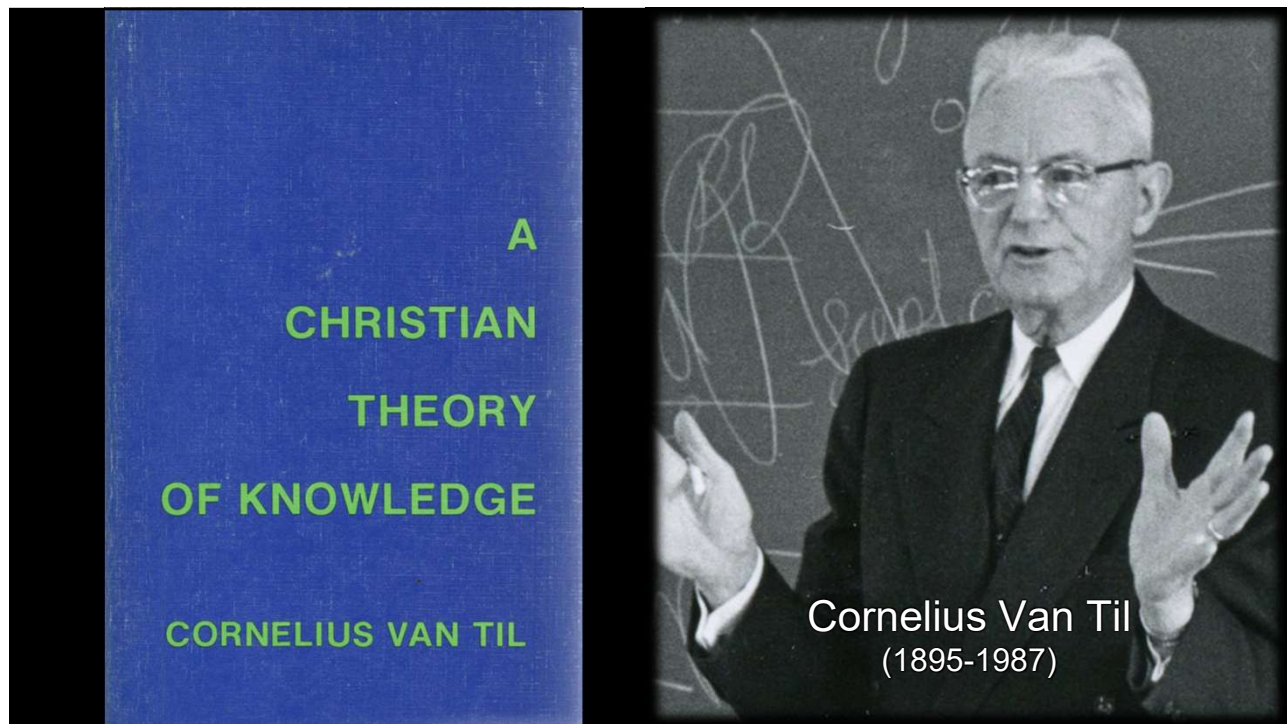
Emil Brunner & Karl Barth

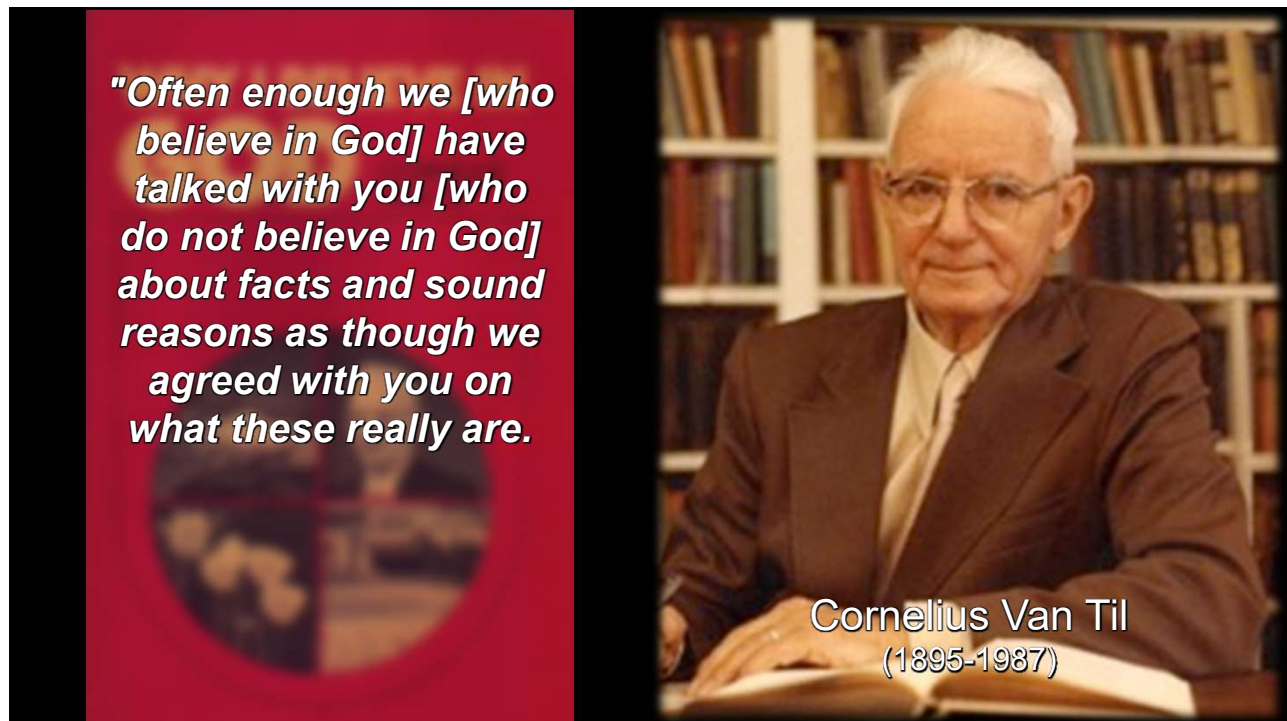
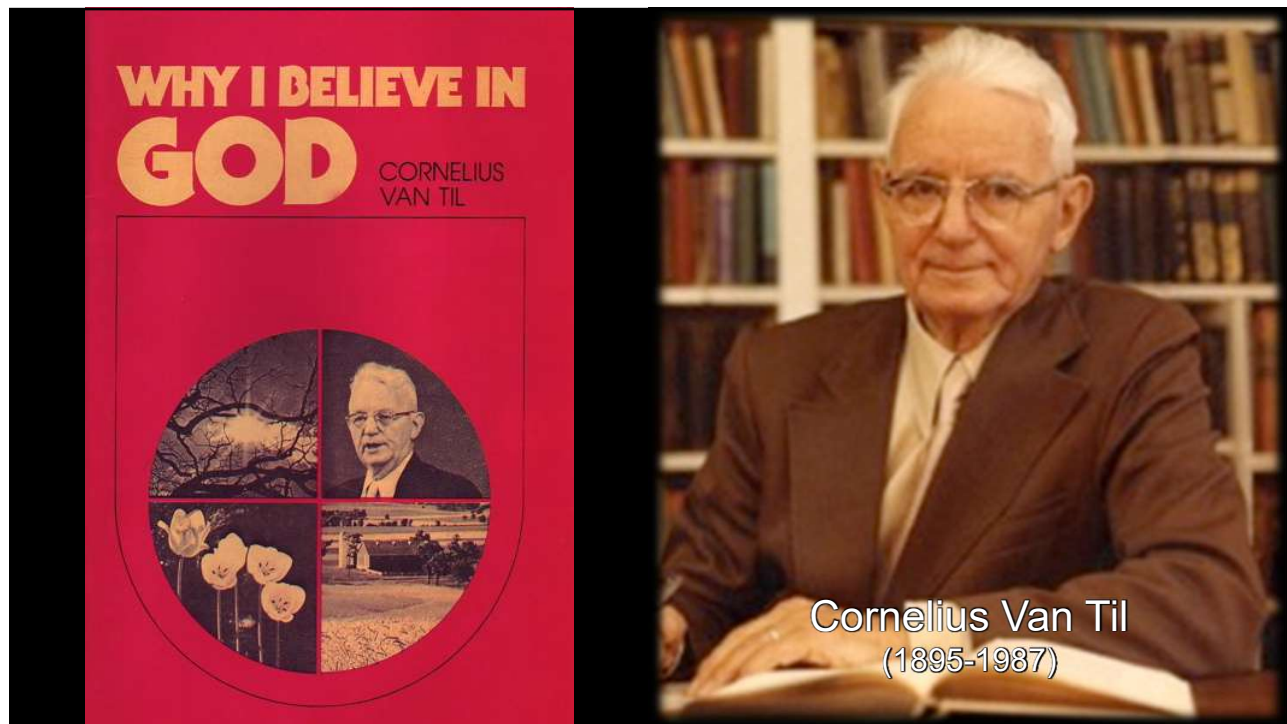
Natural Theology arises from God's General Revelation.

General Revelation: God's revelation of His existence and certain attributes to mankind through His creation.

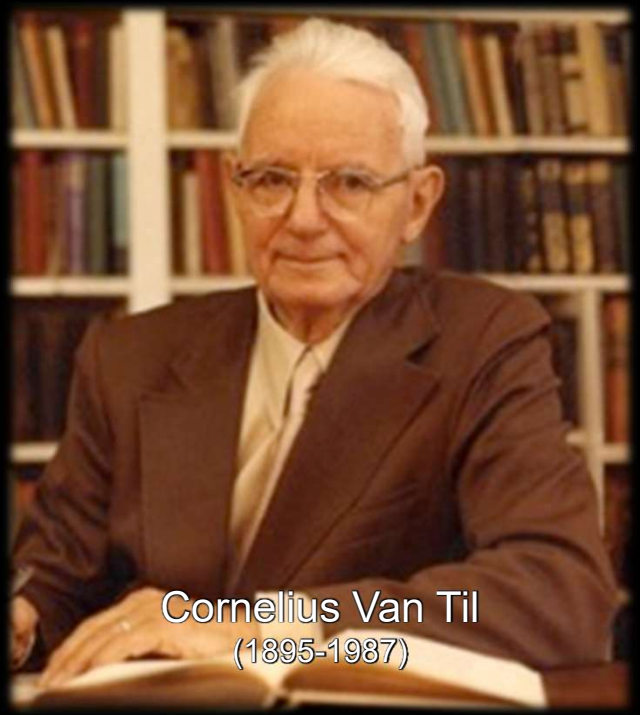
Special Revelation: God's revelation of Himself through His prophets and apostles and ultimate through His taking on human nature in the Incarnation in Jesus Christ.







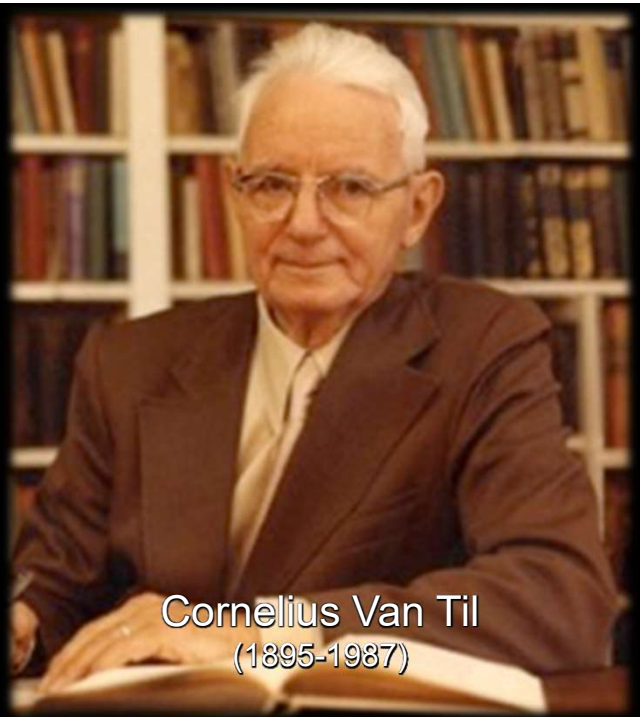
"In our arguments for the existence of God we have frequently assumed that you and we together have an area of knowledge on which we agree."



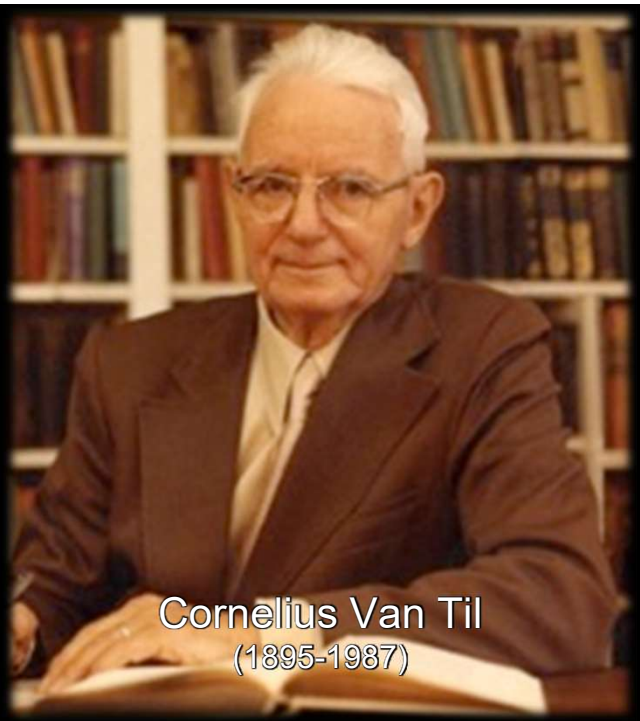
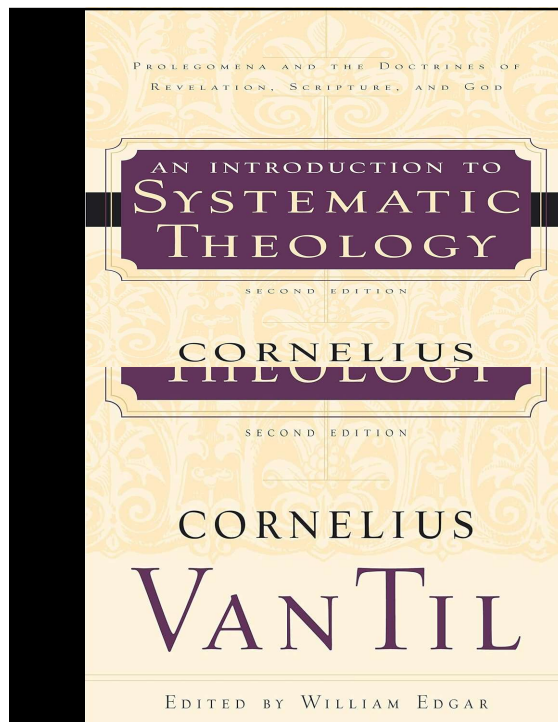
Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

"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."

