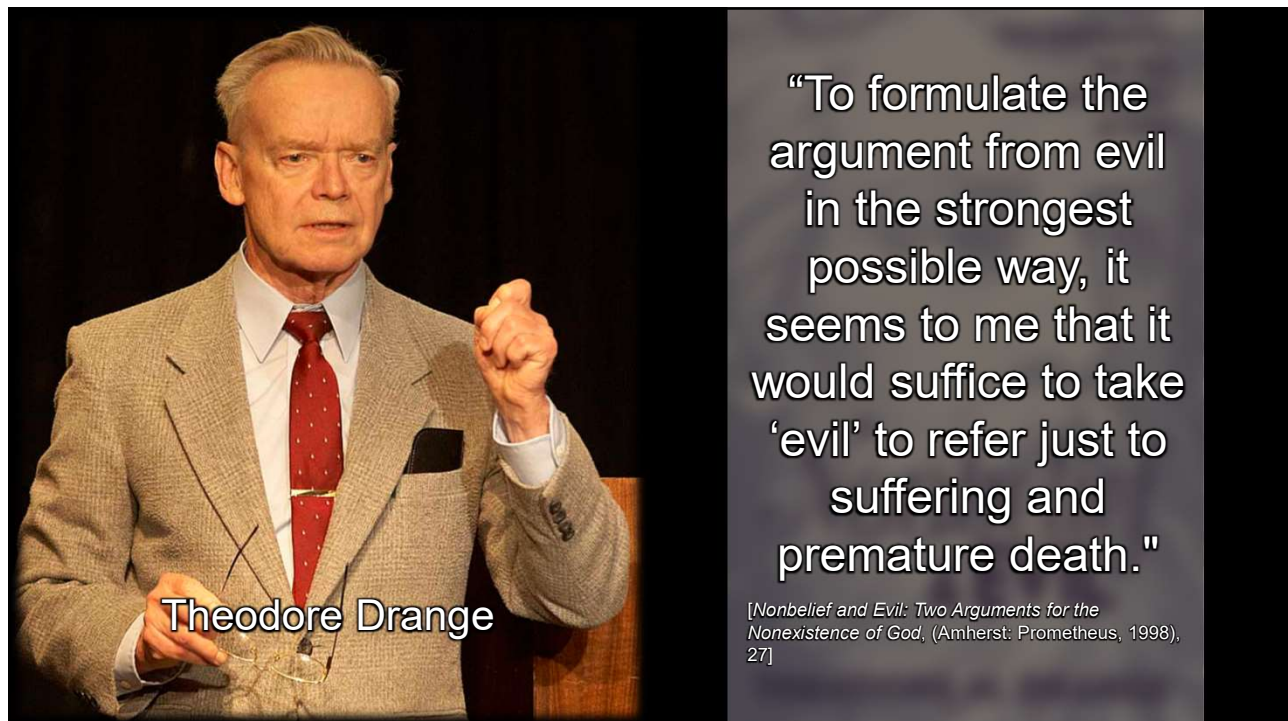
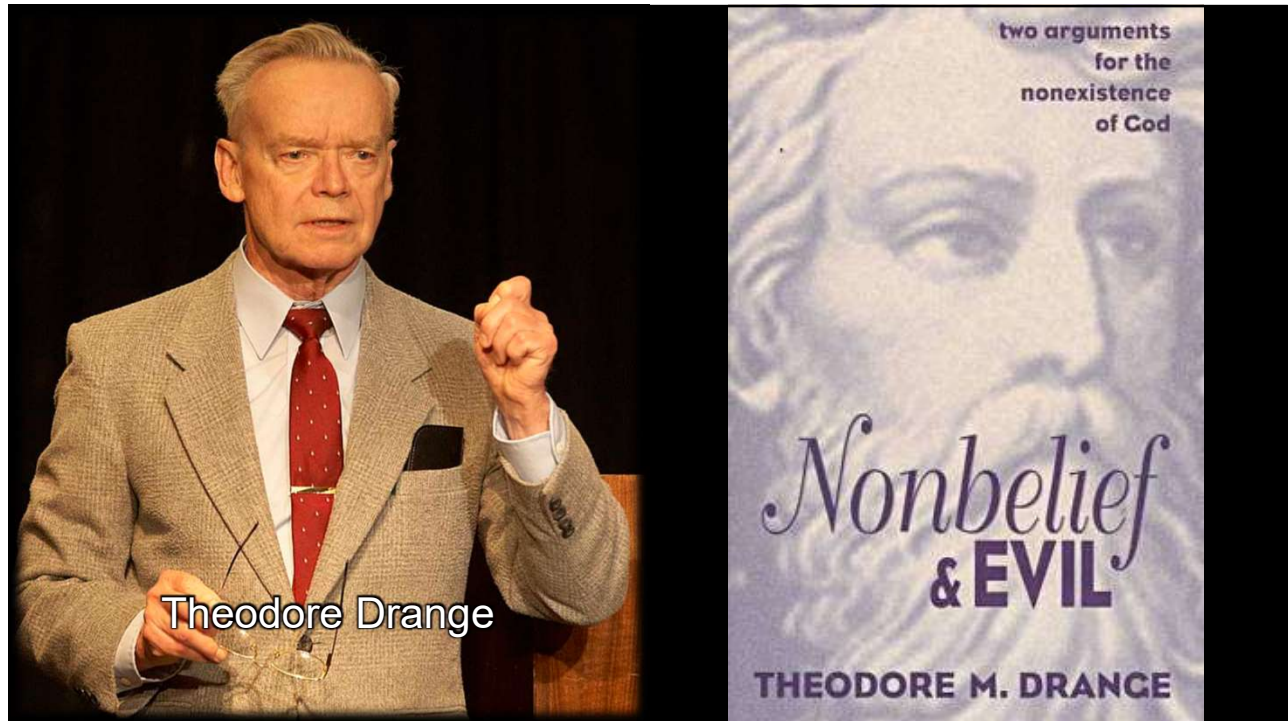




*In contemporary philosophy,
evil usually has to do with
pain, suffering, and death.*

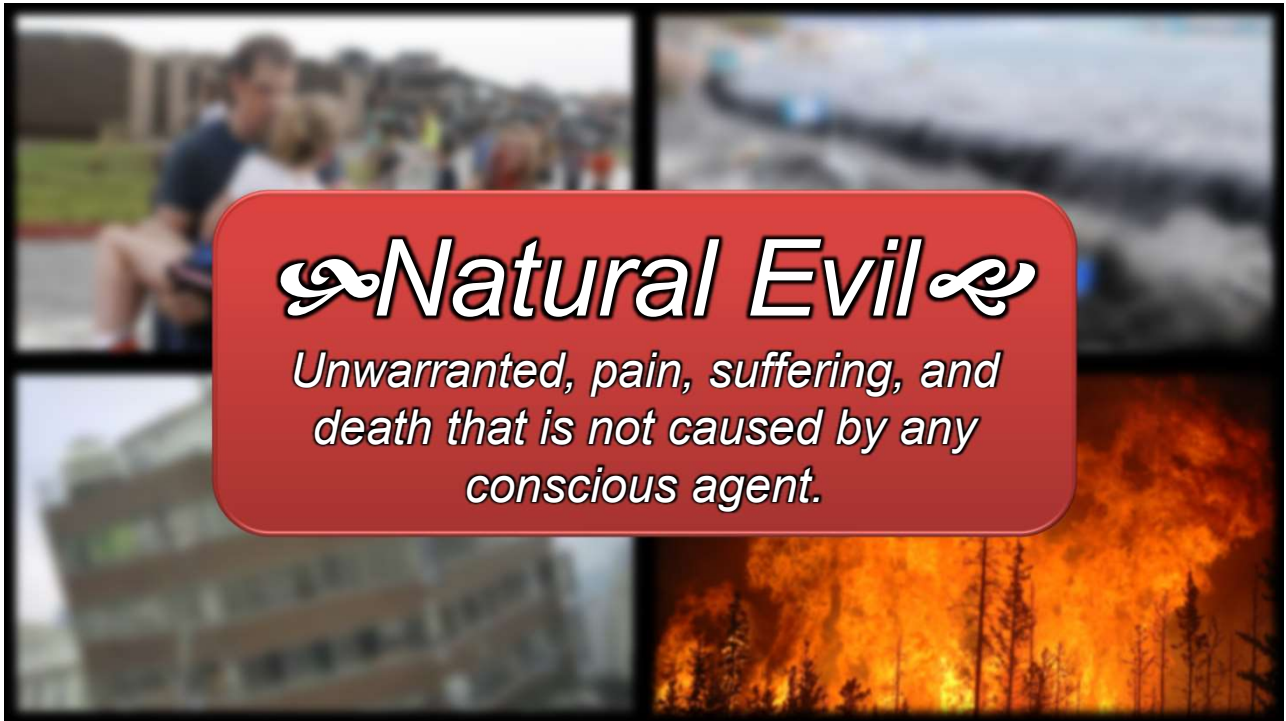


This definition of evil in contemporary philosophy differs from the definition of evil in the Classical / Scholastic (i.e., Aristotelian / Thomistic) tradition.



One of the most common distinctions contemporary philosophers make regarding evil is between

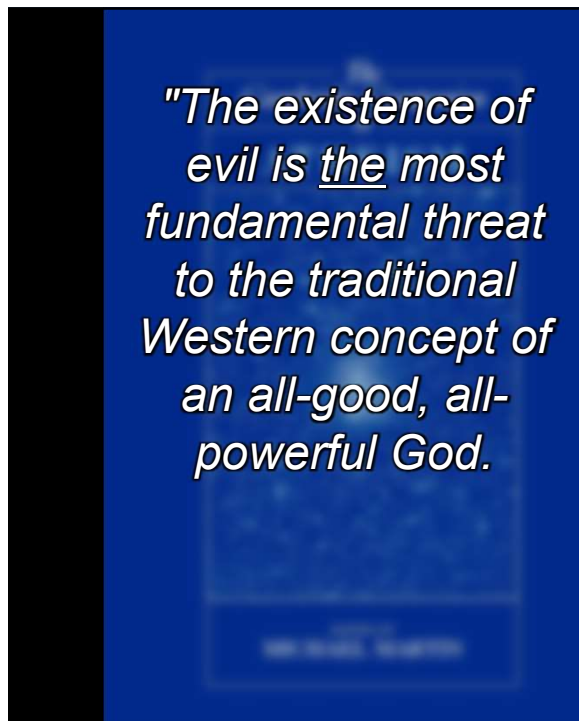
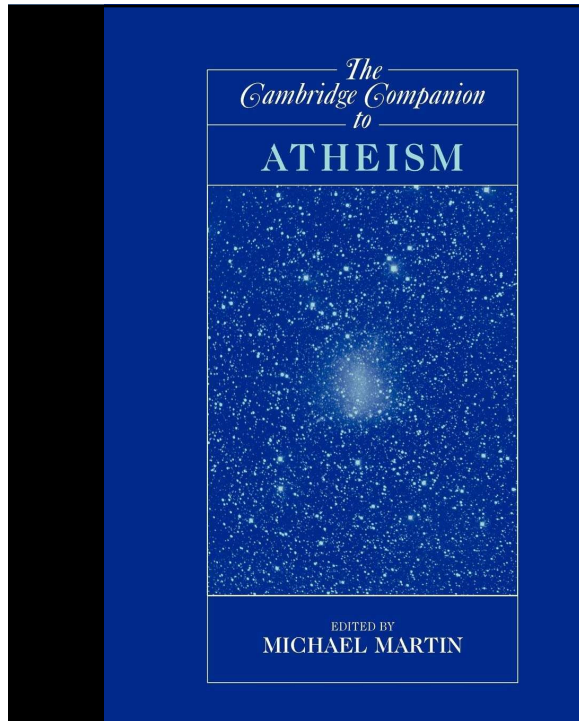
*One of the most common distinctions contemporary philosophers make regarding evil is between
natural evil and moral evil.*





∞Moral Evil∞

Unwarranted, pain, suffering, and death that is deliberately caused by a conscious agent.



"Both natural evil, the suffering that occurs as a result of physical phenomena, and moral evil, the suffering resulting from human actions, comprise the problem of evil."



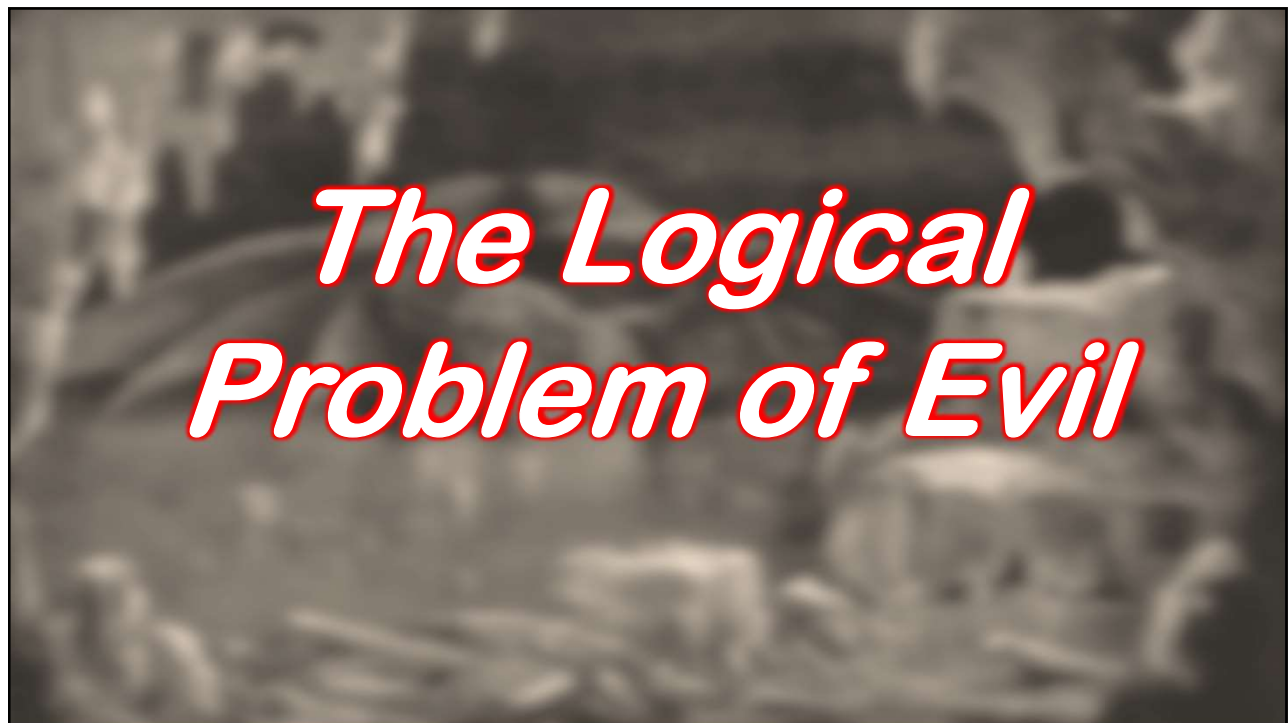
Andrea M. Weisberger

"If evil cannot be accounted for, then belief in the traditional Western concept of God is absurd."

[Andrea M. Weisberger, "The Argument from Evil," in *The Cambridge Companion to Atheism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 166, emphasis in original]



Andrea M. Weisberger



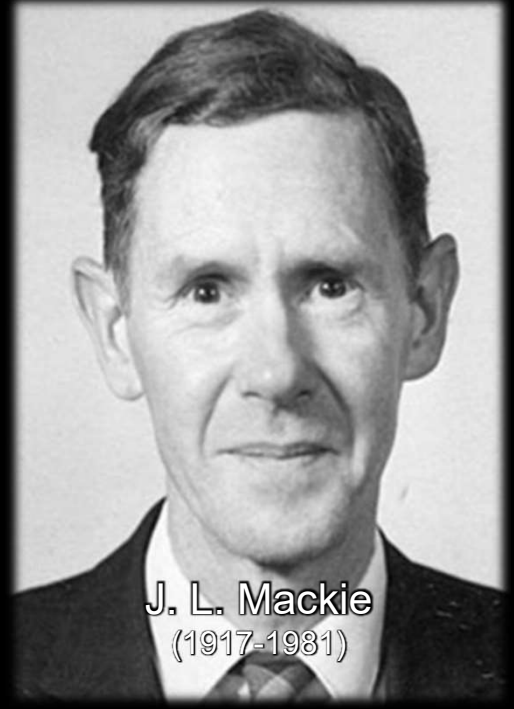
*the logical problem of evil is
notion that the propositions
“God exists”
and
“Evil exists”
are **logically** incompatible*

*With very few exceptions,
the consensus among
contemporary philosophers
is that there is no logical
problem of evil.*

J.L.Mackie

**THE
MIRACLE
OF
THEISM**

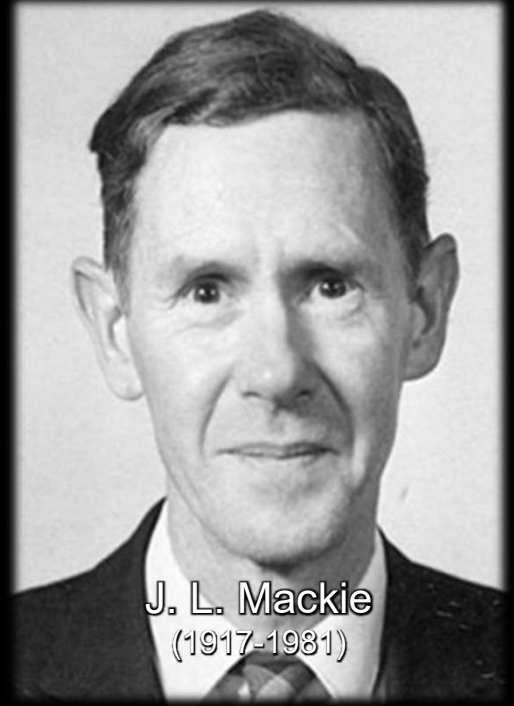
Arguments for
and against the
Existence of
God