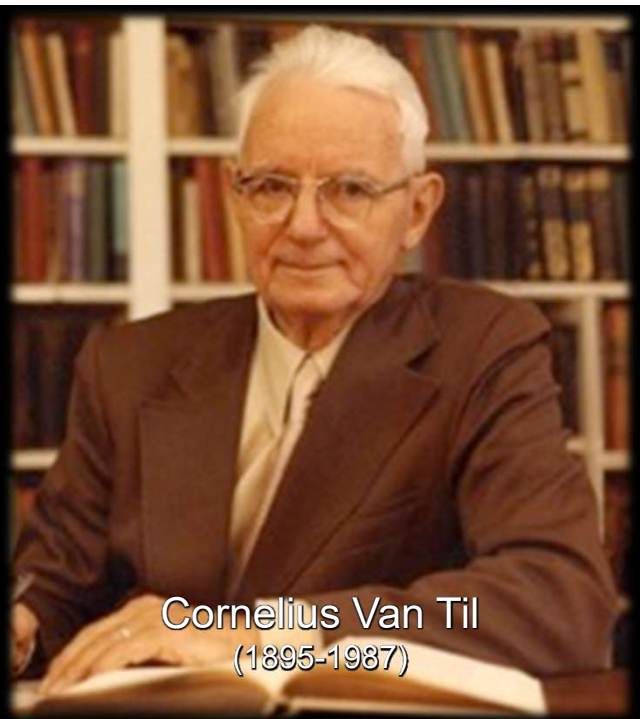
[Why I Believe in God (Philadelphia: Westminster Theological Seminary, n.d.), 9]



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)

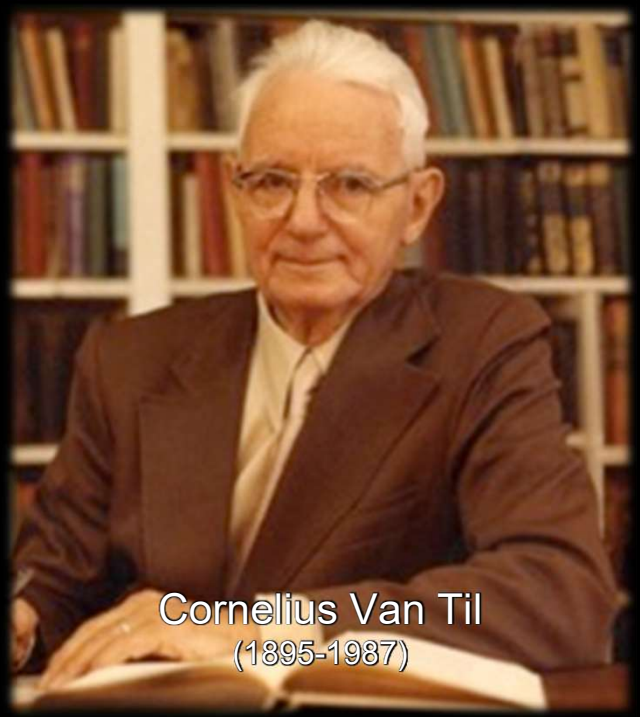


*"We are well aware of the fact that non-Christians have a great deal of knowledge about this world that is true as far as it goes. That is, there is a sense in which we can and must allow for the value of knowledge of non-Christians. **This has always been a difficult point.** It is often the one great source of confusion on the question of faith and its relation to reason."*



*"We should admit that **we cannot give any wholly satisfactory account of the situation as it actually obtains.** ... All that we can do with this question, as with many other questions in theology, is to hem it in, in order to keep out errors, and to say that truth lies within a certain territory.*

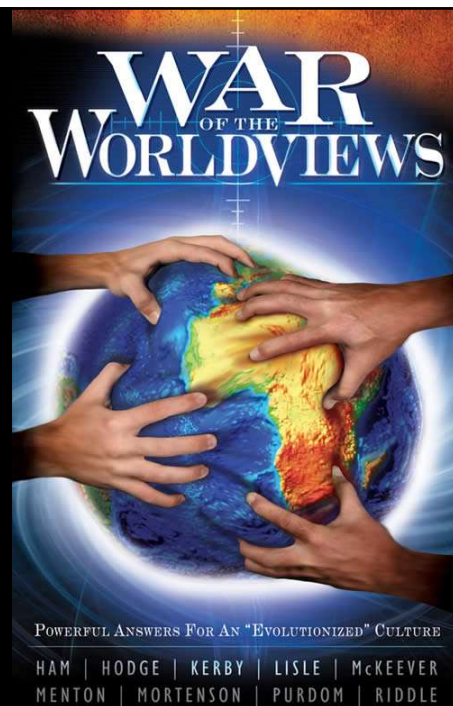
[Cornelius Van Til, *Common Grace and the Gospel*, 2nd ed., edited by K. Scott Oliphint (P&R Publishing, 2015), 63-64]



Cornelius Van Til
(1895-1987)



Jason Lisle



POWERFUL ANSWERS FOR AN "EVOLUTIONIZED" CULTURE


HAM | HODGE | KERBY | LISLE | McKEEVER
MENTON | MORTENSON | PURDOM | RIDDLE



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

Answers IN GENESIS

Answers Store Events Media Kids Education Donate

sign in or sign up United States / English

Bible

- Adam and Eve
- Archaeology
- Bible Characters
- Bible Contradictions
- Bible History
- Bible Questions
- Bible Study
- Bible Timeline
- Genesis
- Gospel
- Hell
- Hermeneutics
- Is the Bible True?
- Noah's Ark
- Noah's Flood: a Historical, Global Catastrophe
- The Flood
- The Word of God
- Tower of Babel

Newsletter

Get the latest answers emailed to you.

Email

☐ I agree to the current Privacy Policy. This site is protected by reCAPTCHA, and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply.

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

Faith vs. Reason

By Dr. Jason Lisle on October 1, 2010; last featured May 19, 2013
Featured in Answers Magazine

[AUDIO VERSION](#)

Share: [f](#) [t](#) [e](#)

Some Christians have the idea that faith and reason are in conflict, divided by some unbridgeable chasm. They think that one takes over where the other leaves off. In reality, faith and reason work together seamlessly to help us know and love our Maker.

Many Christians perceive a conflict between reason and faith. On the one hand, God tells us to reason (Isaiah 1:18). We are to have a good reason for what we believe, and we are to be always ready to share that reason with other people (1 Peter 3:15). So we attempt to show unbelievers that our belief in the Scriptures is reasonable, justified, and logically defensible. The Bible makes sense.

Latest Answers

Stay up to date each week with top articles, blogs, news, videos, and more.

[SIGN UP NOW](#)



Jason Lisle

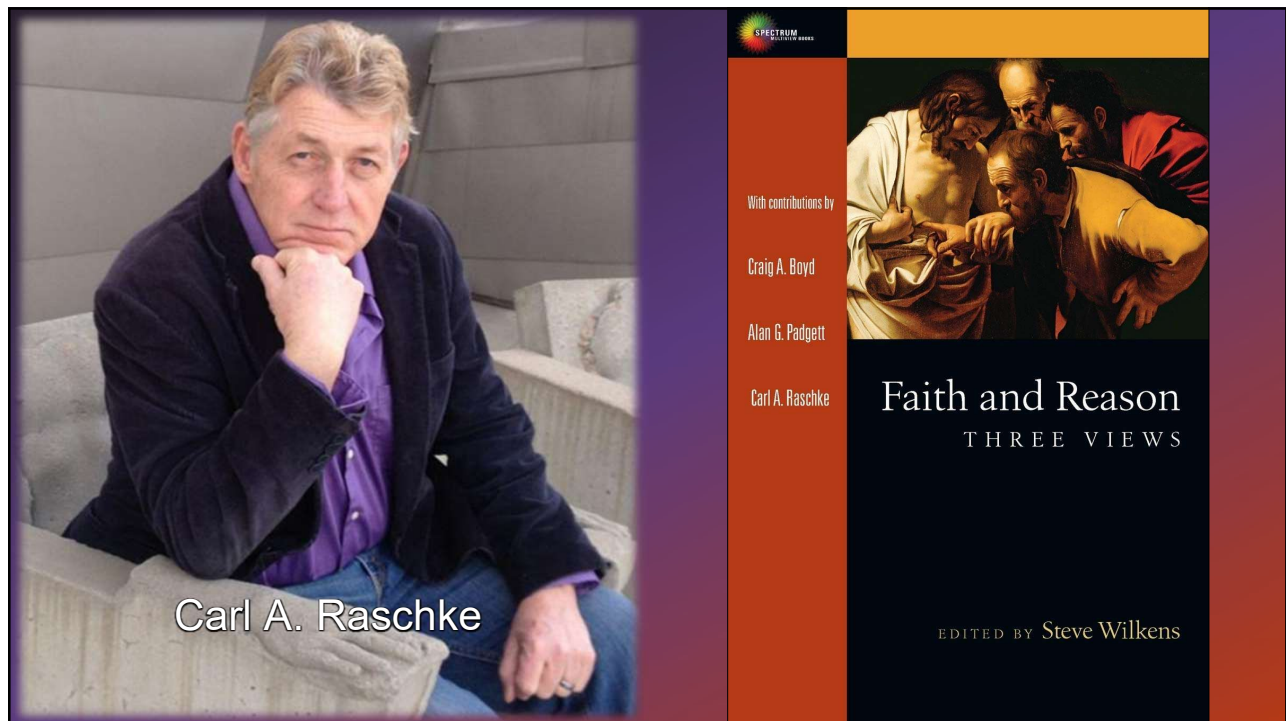
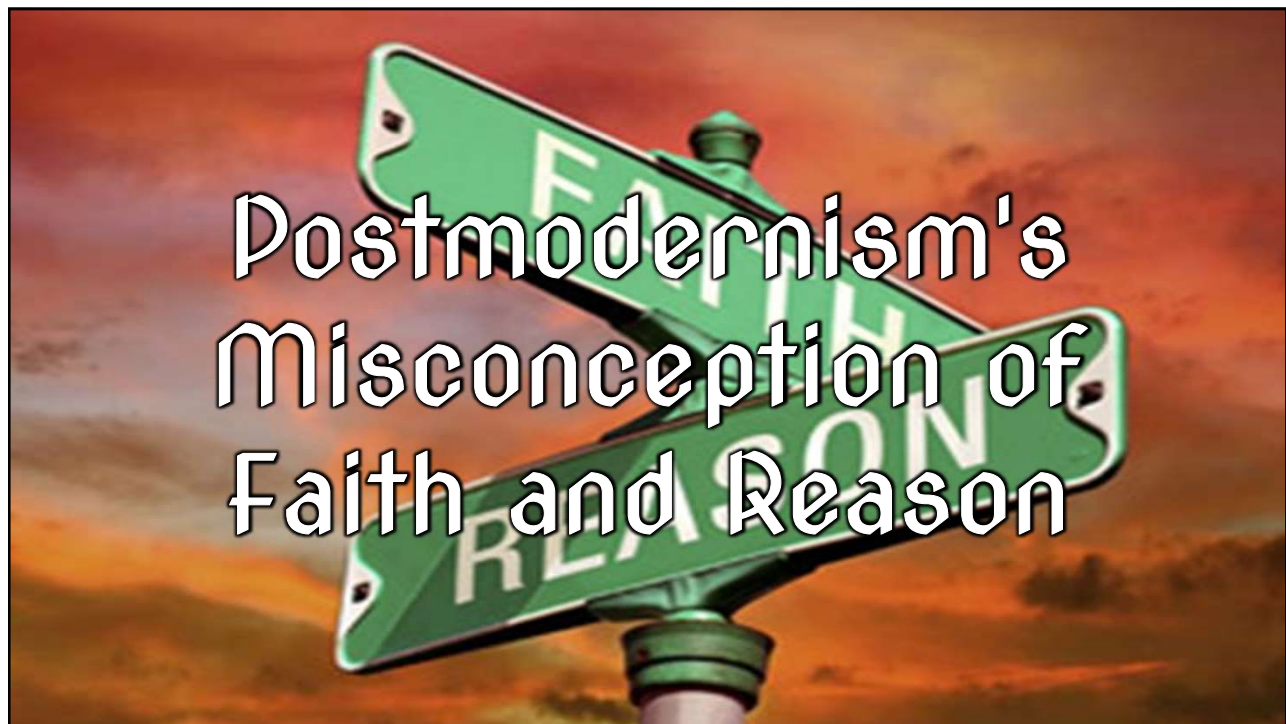
*"Faith is a prerequisite for reason. In order to reason about anything we must have **faith that there are laws of logic** which correctly prescribe the correct chain of reasoning. **Since laws of logic cannot be observed with the senses, our confidence in them is a type of faith.**"*


[Jason Lisle, "Faith and Reason," <https://answersingenesis.org/apologetics/faith-vs-reason/>, accessed 08/13/22]

Lisle is confusing having faith that X is true with X being self-evidently or undeniably true.

*"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 08/13/22]






Carl A. Raschke

"Faith, as well as what we call reason, are not incompatible but belong to separate orders of significance. ... Faith is neither irrational nor suprarational. It has nothing to do with 'reason' per se. ... God does not speak in syllogisms or make philosophical claims that require the fallible human intellect to demonstrate them."


[Carl A. Raschke, "Faith and Philosophy in Tension," in Steve Wilkins, ed., *Faith and Philosophy: Three Views* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014), 63, emphasis in original]



Carl A. Raschke

"Meaning is ultimately determined by how the intricate structures of communication work together in an overarching manner, and it is up to the interpreter to provide a new framework of discourse in which what was first written or spoken can be fleshed out. The 'truth' of a text can be discerned in its deployability within a particular set of life circumstances."

[Carl A. Raschke, "Faith and Philosophy in Tension," in Steve Wilkins, ed., *Faith and Philosophy: Three Views* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014), 61, emphasis in original]




Carl A. Raschke

"Meaning is ultimately determined by how the intricate structures of communication work together in an overarching manner, and it is up to the interpreter to provide a new framework of discourse in which what was first written or spoken can be fleshed out. The 'truth' of a text can be discerned in its deployability within a particular set of life circumstances."

[Carl A. Raschke, "Faith and Philosophy in Tension," in Steve Wilkins, ed., *Faith and Philosophy: Three Views* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014), 61, emphasis in original]

If "meaning is ultimately determined by now intricate structures of communication work together in an overarching manner" and that "it is up to the interpreter to provide a new framework of discourse," then how are we to take the meaning you were seeking to communicate through your statement here?