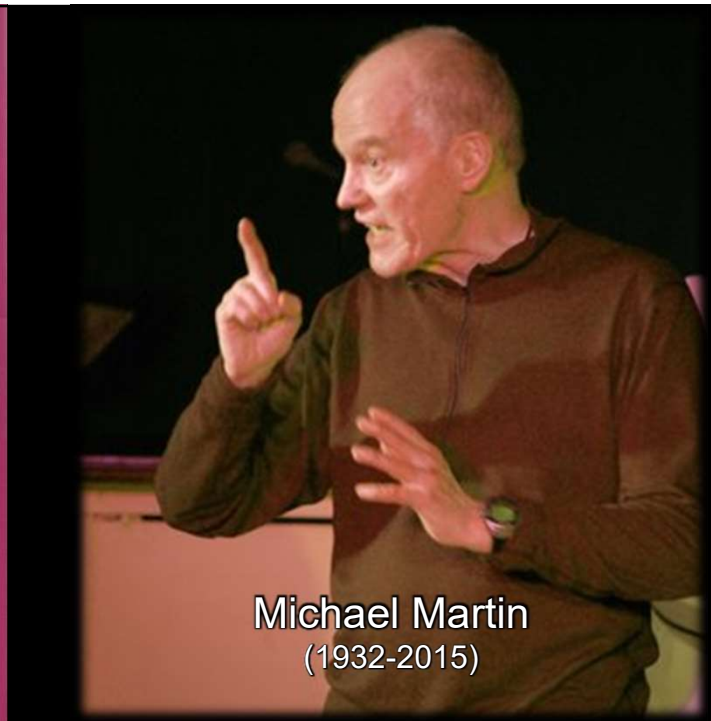
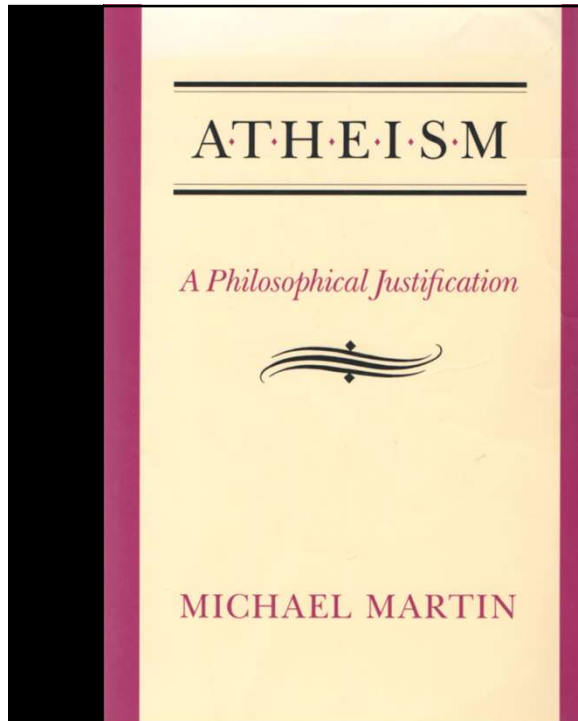
J. L. Mackie
(1917-1981)

***"We can concede
that the problem of
evil does not, after
all, show that the
central doctrines
of theism are
logically
inconsistent with
one another."***

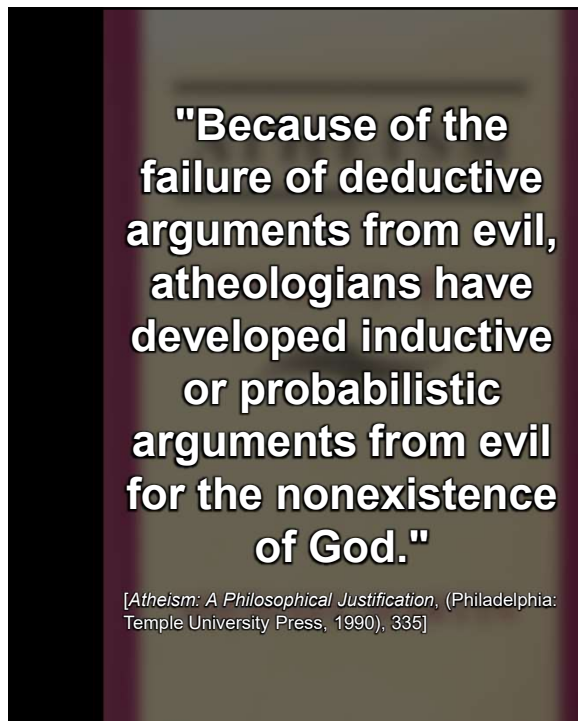
[The Miracle of Theism, (Oxford: Clarendon Press,
1982), 154]



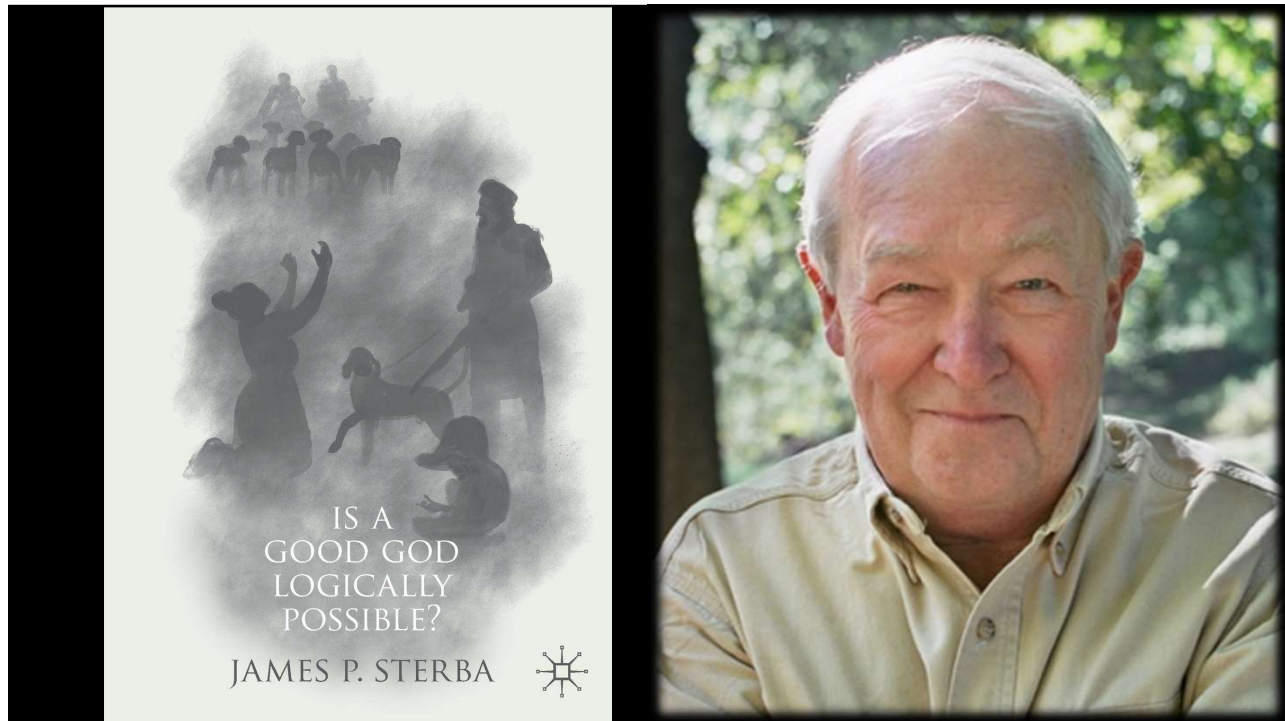
J. L. Mackie
(1917-1981)



Michael Martin
(1932-2015)



Michael Martin
(1932-2015)



THE
PHILOSOPHICAL
QUARTERLY

Vol. 10 No. 39 APRIL 1960

GOD AND EVIL



A. THE PROBLEM STATED:


Evil is a problem for the theist in that a contradiction is involved in the fact of evil on the one hand, and the belief in the omnipotence and perfection of God on the other. God cannot be both all-powerful and perfectly good if evil is real. This contradiction is well set out in its detail by Mackie in his discussion of the problem.¹ In his discussion Mackie seeks to show that this contradiction cannot be resolved in terms of man's free will. In arguing in this way Mackie neglects a large number of important points, and concedes far too much to the theist. He implicitly allows that whilst physical evil creates a problem, this problem is reducible to the problem of moral evil and that therefore the satisfactoriness of solutions of the problem of evil turns on the compatibility of free will and absolute goodness. In fact physical evils create a number of distinct problems which are not reducible to the problem of moral evil. Further, the proposed solution of the problem of moral evil in terms of free will renders the attempt to account for physical evil in terms of moral good, and the attempt thereby to reduce the problem of evil to the problem of moral evil, completely untenable. Moreover, the account of moral evil in terms of free will breaks down on more obvious and less disputable grounds than those indicated by Mackie. Moral evil can be shown to remain a problem whether or not free will is compatible with absolute goodness. I therefore propose in this paper to reopen the discussion of "the problem of evil", by approaching it from a more general standpoint, examining a wider variety of solutions than those considered by Mackie and his critics.

¹ "Evil and Omnipotence", *Mind*, 1955.

"Evil is a problem for the theist in that a contradiction is involved in the fact of evil on the one hand and the belief in the omnipotence and perfection of God on the other."

[H. J. McCloskey, "God and Evil," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 10, no. 39 (April 1960): 97-114]

WRITINGS VIDEOS PUBLICITY RECOMMENDATIONS  



Richard Carrier
↳ Blogs

ABOUT GET BOOKS TAKE CLASSES HOW TO HELP BOOKING DR. CARRIER

Is a Good God Logically Impossible?

BY RICHARD CARRIER / ON AUGUST 27, 2019 / 6 COMMENTS



Philosopher James Sterba just came out with [a book of that title](#), arguing for the conclusion that a good God is logically impossible, given present observations. At the same time, Michael Shermer and Brian Huffling published [in *Skeptic Magazine*](#) a closing exchange in reaction to their debate on the same question.