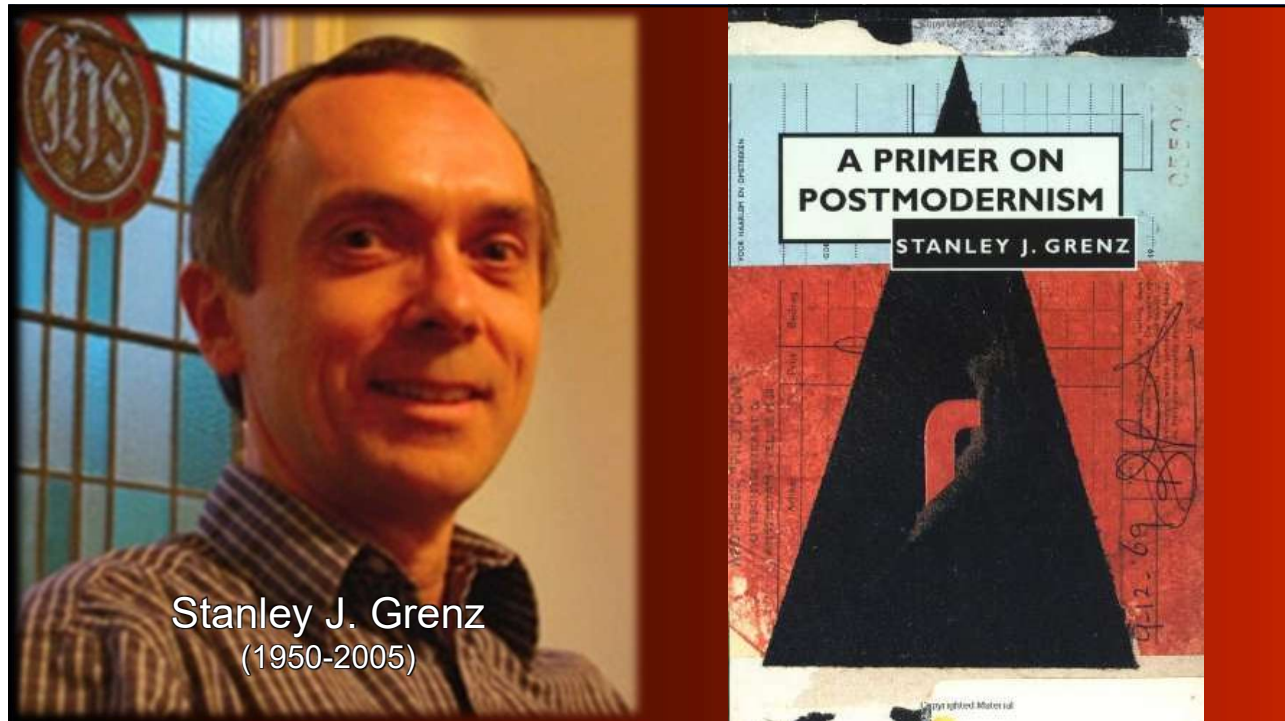
If the interpreter provides a new framework, then why should we take your statement to be objectively true?




Carl A. Raschke

"Propositional logic, whether exercised for the clarification of terms in a formal argument or to prove the validity of some simple assertion, is inadequate to make sense out of the 'revealed' truth of Scripture for one compelling reason: it speaks to the disinterested intellect, whereas God through his Word speaks to the whole person, including the human heart and what in both ancient Greek and later Christian philosophy is known as synderesis, or 'conscience.'"

[Carl A. Raschke, "Faith and Philosophy in Tension," in Steve Wilkins, ed., *Faith and Philosophy: Three Views* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014), 61, emphasis in original]





Stanley J. Grenz
(1950-2005)

"In contrast to the modern ideal of the dispassionate observer, we affirm the postmodern discovery that no observer can stand outside the historical process. Nor can we gain universal, culturally neutral knowledge as unconditioned specialists."

If what Grenz says is true, then his own statement itself does not come from an observer who stands "outside the historical process" and, thus, the statement is not itself "neutral knowledge" coming from an "unconditioned specialist."


Since this is the case, why should we believe that it is objectively true?



Stanley J. Grenz
(1950-2005)

*"On the contrary, we are participants in our historical and cultural context, and **all our intellectual endeavors are unavoidably conditioned by that participation.**"*

[Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 166]




Stanley J. Grenz
(1950-2005)

*"On the contrary, we are participants in our historical and cultural context, and **all our intellectual endeavors** are unavoidably conditioned by that participation."*

[Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 166]

If "all our intellectual endeavors" are "unavoidably conditioned" then Grenz's own statement is itself "unavoidably conditioned."

But if his statement is "unavoidably conditioned," then why should we take it as objectively true?



Dan McGee

Medium

Truth and Postmodernism

Dan M. · Follow
4 min read · Mar 29, 2017

👤 31 💬 2 📖 ⌂

I initially thought this was a parody of conservative thinking, but on second reading, I realized that it was a genuine (albeit likely willful) lack of understanding of postmodernist thinking. Thus, there are some critiques the discussants should consider.

First, postmodernism (and epistemology generally) distinguishes between subjective truths and objective truths. The former are statements about one's individual experience of the world, while the latter comprise propositions supported either inductively or deductively.

For example, the colour red contains both objective and subjective truths. Objectively, 'red' is the term given to light in the visible spectrum with wavelengths around 650 nm. However, seeing the colour is a subjective experience that happens within the brain of each observer. Thus, my experience of seeing red need not be identical to yours.

The discussants might still object to the existence of subjective truths, saying



Dan McGee

*"Postmodernism stresses the distinction between objectivity of facts, versus objectivity of knowledge or people. It accepts the possible existence of facts outside human context, but argues that **all knowledge is mediated** by an individual and that the experiences, **biases**, beliefs, and identity of that individual **necessarily influence how they mediate any knowledge.**"*

[Dan McGee, "Truth and Postmodernism" downloaded from <https://medium.com/@danmcgee/truth-and-postmodernism-816ea9b3007a>, 05/09/22]



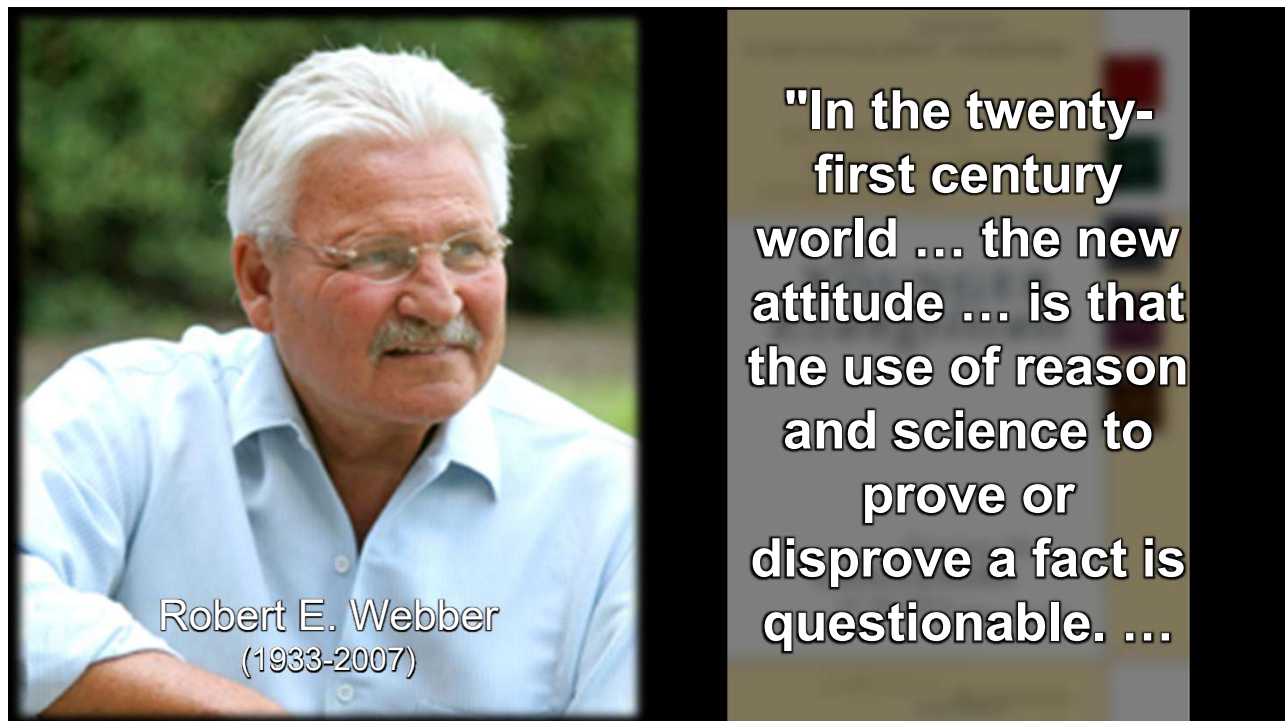
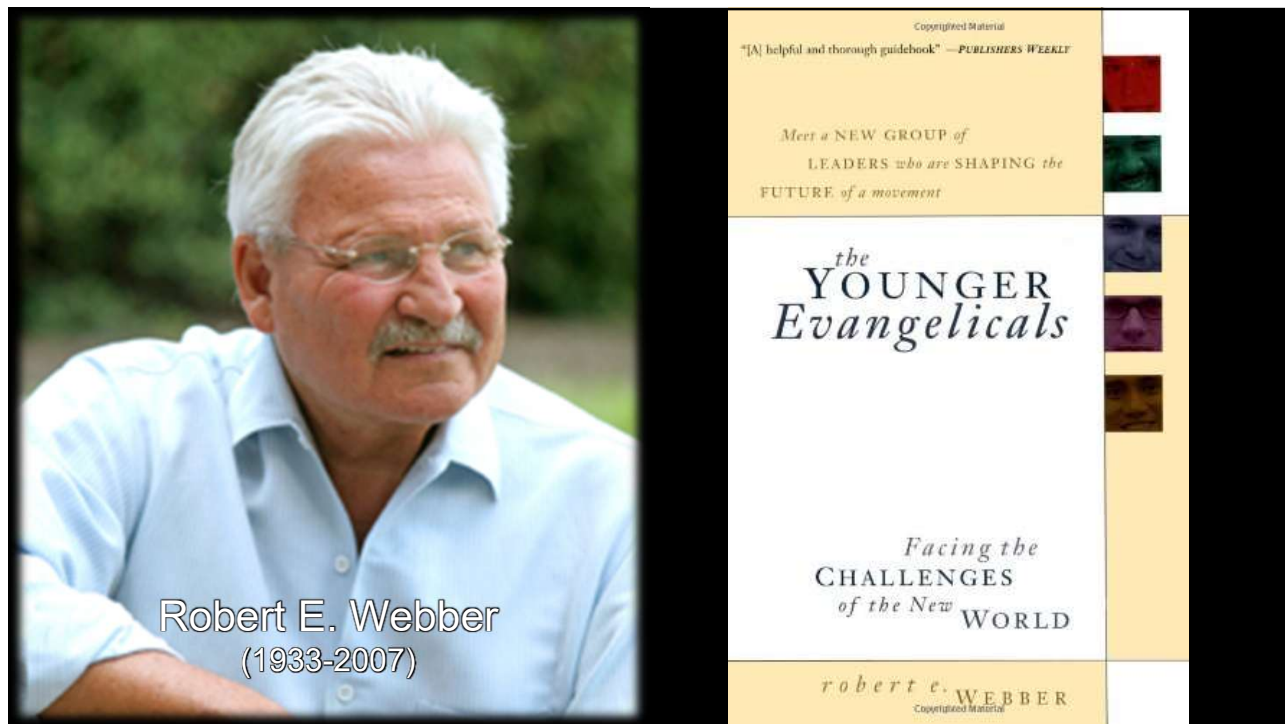
Dan McGee

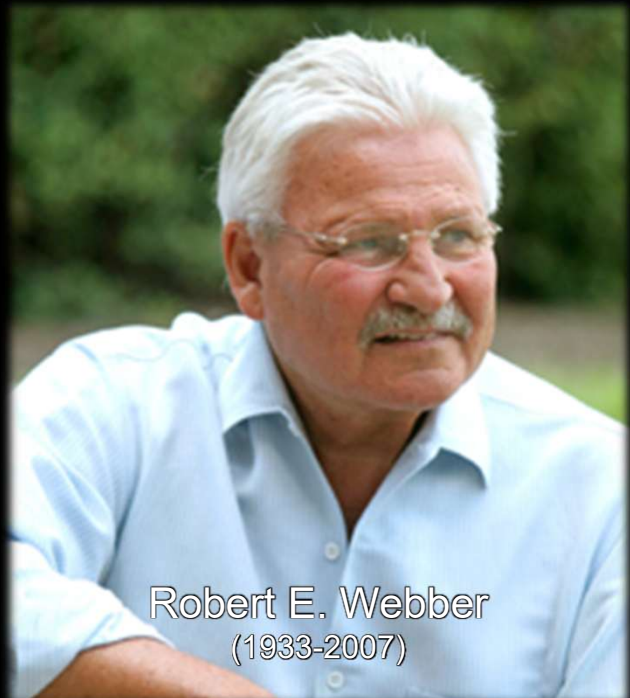
*"Postmodernism stresses the distinction between objectivity of facts, versus objectivity of knowledge or people. It accepts the possible existence of facts outside human context, but argues that **all knowledge is mediated** by an individual and that the experiences, **biases**, beliefs, and identity of that individual **necessarily influence how they mediate any knowledge.**"*

[Dan McGee, "Truth and Postmodernism" downloaded from <https://medium.com/@danmcgee/truth-and-postmodernism-816ea9b3007a>, 05/09/22]

If "all knowledge is mediated" and the individual has "biases" that "necessarily influence how they mediate ANY knowledge" (emphasis added), then this would be true of Dan McGee and the knowledge claim he is making right here.

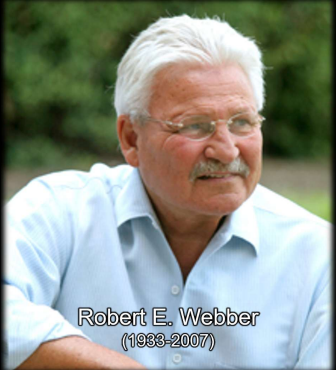
But if this is true of Dan McGee's claim here, why should we take his claim to be objectively true?





Robert E. Webber
(1933-2007)

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



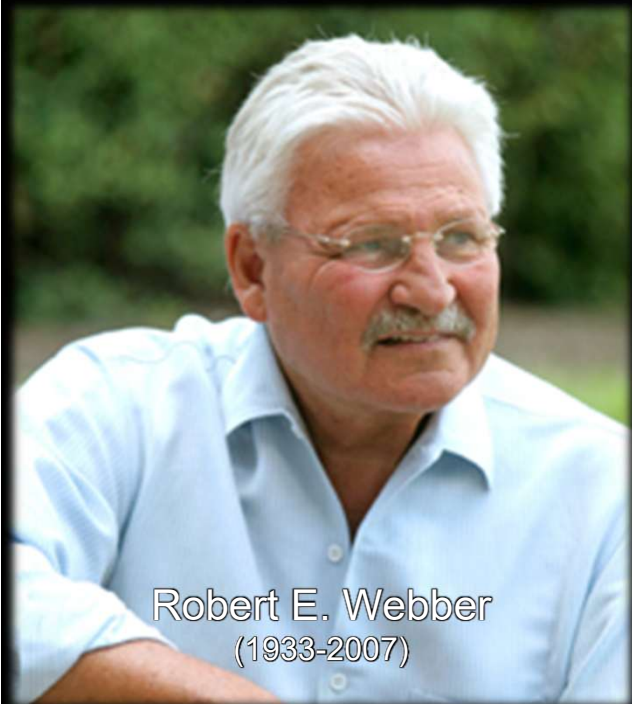
Robert E. Webber
(1933-2007)

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

***Again, if we deal with
"interpreted facts," then
what does that say about
Webber's statement
itself?***

***Is his claim here merely
an "interpreted fact?"***

***If so, then why should we
take it as objectively
true?***



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]



Carl A. Raschke

"Meaning is ultimately determined by how the intricate structures of communication work together in an overarching manner, and it is up to the interpreter to provide a new framework of discourse in which what was first written or spoken can be fleshed out. The 'truth' of a text can be discerned in its deployability within a particular set of life circumstances."

[Carl A. Raschke, "Faith and Philosophy in Tension," in Steve Wilentz, ed., *Faith and Philosophy: Three Views* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014), 61, emphasis in original]



Dan McGee

"Postmodernism stresses the distinction between objectivity of facts, versus objectivity of knowledge or people. It accepts the possible existence of facts outside human context, but argues that **all knowledge is mediated** by an individual and that the experiences, **biases**, beliefs, and identity of that individual **necessarily influence how they mediate any knowledge.**"

[Dan McGee, "Truth and Postmodernism," downloaded from <https://medium.com/@danmcgee/truth-and-postmodernism-816ea9b3007a>, 05/09/22]



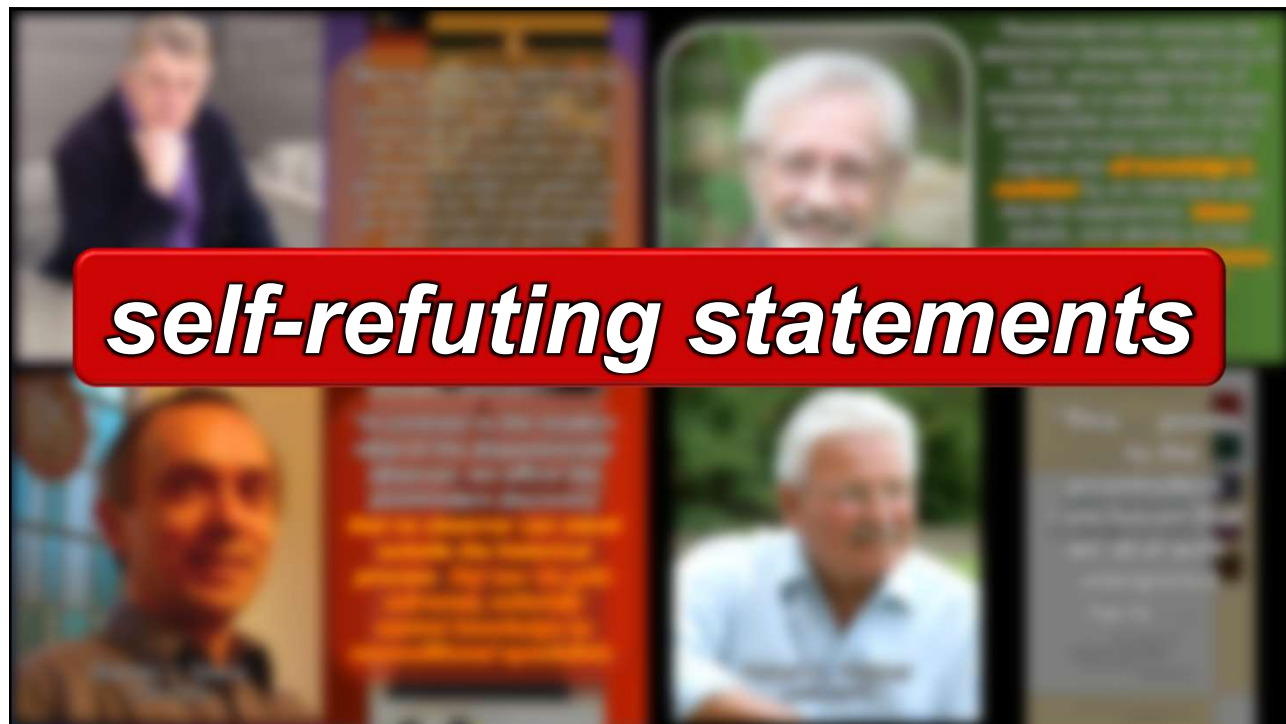
Stanley J. Grenz
(1950-2005)

"In contrast to the modern ideal of the dispassionate observer, we affirm the postmodern discovery that **no observer can stand outside the historical process. Nor can we gain universal, culturally neutral knowledge as unconditioned specialists.**"



Robert E. Webber
(1933-2007)

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



Saturday, 10 March 2018

HOMILETICS ONLINE

for those who have too much integrity to preach someone else's sermon!

Home | PowerPoint | Timothy's Blog | My Account | Shop | Contact Us | Help | Log off

Home

HOMILETICS INTERVIEW: Robert E. Webber

What Younger Evangelicals Want—and Are Getting!

Robert E. Webber is the William R. and Geraldyn B. Myers Professor of Ministry at Northern Seminary in Lombard, Illinois, one of the only seminaries in the country that offers a Master's and a Doctorate in worship and which has intentional studies that integrate worship and spirituality into the program. He is also the President of the Institute For Worship Studies which offers a MWS (Masters of Worship Studies) and a DWS (Doctor of Worship Studies). He is also Professor of Theology Emeritus at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois.

Dr. Webber has lectured on worship in nearly every denomination and fellowship, and has authored or edited more than 40 books on worship including the eight-volume work, *The Complete Library of Christian Worship*. His most recent books include: *Planning Blended Worship* (Abingdon, 1998), *Ancient-Future Faith* (Baker, 1999), and *Journey to Jesus* (Abingdon, 2001).

His latest book, *The Younger Evangelical* (Baker, 2002), is attracting broad attention and interest because of its incisive look at a new emerging leadership in the church, while at the same time pausing to look at the leadership models of the 20th-century church.

Dr. Webber was scheduled to speak at a conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on Radical Orthodoxy, where Homiletics was to meet up with him for this interview. But he called a few days before the conference to say that he had had back surgery and wouldn't be there. So we met with him in his home in Wheaton, where in the kitchen, and in a straight-back chair, he gladly and graciously discussed his observations about a church that is in the midst of change and the Younger Evangelicals who are leading the way.

Homiletics: To start, we should probably clarify the categories you develop for evangelicals in the 20th century and the early 21st century. You identify traditional, pragmatic and Younger Evangelicals. What defines these groups?

Webber: The underlying idea of these three groups is that evangelicalism seems to follow the curvature of culture and reflects culture. And if you look back over the last 50-60 years, culture has actually gone through three very distinct groupings: Boomers, Gen-Xers and now Millennials. It seems to me that as evangelicalism encounters each cultural shift that each cultural shift as they integrate with it gives a different shape and form, not so much to the message, but to the way in which the message itself is



Robert E. Webber

Other Homiletics Interviews:

Preaching Is an Incarnational Event — **Richard Ward**

Jesus and the Consumerist Culture — **Tyler Wigg Stevenson**

Taking God to Work — **David Miller**

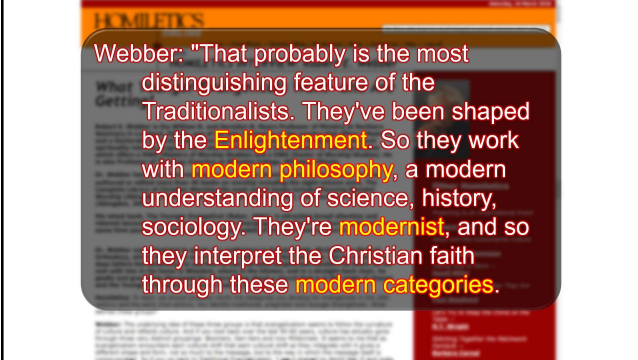
Why Things Are the Way They Are — **Paul Shepherd**

Let's Try to Keep the China on the Table — **N.T. Wright**

Stitching Together the Patchwork Family — **Barbara Carnal**

Homiletics: So then, the Traditional Evangelicals function within a modern worldview that is rationalistic, and propositional.

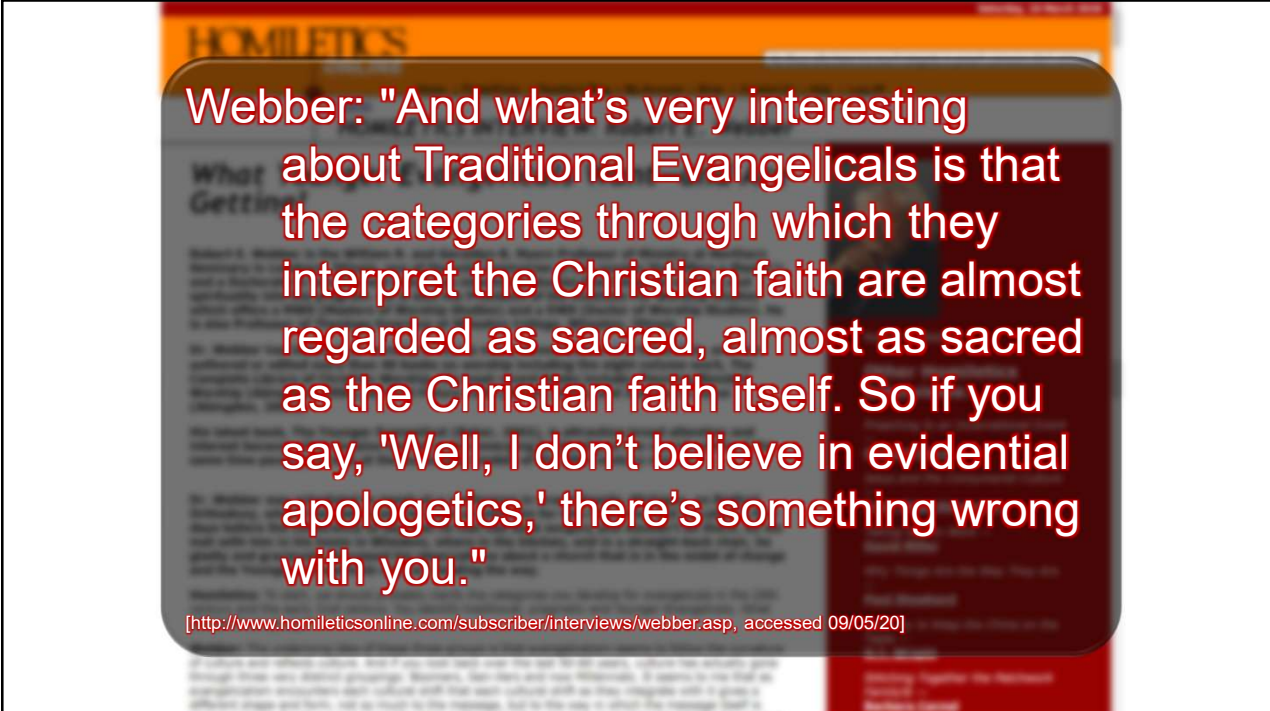
Webber: "That probably is the most distinguishing feature of the Traditionalists. They've been shaped by the **Enlightenment**. So they work with **modern philosophy**, a modern understanding of science, history, sociology. They're **modernist**, and so they interpret the Christian faith through these **modern categories**."



Webber: "That probably is the most distinguishing feature of the Traditionalists. They've been shaped by the **Enlightenment**. So they work with **modern philosophy**, a modern understanding of science, history, sociology. They're **modernist**, and so they interpret the Christian faith through these **modern categories**."

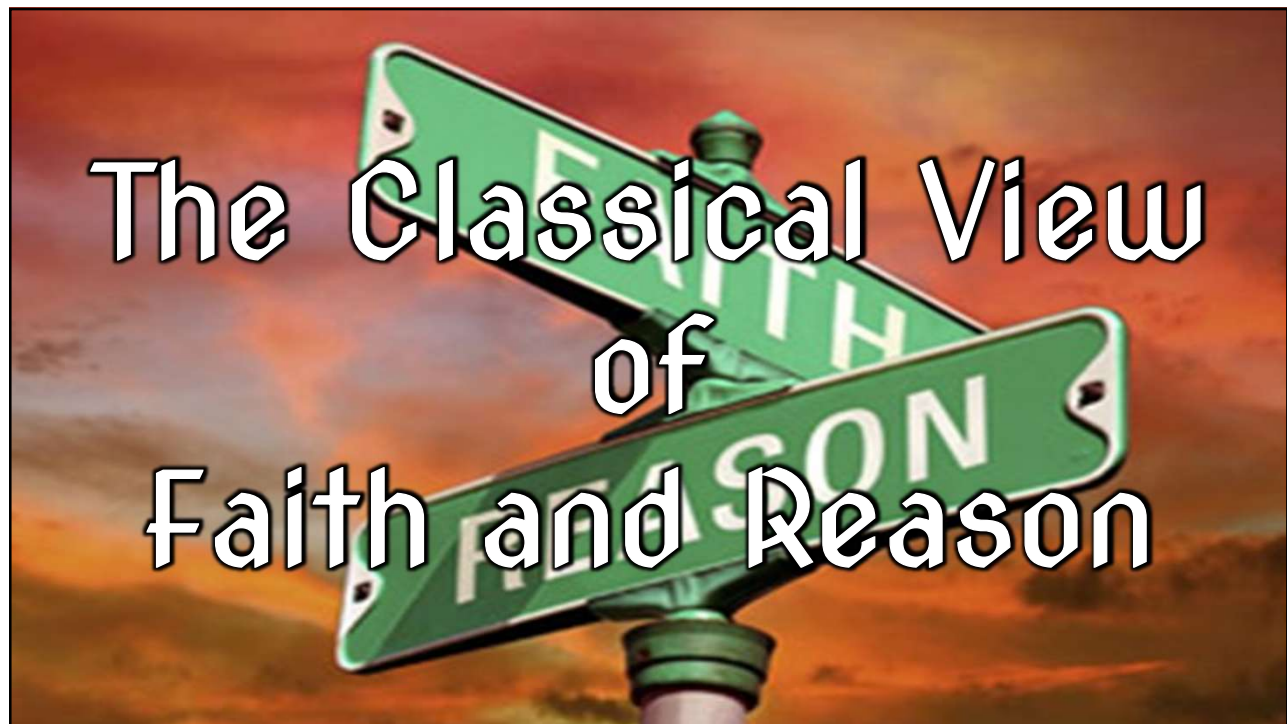
Earlier, Webber accused "Traditional Evangelicals" as functioning within "a modern worldview that is rationalistic and propositional."