Both are very interesting reads; Sterba's even quite useful, if you want to hone your ability to explain why the Argument from Evil cannot be dismissed with any of the tactics delusional

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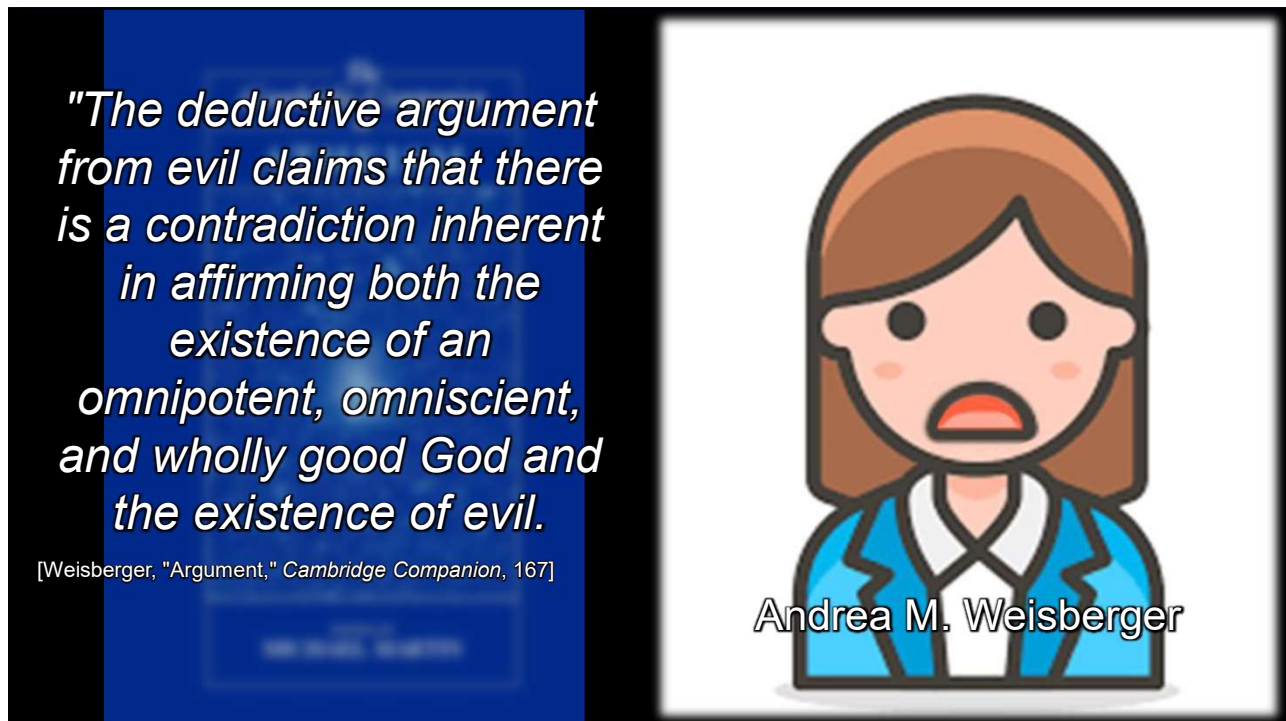
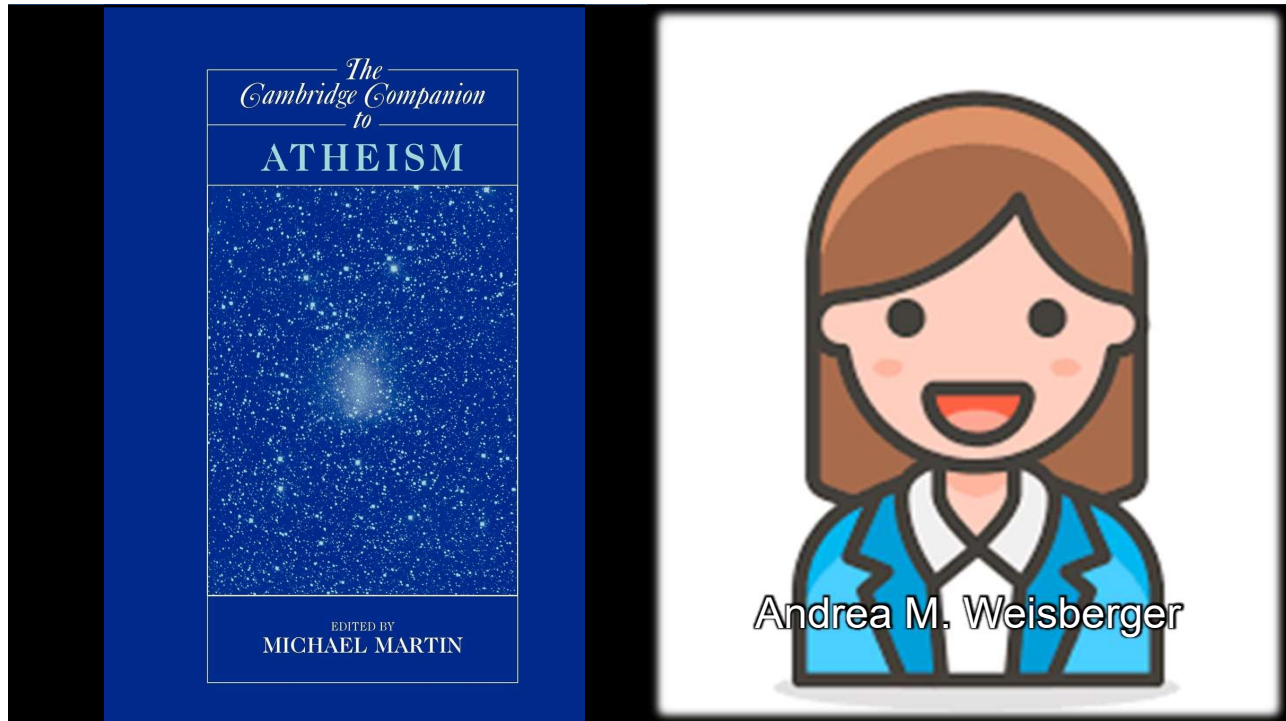
Follow Richard Carrier's Work & Announcements



Atheist Richard Carrier

"So as clever and useful I find Sterba's argument to be, I don't see it providing a logical proof of the impossibility of a good God."



The basic intuition of the inconsistency involved in the problem of evil is captured by the following formulation, from Michael Martin:

- 1. God is all-powerful.*
- 2. God is all good.*
- 3. Evil exists in great abundance.*

[Weisberger, "Argument," *Cambridge Companion*, 166]



Andrea M. Weisberger

Most philosophers today agree that ... surely no direct contradiction is generated by the three premises, without the addition of qualifying statements."

[Weisberger, "Argument," *Cambridge Companion*, 167]



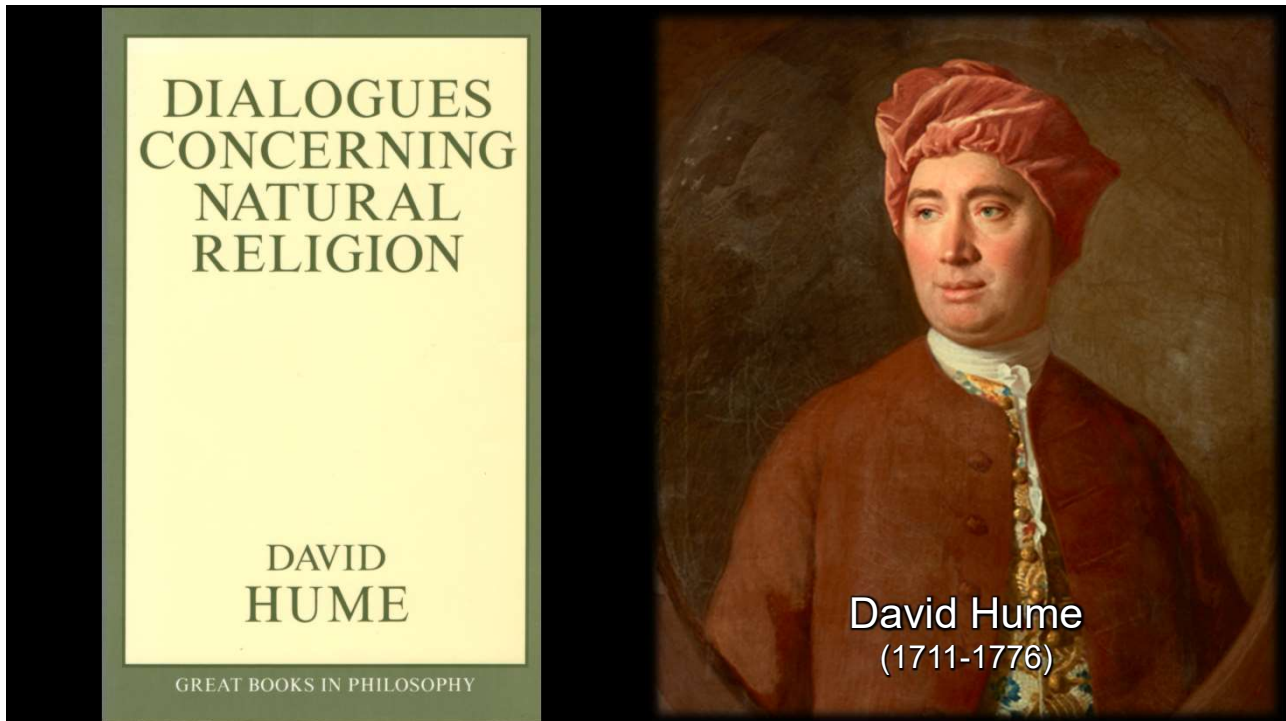
Andrea M. Weisberger



***The Pastoral
(Existential)
Problem of Evil***




***The Philosophical /
Inductive / Evidential /
Moral Problem of Evil***

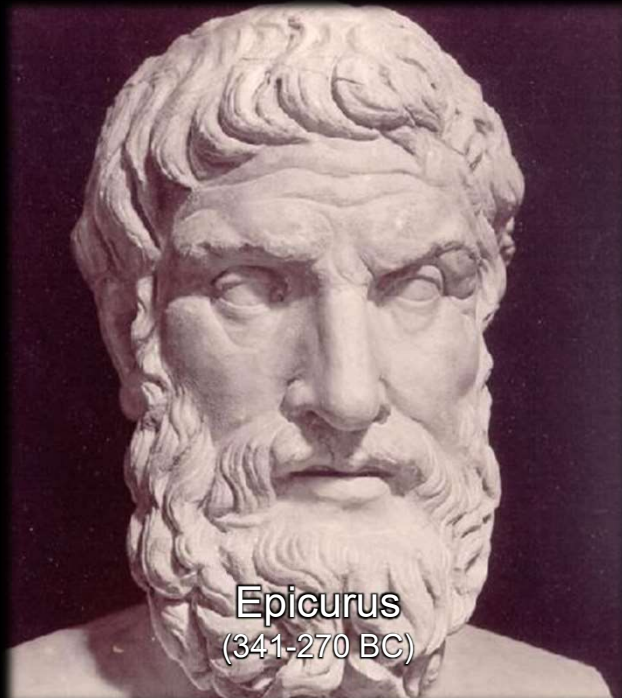


Philo: "Epicurus' old questions are yet unanswered. Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?"

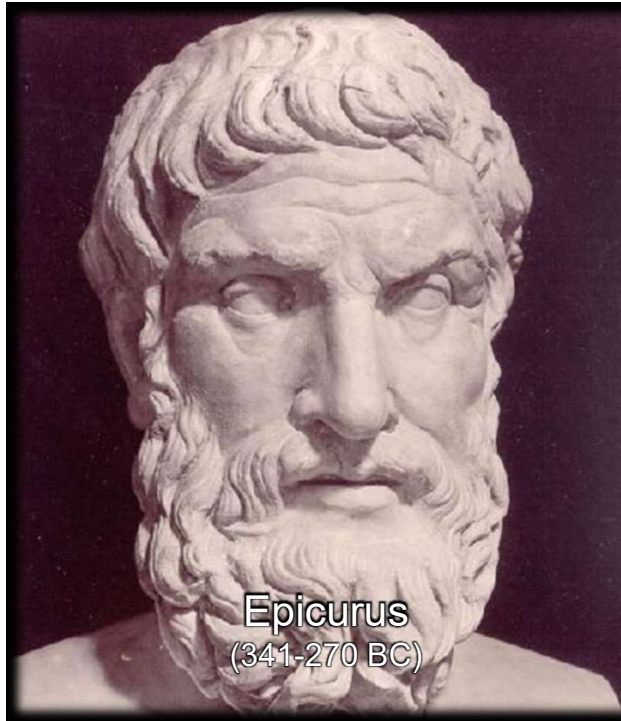
[Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1989), 84]

A portrait of David Hume, a Scottish philosopher, wearing a red turban and a brown coat with a decorative gold and blue patterned sash. The background is a dark, circular vignette.

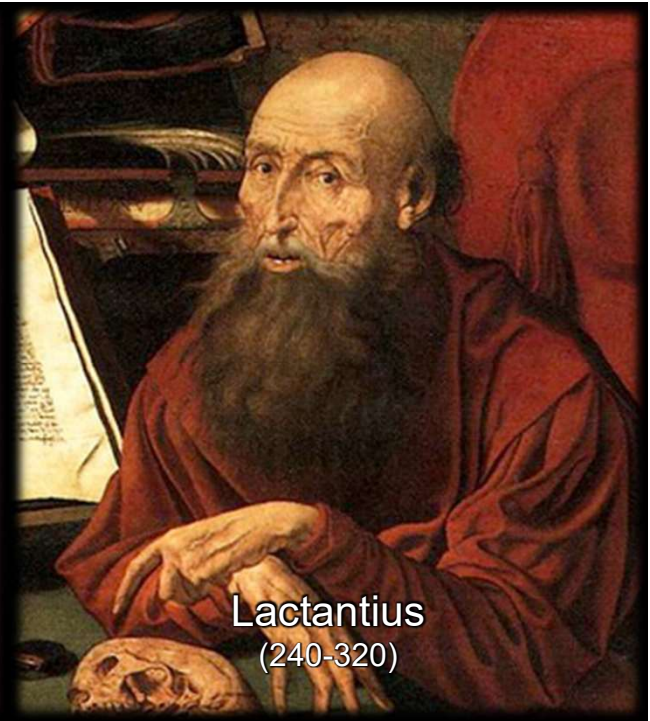
David Hume
(1711-1776)

A marble bust of the philosopher Epicurus, showing him with a full, curly beard and hair, and a serious expression. The bust is set against a dark purple background.

Epicurus
(341-270 BC)

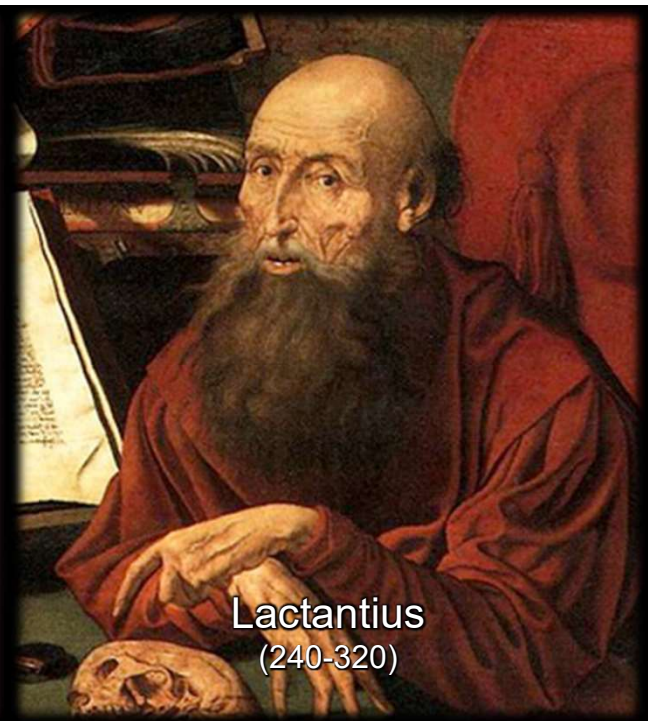


Epicurus
(341-270 BC)



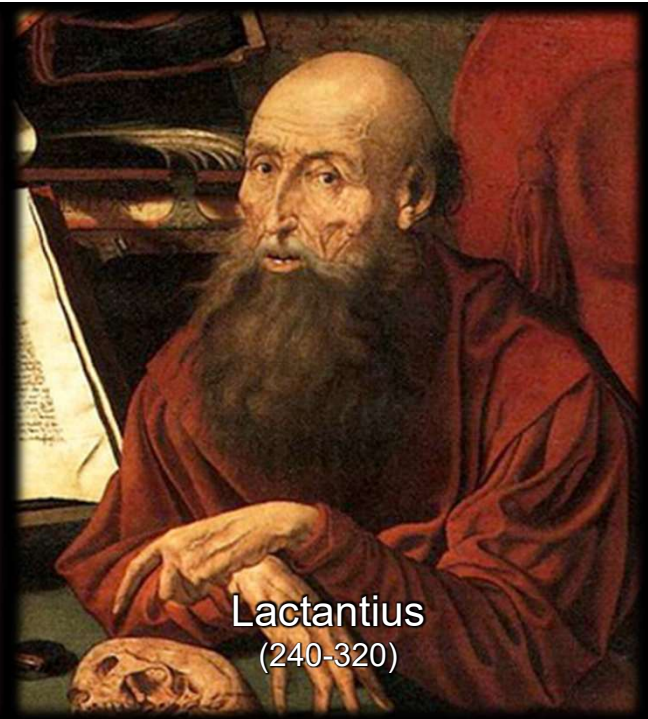
Lactantius
(240-320)

“God, [Epicurus] says, either wishes to take away evils, and is unable; or He is able, and is unwilling; or He is neither willing nor able, or He is both willing and able.



Lactantius
(240-320)

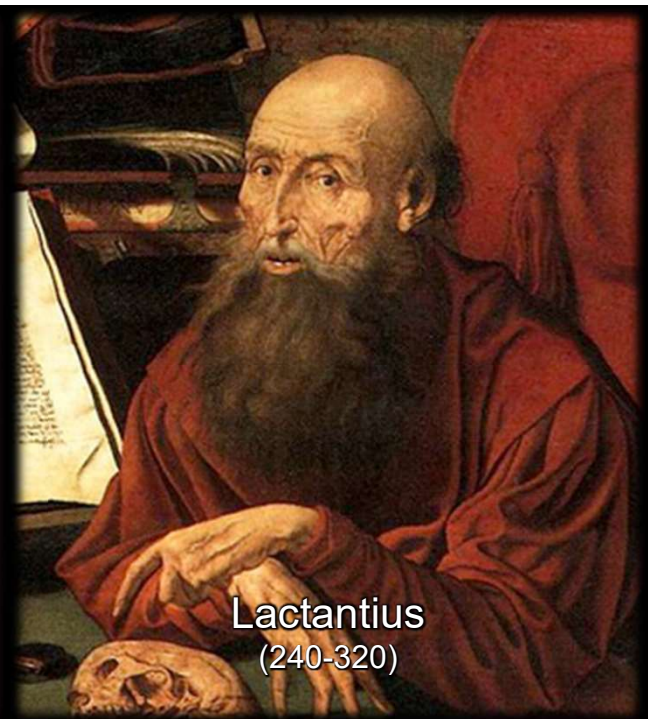
“If He is willing and is unable, He is feeble, which is not in accordance with the character of God; if He is able and unwilling, He is envious, which is equally at variance with God;



Lactantius
(240-320)

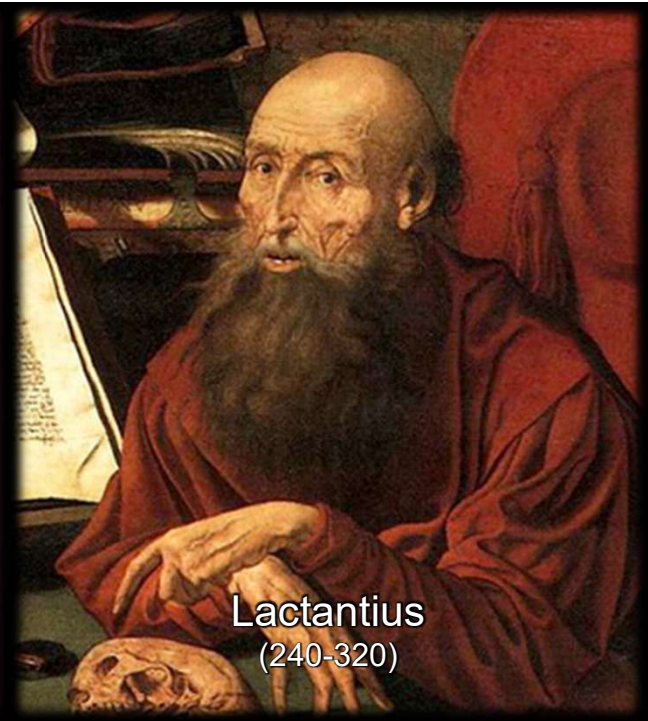
“If He is both willing and able, which alone is suitable to God, from what source then are evils? or why does He not remove them?”