I submit for your consideration (without argument at this point) that Webber characterizing this worldview as "shaped by the Enlightenment" and working with "modern philosophy" through "modern categories" is misleading at best and a misreading of the history of ideas at worst.



Webber: "And what's very interesting about Traditional Evangelicals is that the categories through which they interpret the Christian faith are almost regarded as sacred, almost as sacred as the Christian faith itself. So if you say, 'Well, I don't believe in evidential apologetics,' there's something wrong with you."

[<http://www.homileticonline.com/subscriber/interviews/webber.asp>, accessed 09/05/20]



Classical View of Faith and Reason

Reason

Believing something on the basis of demonstration.

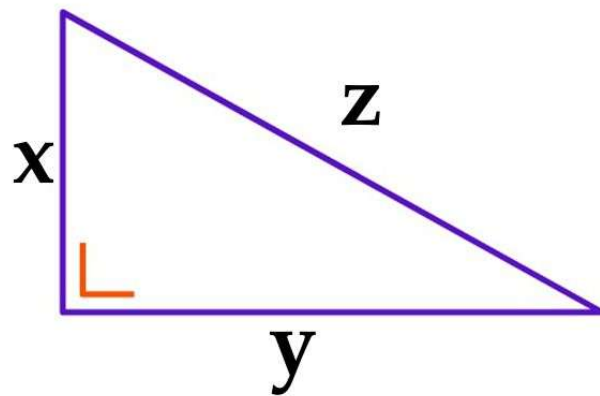
Faith

Believing something on the basis of authority.

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

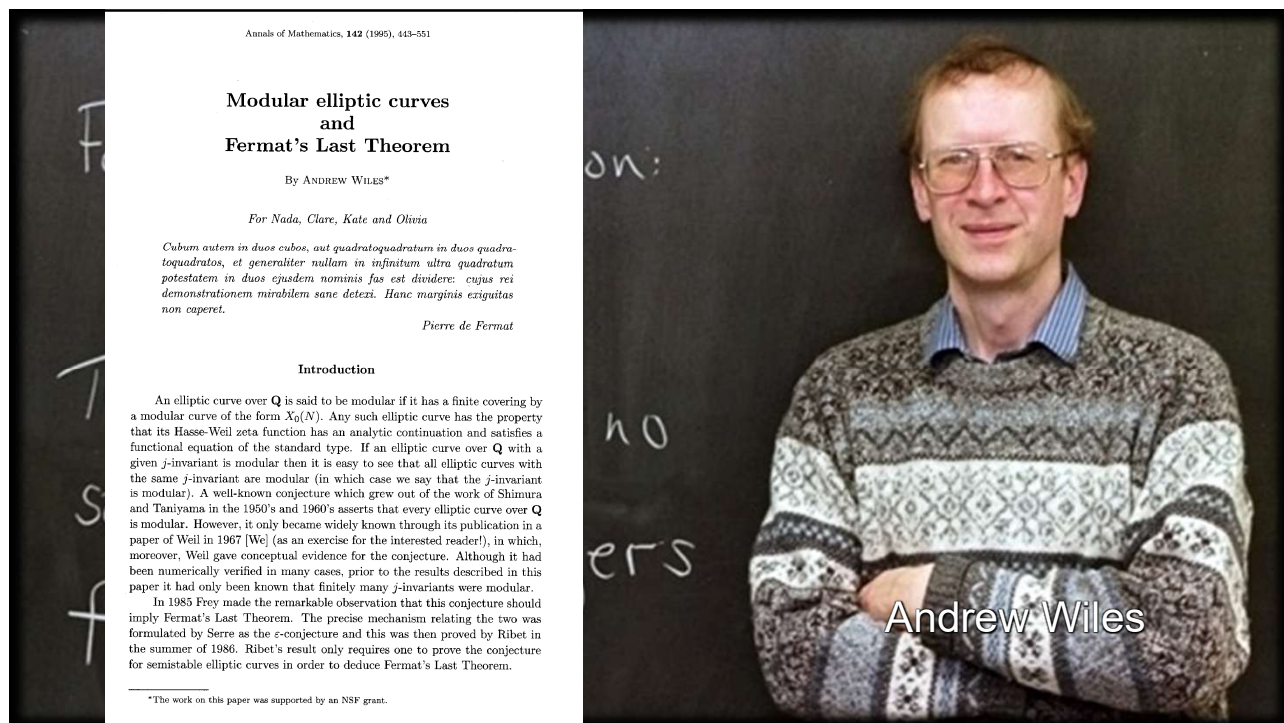
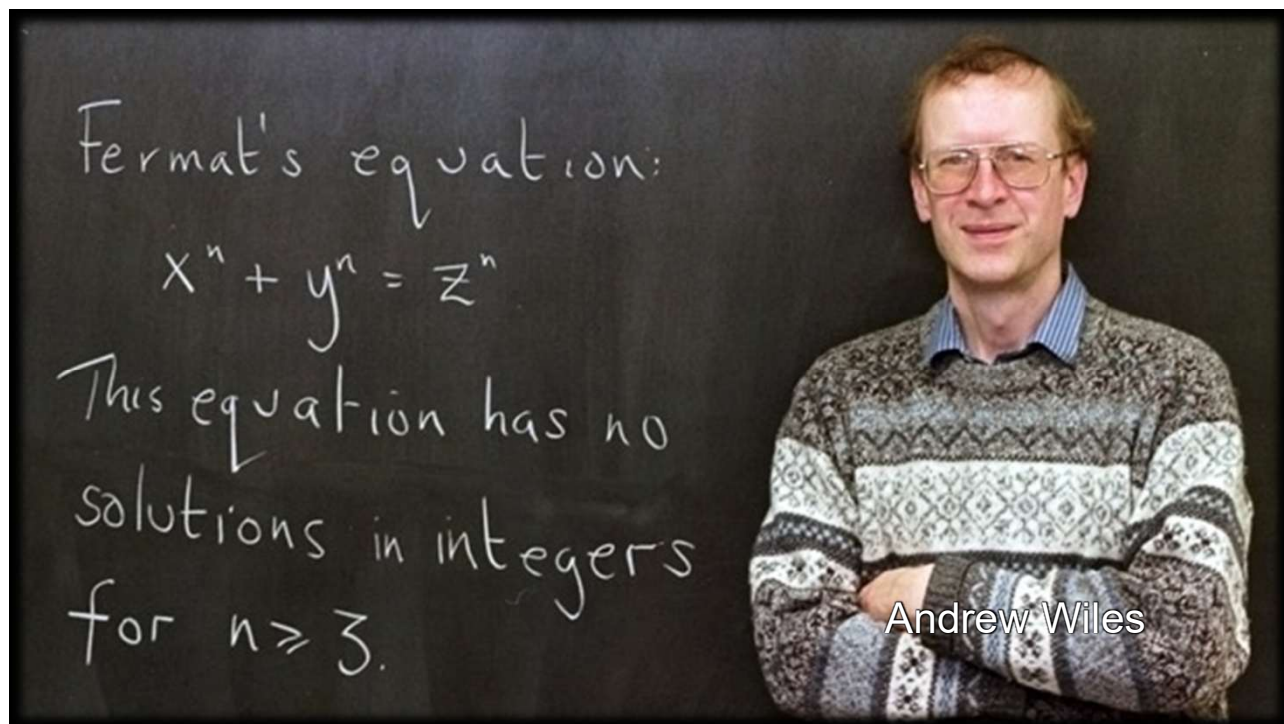


Pierre de Fermat
(1601-1665)



Pythagorean Theorem

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



Classical View of Faith and Reason

Reason

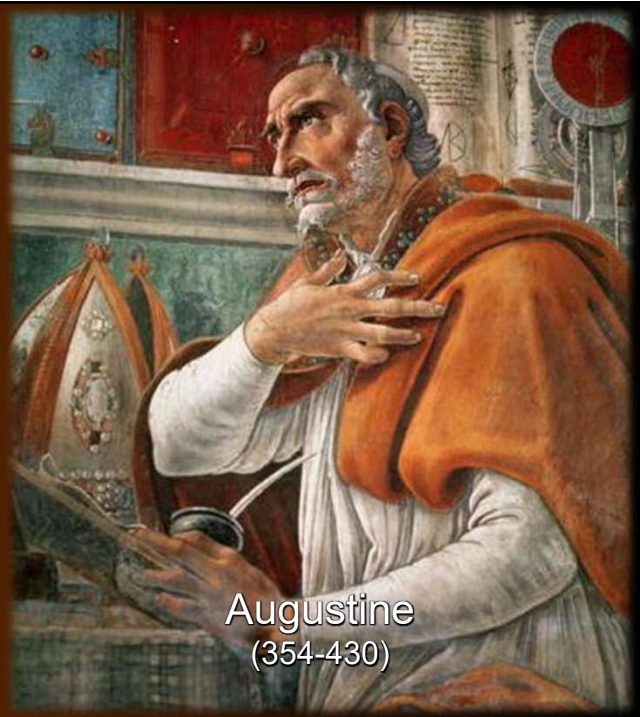
*Believing
something on
the basis of
demonstration.*

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."***

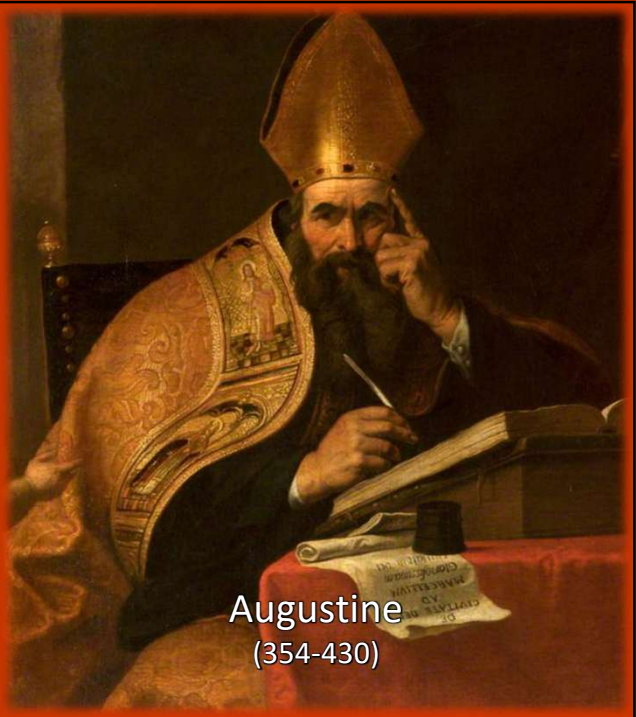
[On the Predestination of the Saints, 5, as cited in Norman L. Geisler, ed.
What Augustine Says (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982), 13]



Augustine
(354-430)

"Heaven forbid, after all, that God should hate in us that by which he made us more excellent than the other animals. Heaven forbid, I say, that we should believe in such a way that we do not accept or seek a rational account, since we could not even believe if we did not have rational souls."

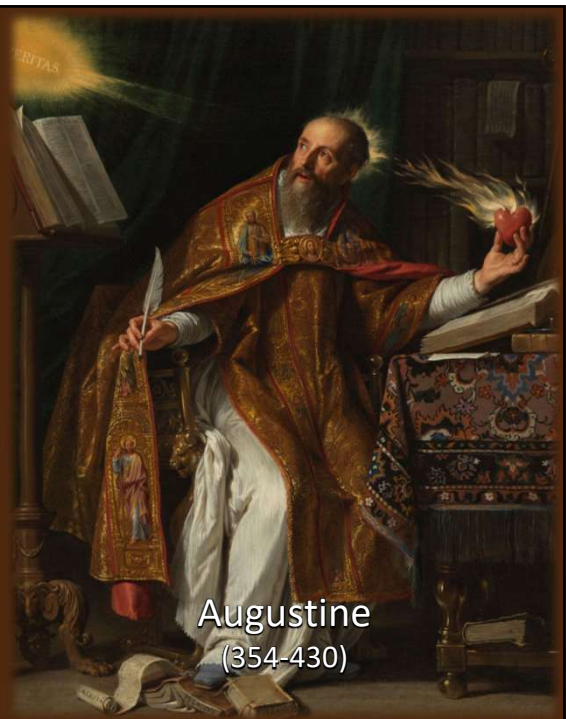
[Letter 120, in *Letters 100-155* (Vol. II/2), trans. Roland Teske (Hyde Park: New City Press), p. 131]



Augustine
(354-430)

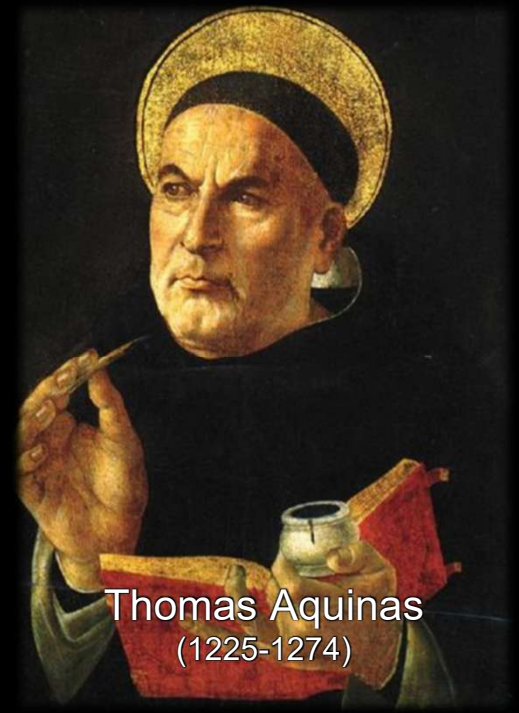
"In certain matters, therefore, pertaining to the teaching of salvation, which we cannot grasp by reason, but which we will be able to at some point, faith precedes reason so that the heart may be purified in order that it may receive and sustain the light of the great reason, which is, of course, a demand of reason!"