[Lactantius, *On the Anger of God*, XIV,
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0703.htm>, accessed 06/19/23]

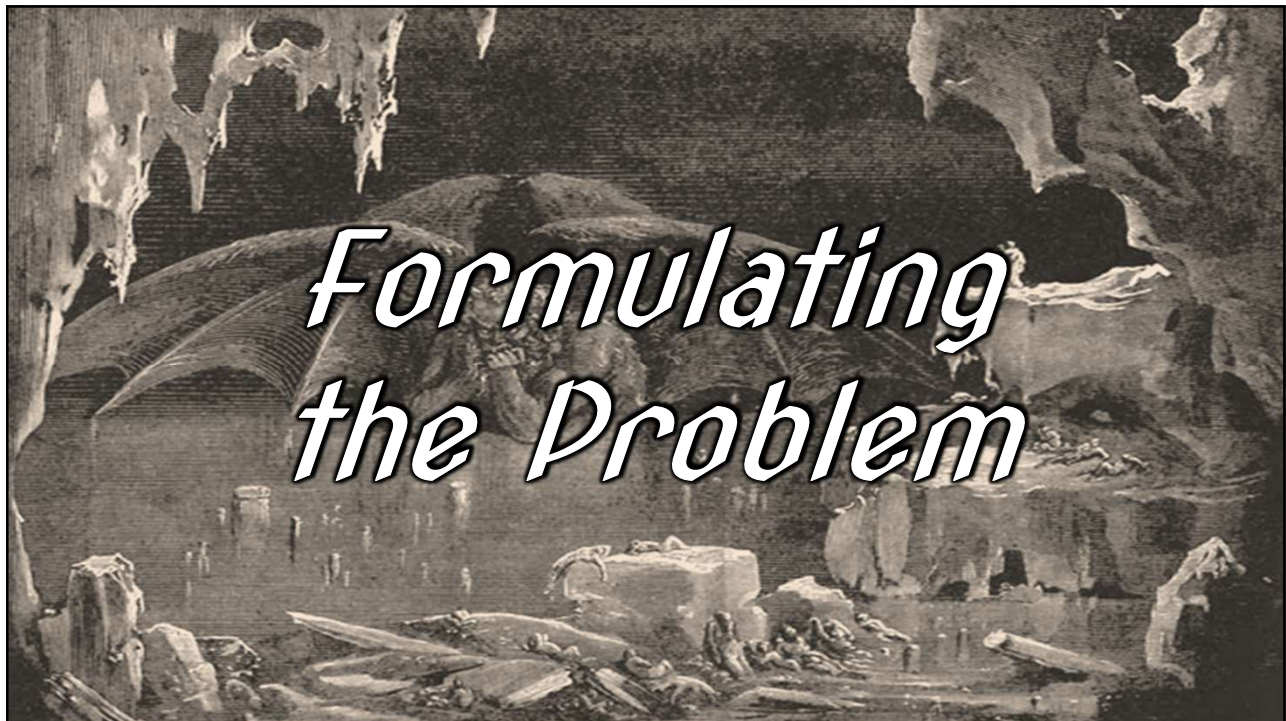


Lactantius
(240-320)

It would seem that Lactantius was mistaken in attributing this quote or sentiment to Epicurus.



Lactantius
(240-320)



∞ Premise 1 ∞

*If God is all good (omnibenevolent),
He would prevent evil.*

∞ Premise 2 ∞

*If God is all powerful (omnipotent),
He could prevent evil.*

↻ Premise 3 ↻

If God knew in advance that creation would fall into sin He would have either:

↻ Premise 3 ↻

**left well enough
alone and not
created in the
first place**

**taken steps to
prevent the
occurrence
of evil**

∞ Premise 4 ∞

*There is evil, i.e. evil
is not prevented.*

∞ Conclusions ∞

*Either evil does not exist
or God is not all-good
or God is not all-powerful (or both)
or God is not all-knowing
or God does not exist.*

☞ Conclusions ☞

*Either evil does not exist
or God is not all-good
or God is not all-powerful (or both)
or God is not all-knowing
or **God does not exist.***

☞ Premise 1 ☞

*If God is all good (omnibenevolent),
He would prevent evil.*

☞ Premise 2 ☞

*If God is all powerful (omnipotent),
He could prevent evil.*

☞ Premise 3 ☞

*If God knew in advance that creation
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☞ Premise 3 ☞

**left well enough
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created in the
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**taken steps to
prevent the
occurrence
of evil**

☞ Premise 4 ☞

*There is evil, i.e. evil
is not prevented.*

☞ Conclusions ☞

*Either evil does not exist
or God is not all-good
or God is not all-powerful (or both)
or God is not all-knowing
or **God does not exist.***



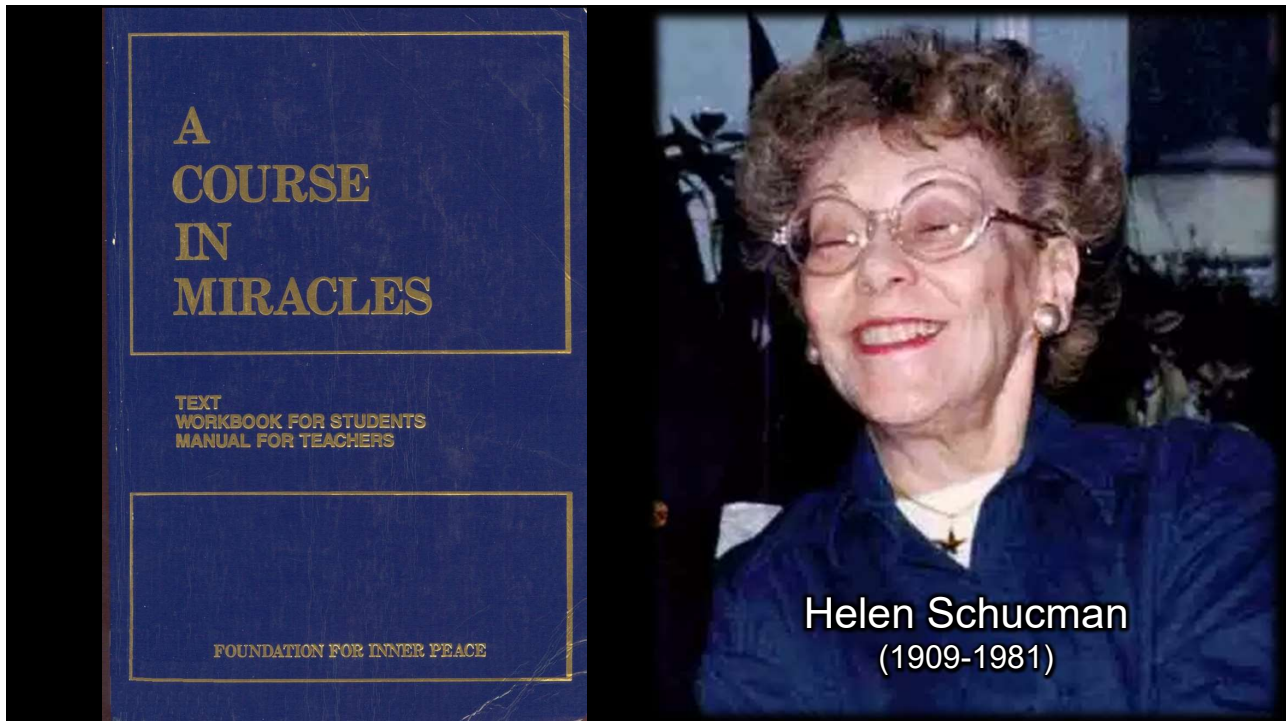
Evil does not exist.