[Letter 120, Teske, p. 131]



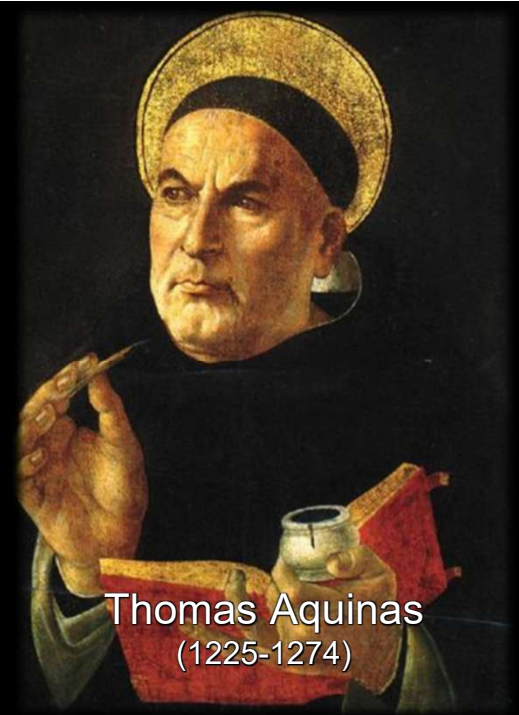
Augustine
(354-430)

"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)

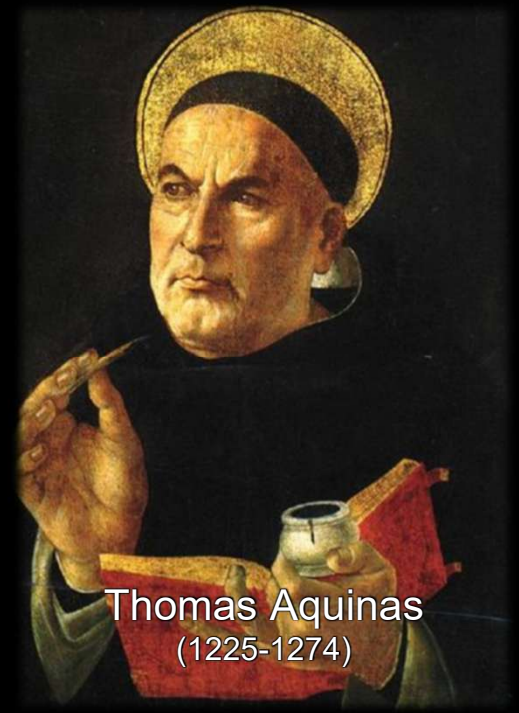
"Those things, however, which are beyond the power of our understanding are said to be absent from the senses of the mind. Hence, our understanding cannot be fixed on them."



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."

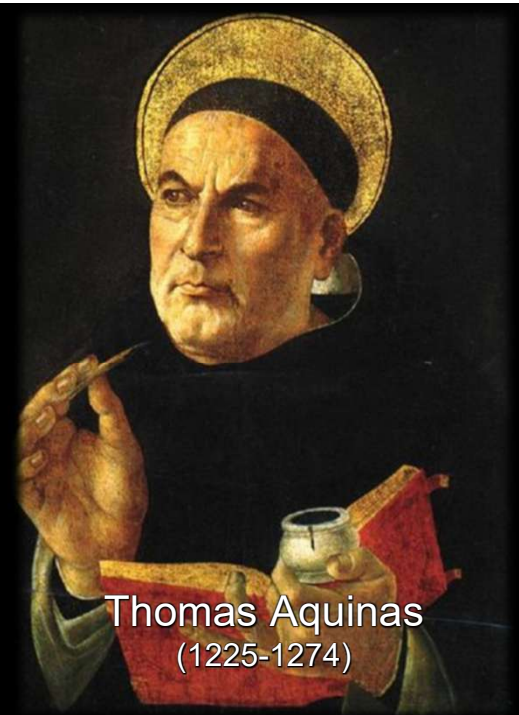
[*Truth*, QXIV, Art. 9, reply, trans. James V. McGlynn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 249-250]



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."

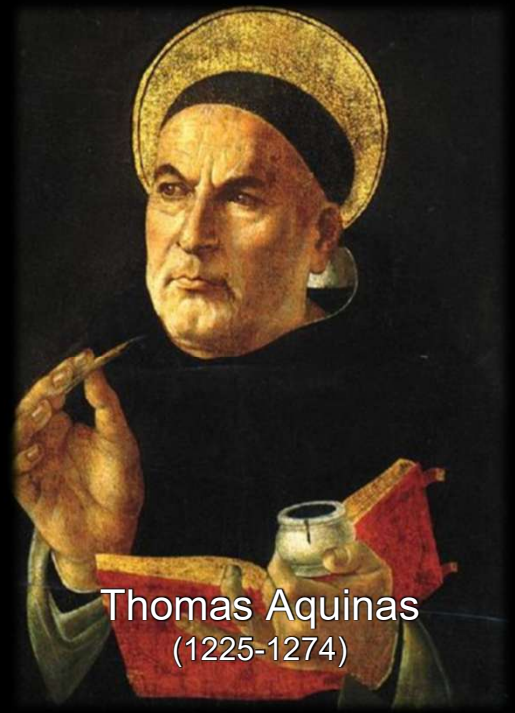
[*Truth*, QXIV, Art. 9, reply, trans. James V. McGlynn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 249-250]



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."

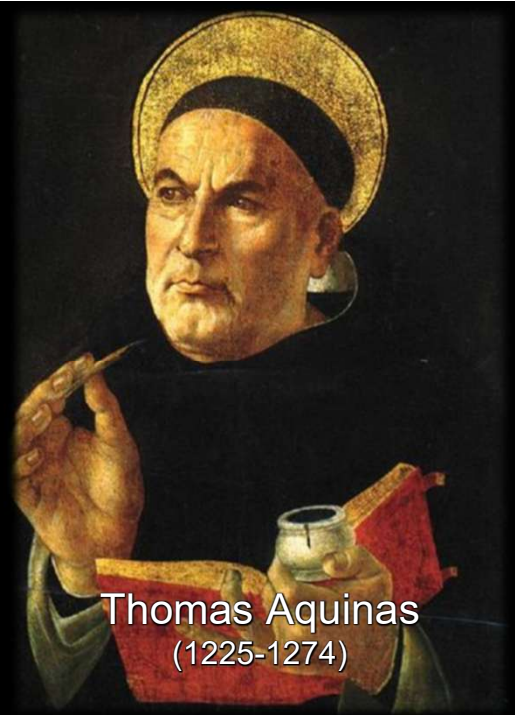
[SCG, 3, 154 [1], trans. Vernon J. Bourke, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), 239]



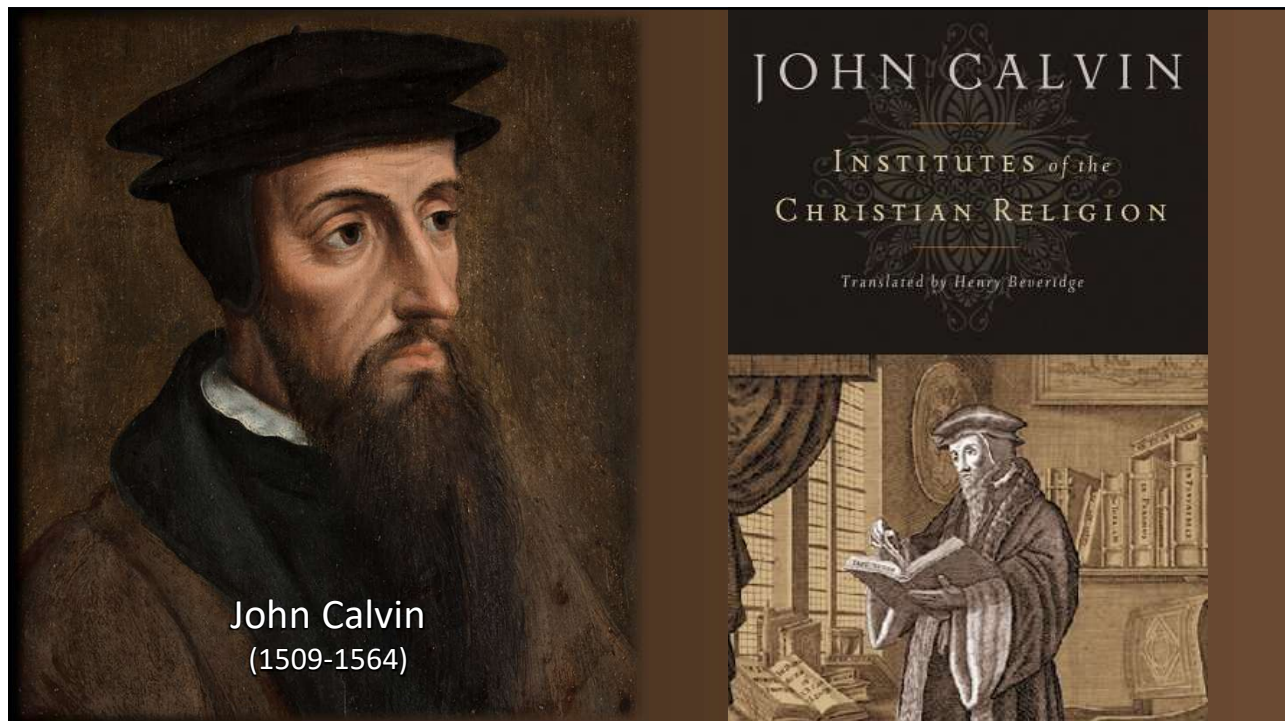
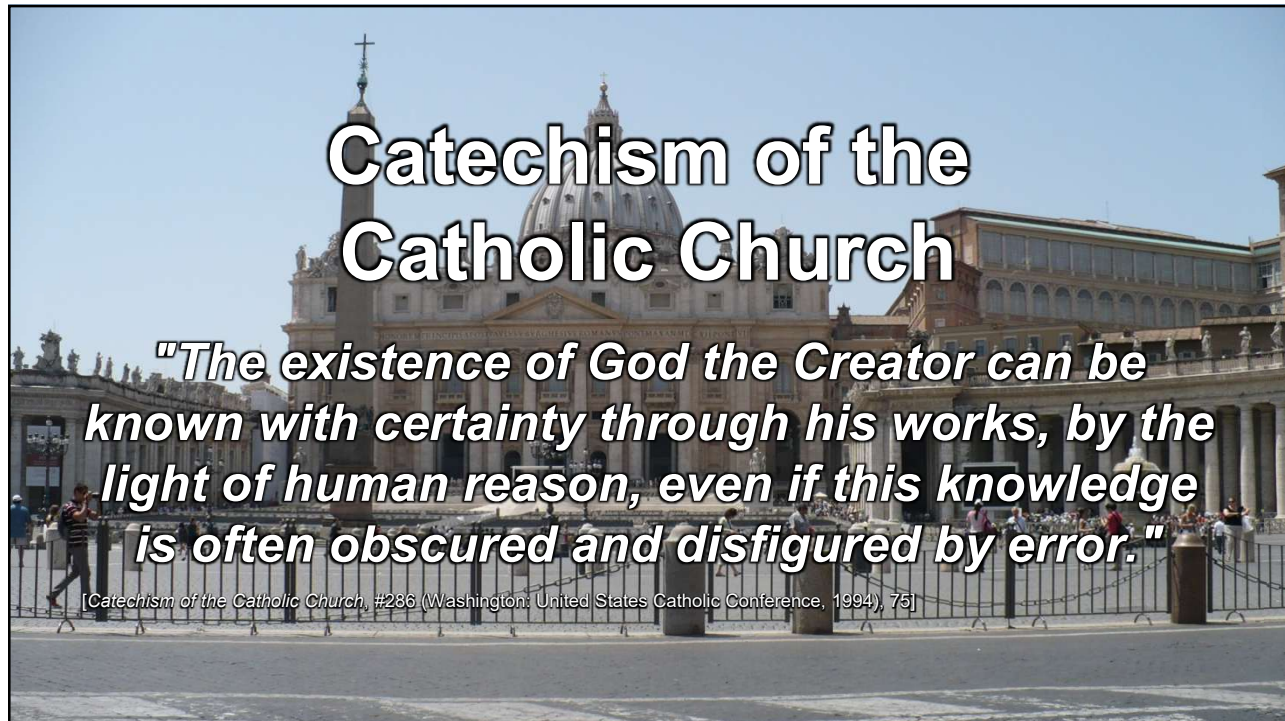
Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

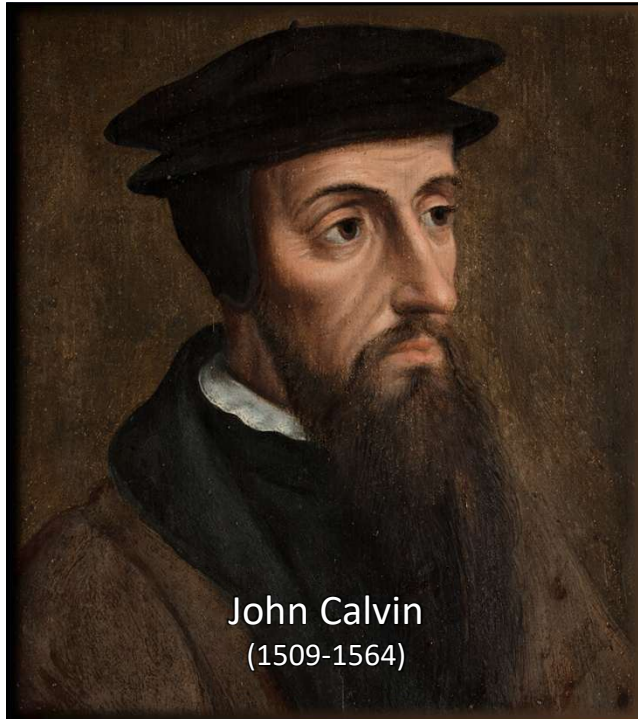
"There are some intelligible truths to which the efficacy of the agent intellect extends, like the principles we naturally know and the conclusions we deduce from them. In order to know them we do not need a new intellectual light; the light endowed by nature suffices. There are some truths, however, which do not come within the range of these principles, like the truths of faith, which transcend the faculty of reason, also future contingents and other matters of this sort. The human mind cannot know these without being divinely illumined by a new light supplementing the natural light."