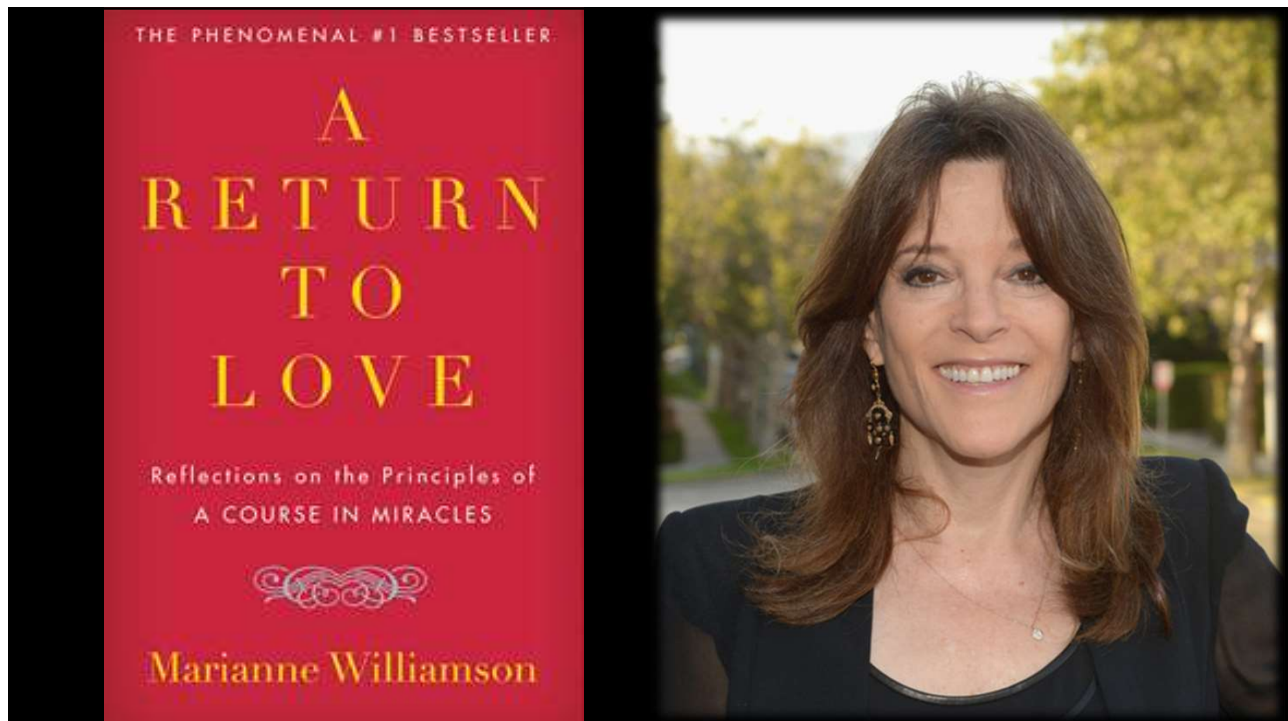
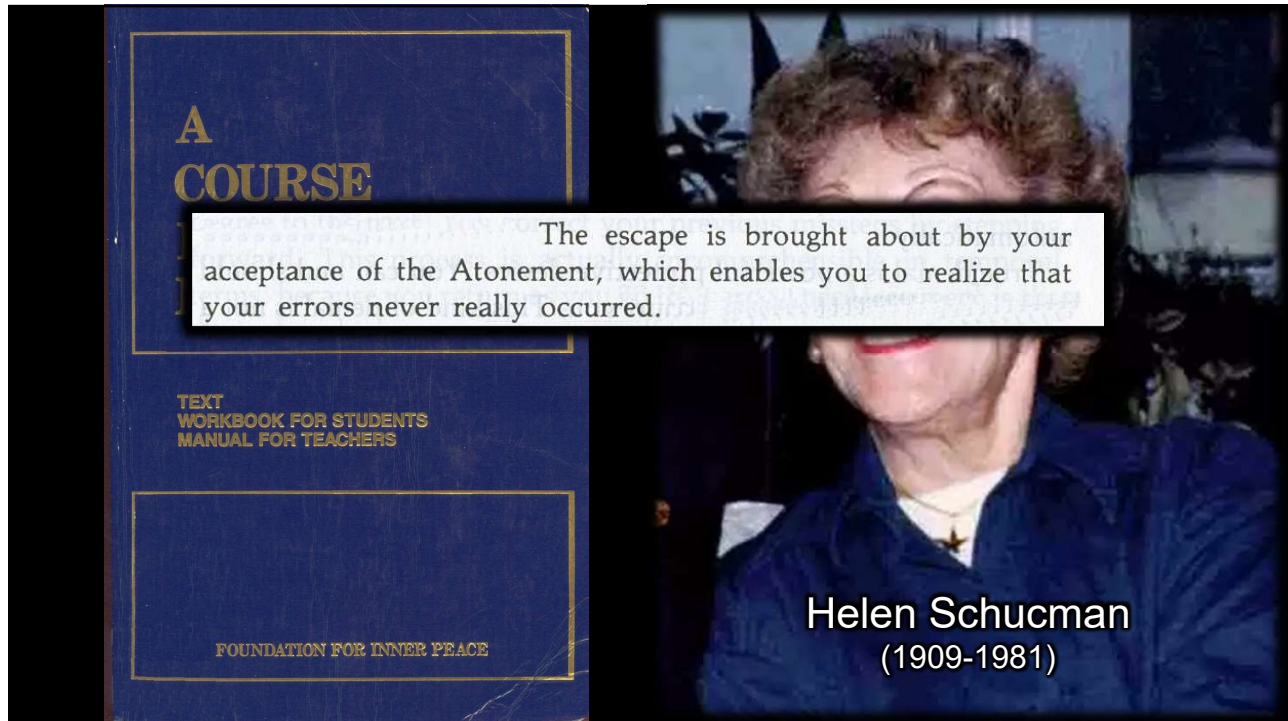
God is not all-good.

God is not all-powerful.

God is not all-knowing.

God does not exist.



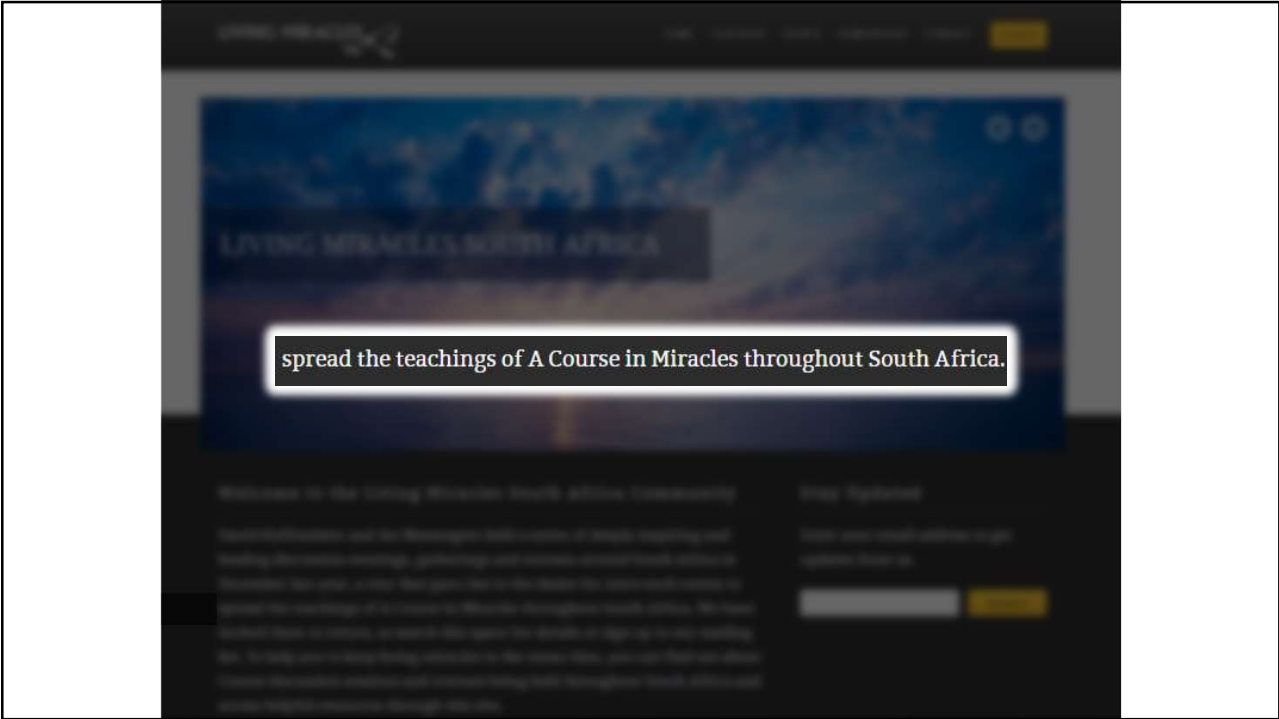


The screenshot shows a Meetup page with the following content:

- Header:** Meetup logo, "Start a new group", "English", "Log in", "Sign up".
- Main Section:**
 - Title:** A Course In Miracles Meetups in Atlanta
 - Text:** Here's a look at some A Course In Miracles Meetups happening near Atlanta.
 - Button:** Sign me up!
 - Image:** A night sky with stars and a telescope, with a small caption: "Photo: The Calgary Astronomy Meetup Group".
- Grid of Meetups:**
 - Meetup 1:** A Course in Miracles in Atlanta. We're 357 Students of ACIM. (+)
 - Meetup 2:** A Course in Miracles Study Group - Suwanee. We're 46 Members. (+)
 - Meetup 3:** A Course in Miracles Study Group Meetup- Marietta/Roswell. We're 50 Members. (+)
 - Meetup 4:** A Course In Miracles - Venice Fl. We're 24 Members. (+)
 - Meetup 5:** The Power of Awareness. We're 1,057 Conscious Co-Creators. (+)
 - Meetup 6:** I See Only Your Perfection Workshop-healing relationships. We're 96 Spiritual Seekers, Mystics. (+)

The screenshot shows the Living Miracles South Africa website with the following content:

- Header:** LIVING MIRACLES logo, navigation links: HOME, TEACHERS, EVENTS, ACIM GROUPS, CONTACT, DONATE.
- Hero Image:** A sunset over the ocean with the text "LIVING MIRACLES SOUTH AFRICA" overlaid.
- Section: Welcome to the Living Miracles South Africa Community**
 - Text:** David Hoffmeister and the Messengers held a series of deeply inspiring and healing discussion evenings, gatherings and retreats around South Africa in December last year, a tour that gave rise to the desire for more such events to spread the teachings of A Course in Miracles throughout South Africa. We have invited them to return, so watch this space for details or sign up to our mailing list. To help you to keep living miracles in the mean time, you can find out about Course discussion sessions and retreats being held throughout South Africa and access helpful resources through this site.
- Section: Stay Updated**
 - Text:** Enter your email address to get updates from us.
 - Form:** An input field for an email address and a "Submit" button.





THE U

4. MEANING OF THE DEATH ON THE CROSS

the Son of Man did not offer himself as a sacrifice to appease the wrath of God and to open the way for sinful man to obtain salvation;

Neither was the Master's death on the cross a sacrifice which consisted in an effort to pay God a debt which the race of mankind had come to owe him.