[Faith, Reason and Theology: Questions I-IV of His Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius, trans. Armand Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1987), 17]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

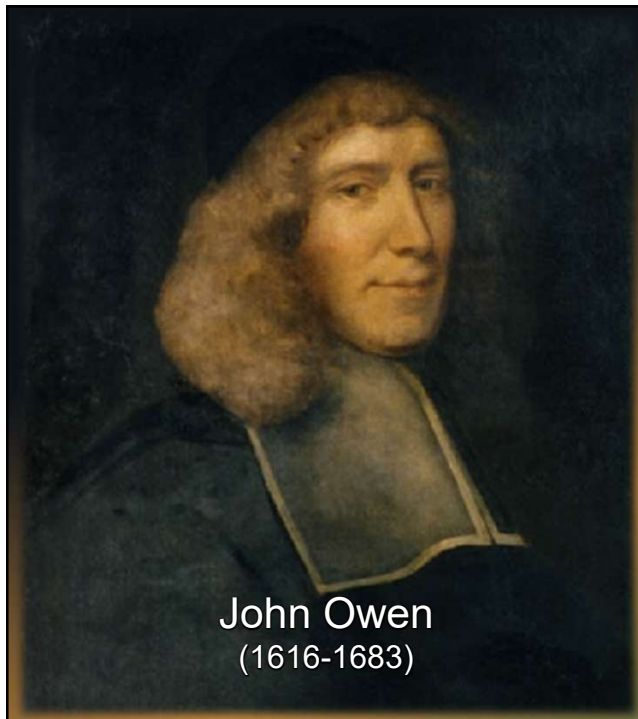




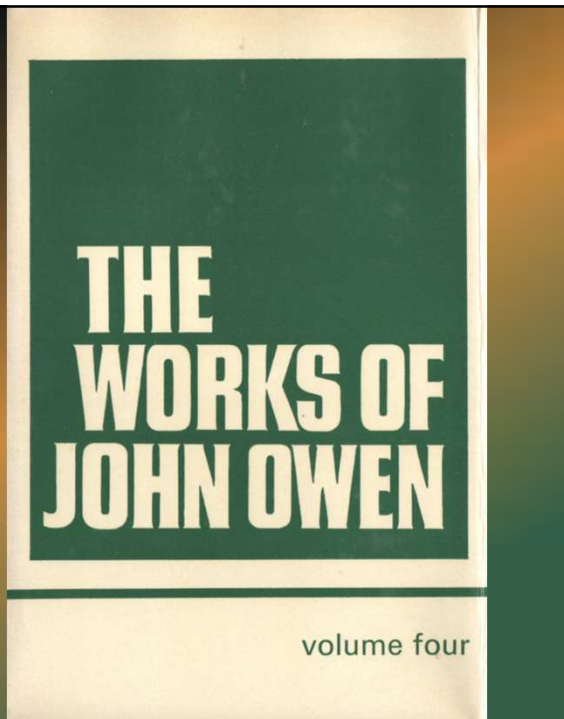
John Calvin
(1509-1564)

"Therefore in reading the profane authors, the admirable light of truth displayed in them should remind us, that the human mind, however much fallen and perverted from its original integrity, is still adorned and invested with admirable gifts from its Creator."

[*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.2.15, trans. Henry Beveridge, (Grand Rapids: William B. Erdmans), 236]

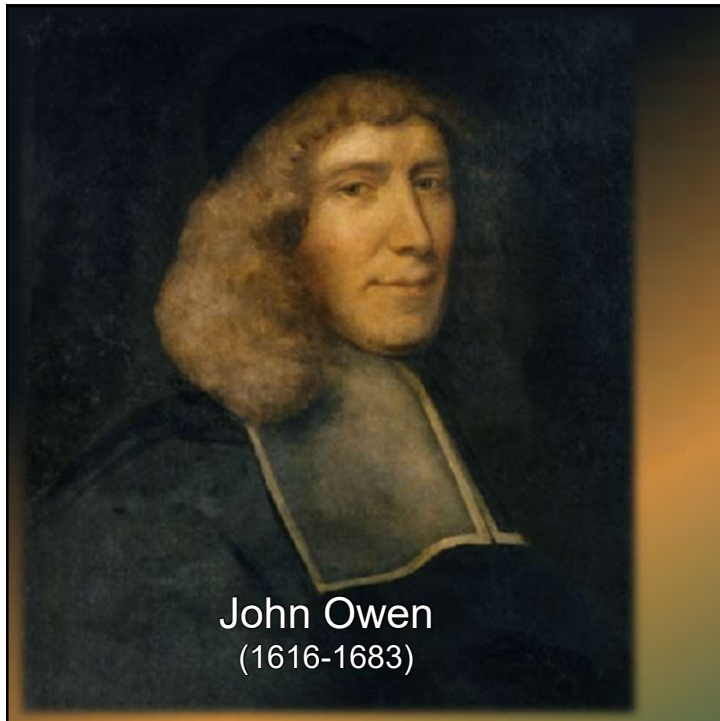


John Owen
(1616-1683)



THE WORKS OF JOHN OWEN

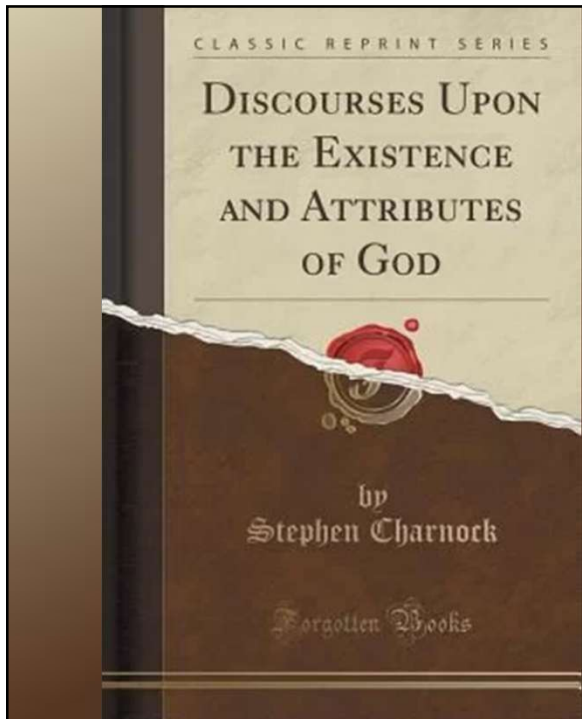
volume four



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]




CLASSIC REPRINT SERIES

**DISCOURSES UPON
THE EXISTENCE
AND ATTRIBUTES
OF GOD**

by
Stephen Charnock

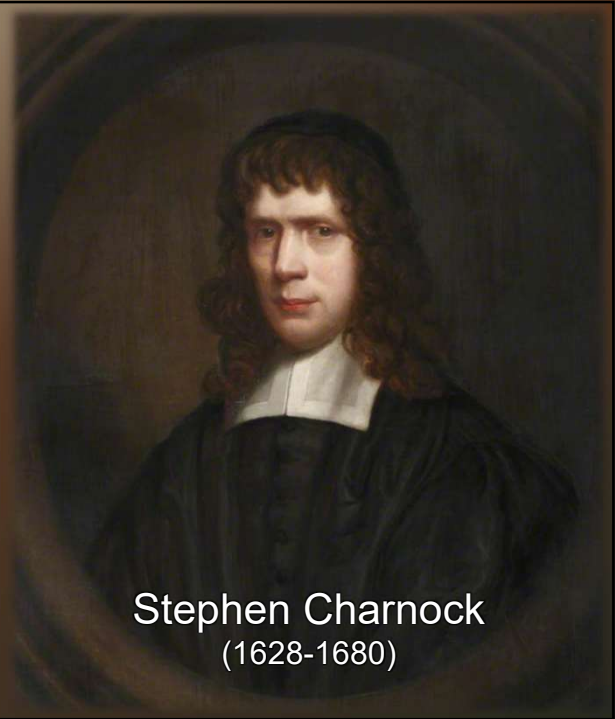
Forgotten Books



Stephen Charnock
(1628-1680)

"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"

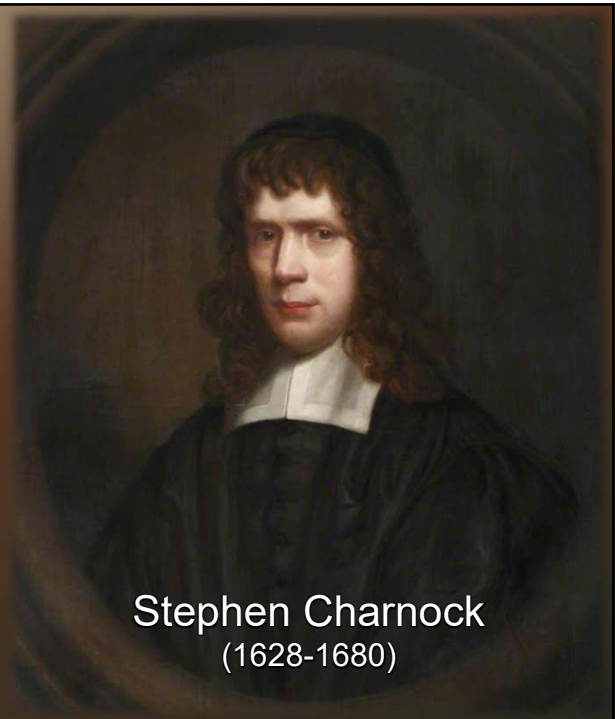
[Stephen Charnock, *Discourses upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 27.]



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)

I Am Put Here for the Defense of the Gospel

Dr. Norman L. Geisler: A Festschrift in His Honor



edited by
Terry L. Miethe

CHAPTER 12

Defending the Handmaid

How Theology Needs Philosophy

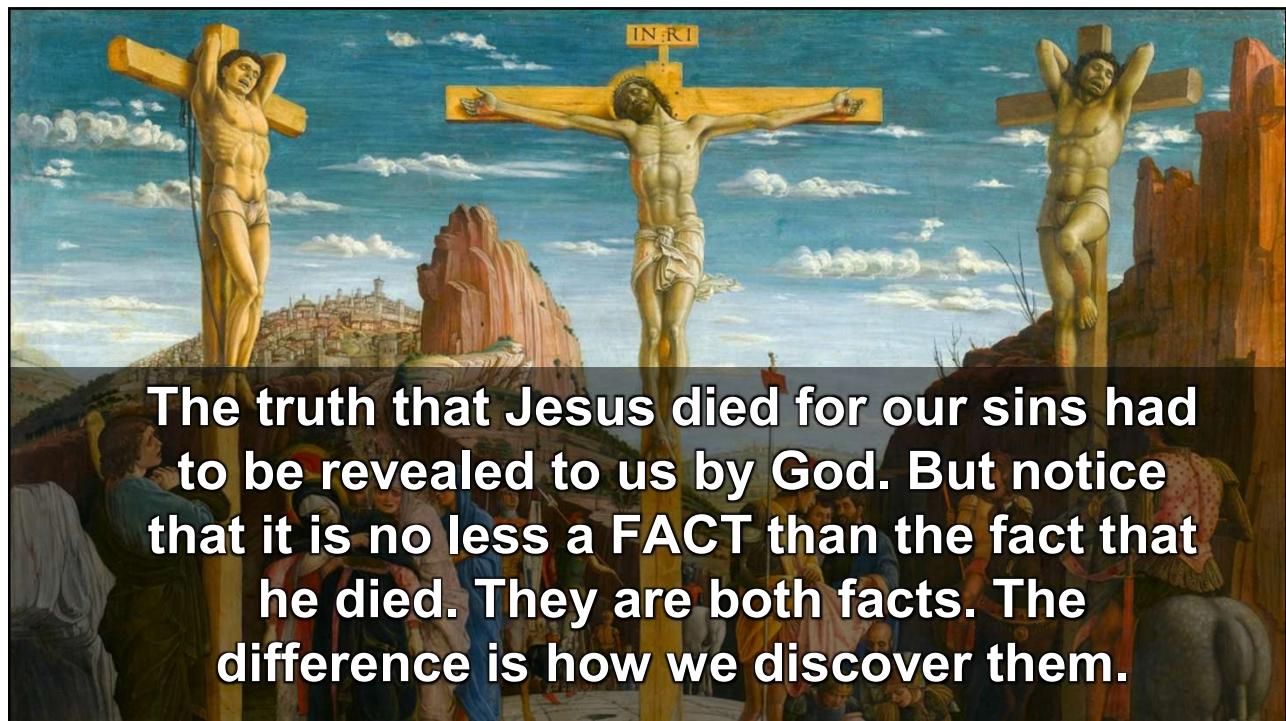
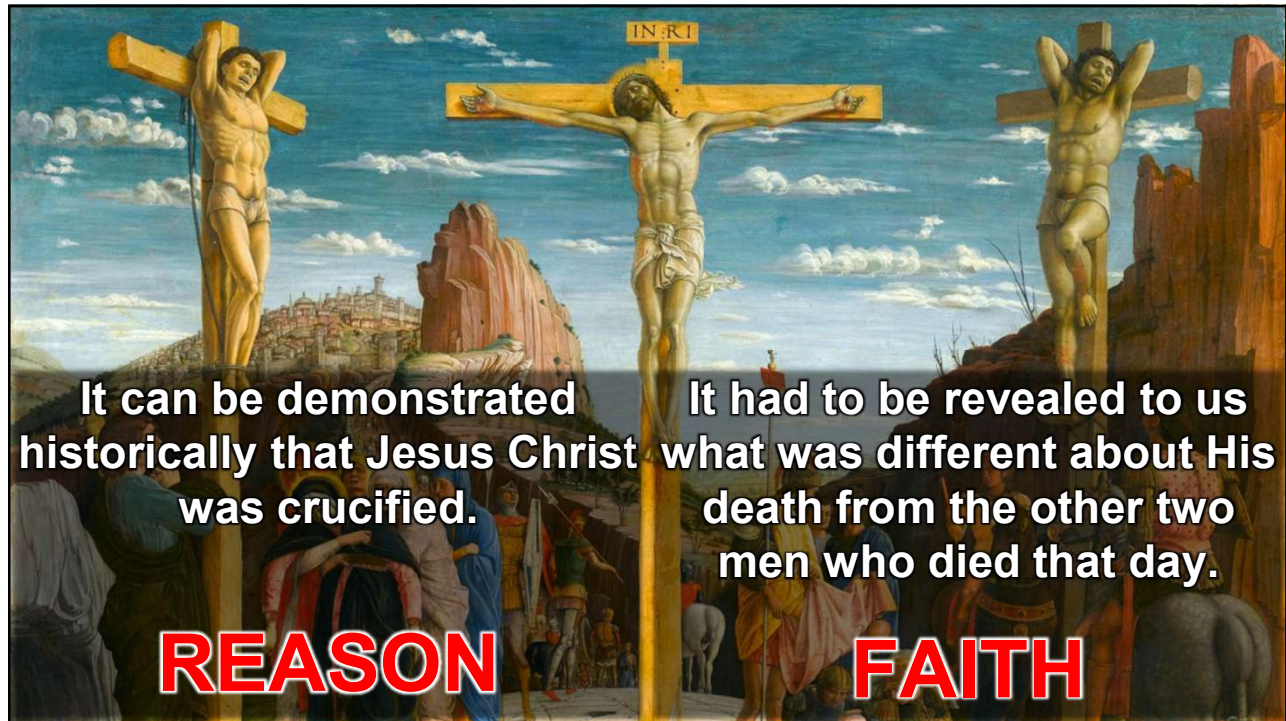
by Richard G. Howe

Prolegomena

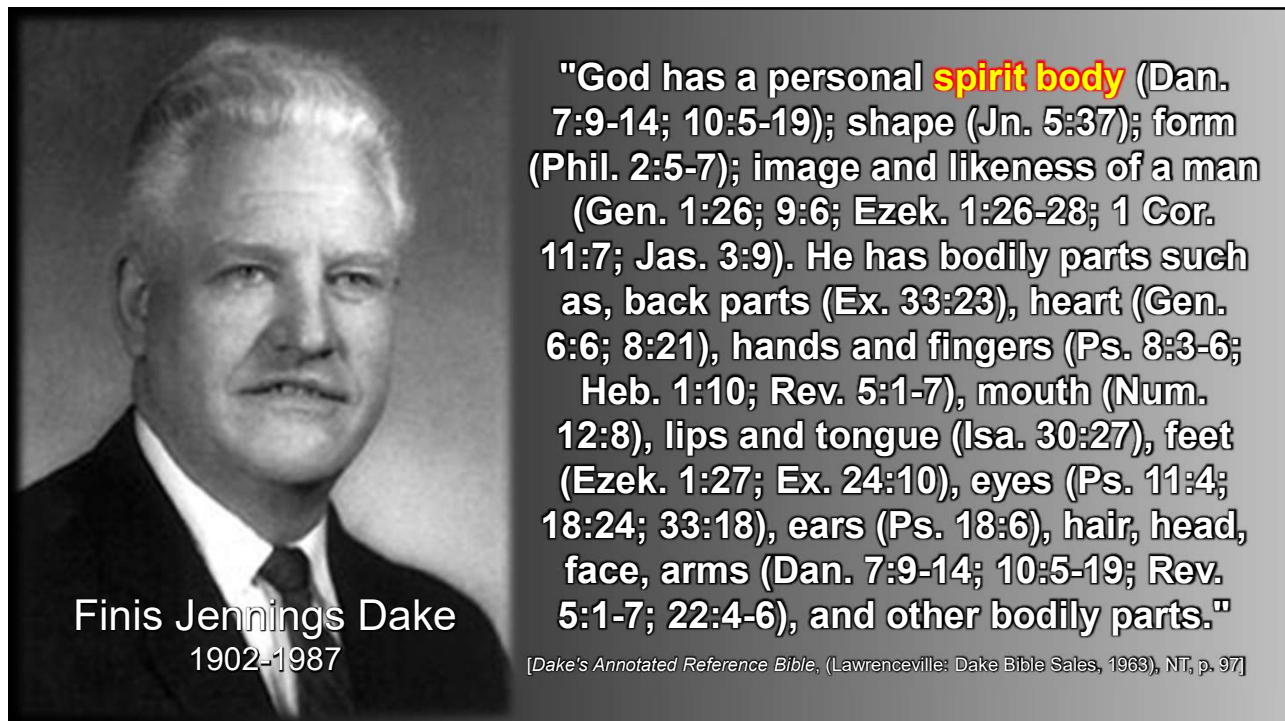
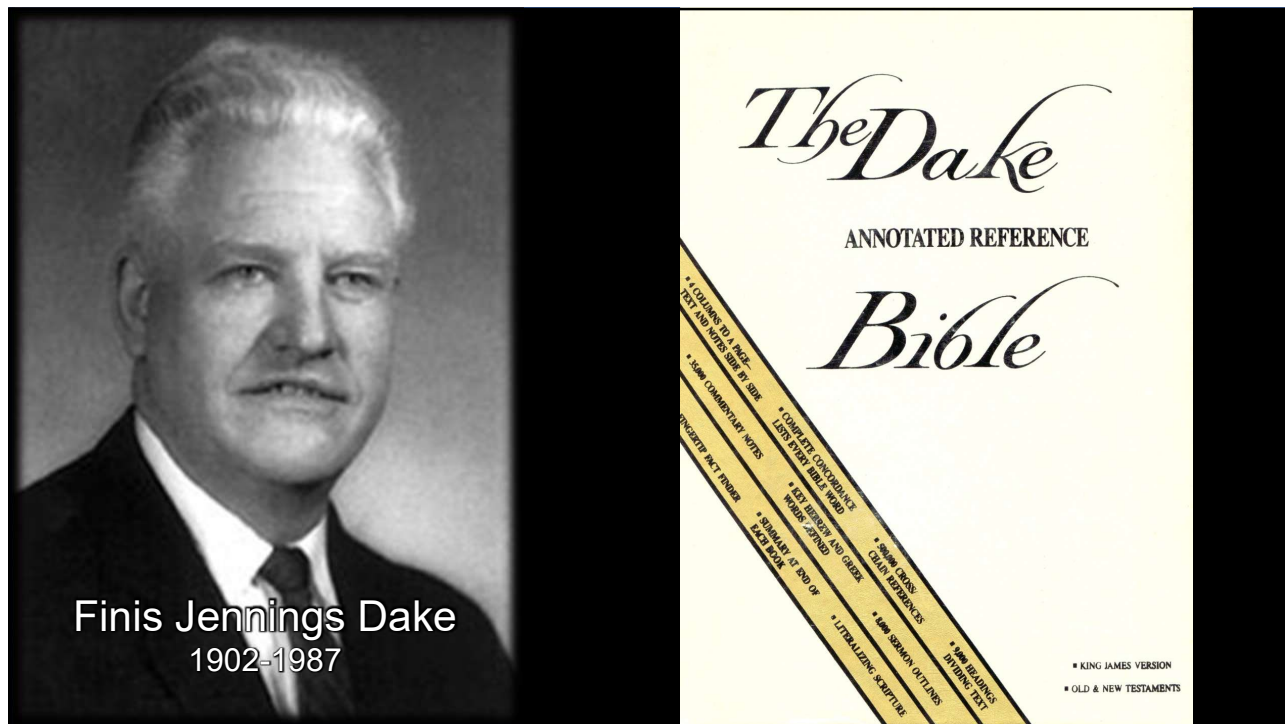
How Norman Geisler Helped Me in the Direction of My Life

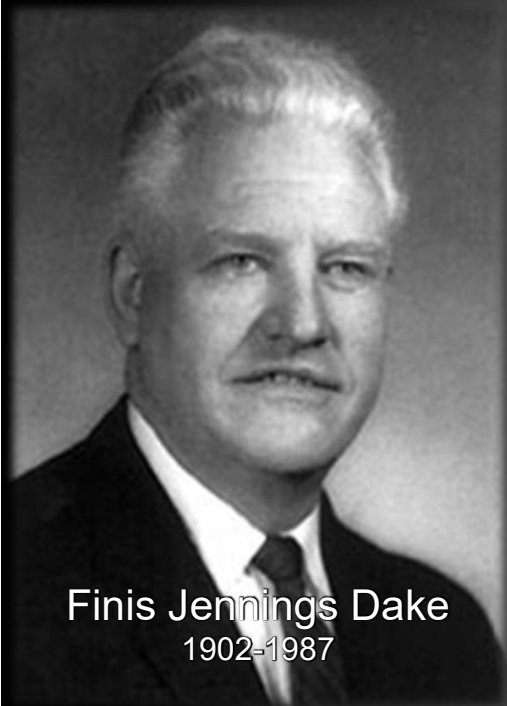
I WAS LED TO Christ in high school by Christian friends of mine. I grew spiritually about as much as one might expect a teenager to grow, becoming involved with my youth group at church and pursuing my interesting in drumming. After graduation, I headed to the community college to study music. I tell people that I learned enough music to annoy everyone around me. When it came time to consider senior college, Christian friends of mine told me that one could go to college and study the Bible. This sounded like a tremendous prospect to me, so off I went. I attended my denomination's flagship Christian college in my state. It was my first encounter with theological liberalism. My church had not prepared me to wrestle with issues like Higher Criticism. As a result, I intellectually lost my faith in college. Looking back on that experience, I saw a range of responses among my friends who were confronted with the same intellectual challenges. Some of my friends with whom I had prayed in high school mockingly "asked Jesus to come out of their hearts" and repudiated their Christianity altogether. Others embraced the skepticism of the critical methods and settled for a more mainstream liberal Christianity. Neither of these options seemed possible for me. I was not capable of completely abandoning my faith, as shipwrecked as it was. But neither was I comfortable with any sort of liberal theology. Others of my friends tried to amputate their intellect from their faith and reject any attempt to come to terms with the challenges and questions posed by critical thinking. That, too, was not appealing to me. I knew that I could not embrace a faith that would not stand up to reason. With this, I lived in dissonance for over a year.

The short version of the story has me being intellectually rescued by a handful of apologists. Through their books and lectures, God brought into my life people like Josh McDowell, R. C. Sproul, and Norman Geisler. To this mix were added the insights and maturity of older brothers who had since come to the Lord. Being back on track, I began to consider the continued direction of my education. A short stint at a local



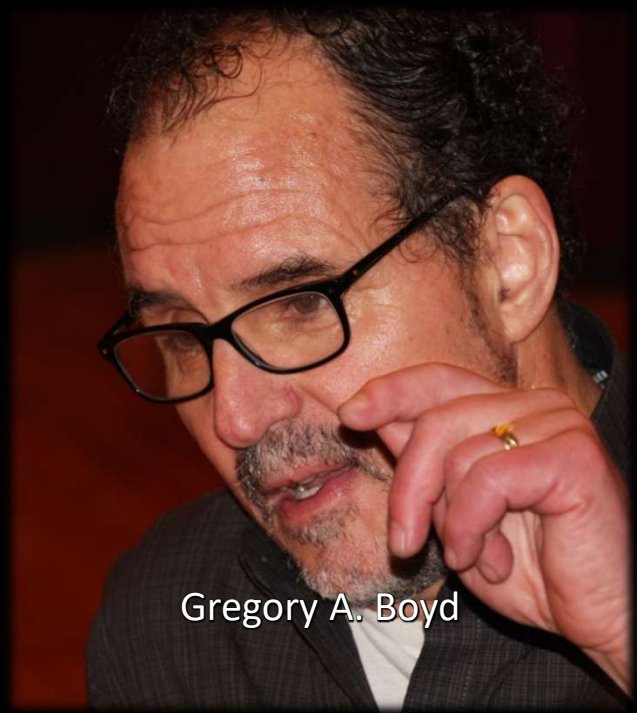






Finis Jennings Dake
1902-1987

(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)

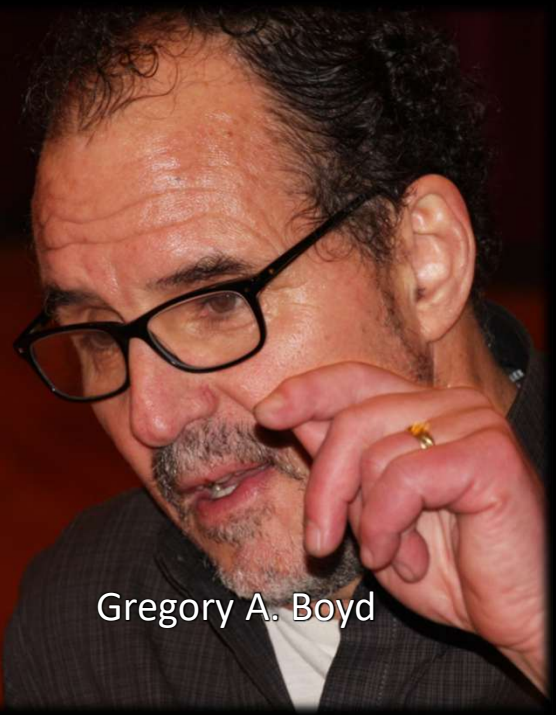


Gregory A. Boyd

PHILOSOPHIA CHRISTI

Φ X

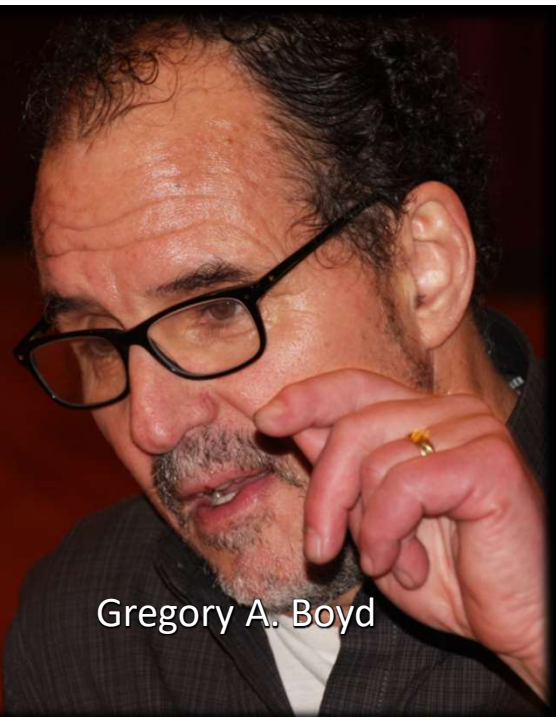
"Scripture also frequently depicts God as experiencing regret ... disappointment, frustration, and unexpected outcomes ... suggesting that the future is to this extent composed of possibilities rather than certainties."



Gregory A. Boyd

"It is, I submit, more difficult to conceive of God experiencing such things if the future is exhaustively settled in his mind than if it is in part composed of possibilities."

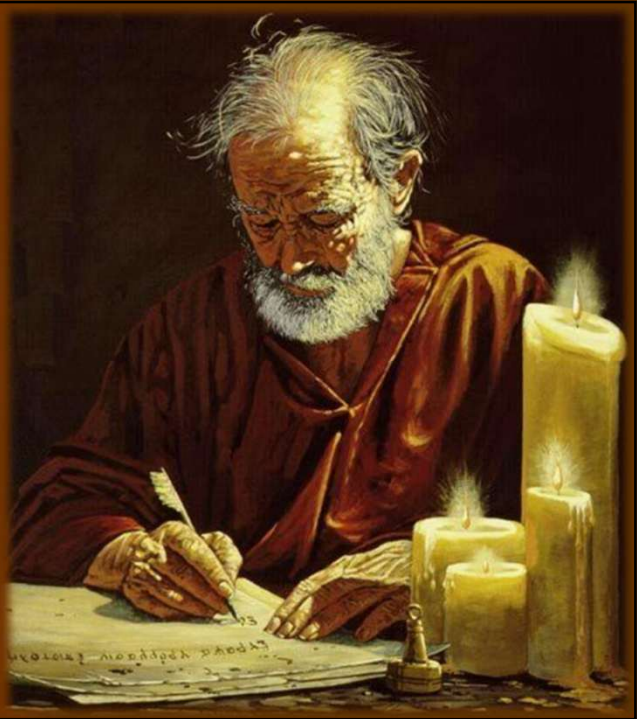
[Gregory A. Boyd, "Neo-Molinism and the Infinite Intelligence of God," *Philosophia Christi* 5, No.1, (2003):192]



Gregory A. Boyd

**"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 since the
creation of the world
His invisible attributes
are clearly seen, **being
understood by the
exegesis of Scripture,**
even His eternal
power and Godhead."**~~

Rom. 1:20a