Atlanta Urantia Study Group

October 20, 2013
Your Study Location for the UB in Atlanta

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This weeks featured video:

The Urantia Book, Paper 24, Higher Personalities of the Infinite Spirit,

Section 1, The Universe Circuit Supervisors, Page (264.1) or 24.0.1
Meeting October 16, 2013

Meeting October 16, 2013

The Urantia Book
Paper 24
Higher Personalities of the Infinite Spirit
Section 1
1. The Universe Circuit Supervisors
Page (264.1) 24.0.1

00:00 / 01:31:03

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Seeding the Revelation in South Africa

in Distribution

Date:
Sat, 12/01/2007

Author:
Simone Cox

By Simone Cox, South Africa

Note from Tamara Wood – Urantia Foundation Coordinator for the South African Initiative:

A project to place over 1000 Urantia Books across Southern Africa has been sponsored by many individuals within the reader community and carried out by Mark Bloomfield. The project began in June when the first shipment of 500 books was received by Mark in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Since then 700 books have been gratefully accepted by public libraries, universities and religious institutions as indicated by the many thank you letters Urantia Foundation has received.

Mark has covered a lot of territory within South Africa and has also placed books in Namibia and Botswana. Currently, he is en route to Mombassa, Kenya where 300 books will be arriving for additional library placement. After this round, Mark will return to South Africa to receive one more shipment of 300 books in order to complete this phase of his mission.

The Trustees and Staff extend their thanks to the reader community for participating in this service of making our treasured text available to so many individuals across Southern Africa.

On behalf of the budding Urantia community in South Africa, kindly allow me to express our gratitude and appreciation for the wonderful work you are doing in service of the fifth epochal revelation, our Christ Michael and our beloved planet, and for your generous contributions to our own efforts.

As a spiritually progressive country, South Africa is thirsty for the rich blessing of the Urantia teachings. Not only will we benefit greatly from the books seeded into our local libraries, but we also enjoy upliftment and encouragement from your loving prayers and kind support.

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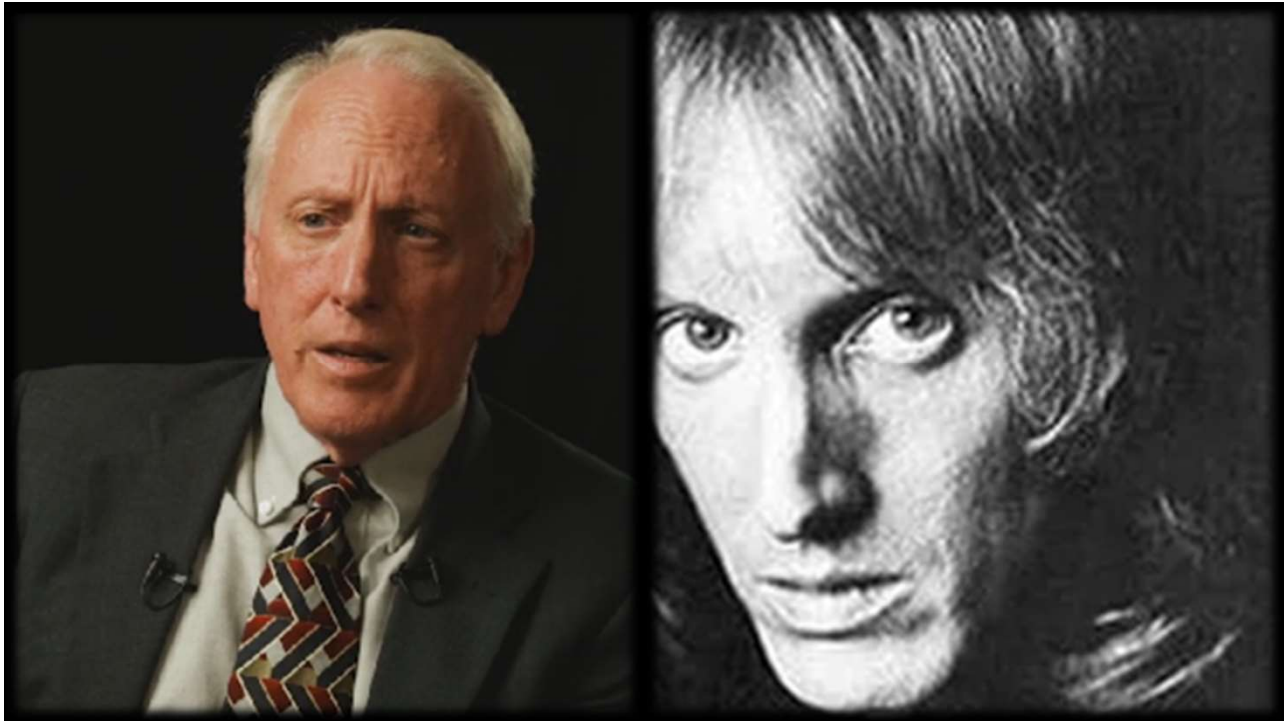
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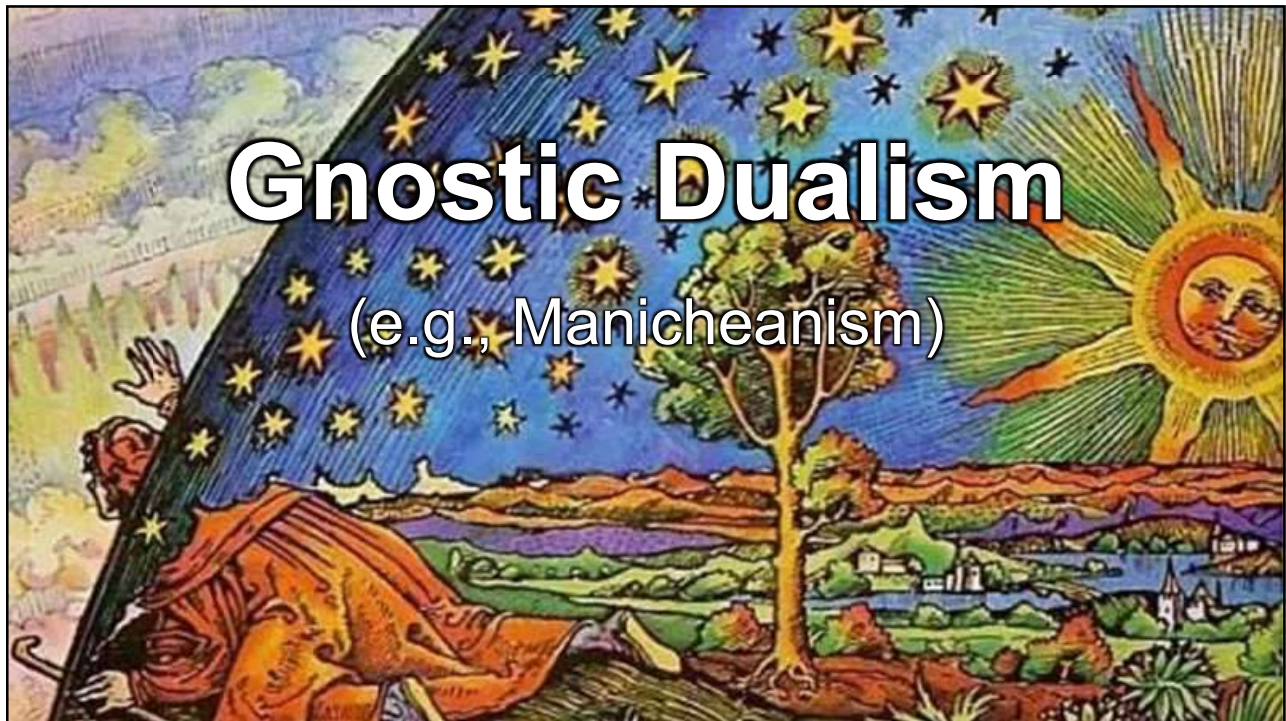


***God is not
all-good.***

Greek Polytheism

held that there were both good and evil gods

explained evil in the world by the evil among the gods



Manicheanism

"The chief characteristic ... is a consistent dualism which rejects any possibility of tracing the origin of good and evil to one and the same source.



Manicheanism

"Evil stands as a completely independent principle against Good, and redemption from the power of Evil is to be achieved by recognizing this dualism and following the appropriate rules of life.



Manicheanism

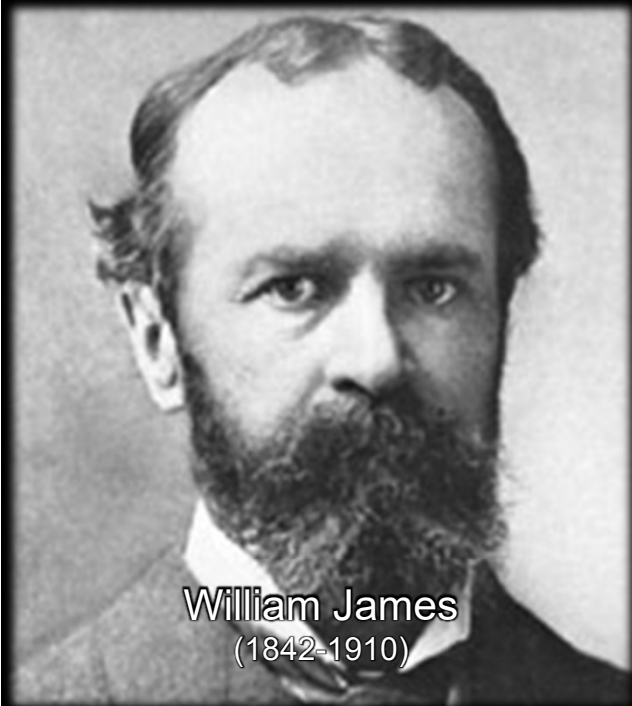
"The opposition of God and Matter is seen in the realm of nature as the conflict of Light and Darkness, Truth and Error."

[R. McL. Wilson, "Mani and Manichaeism" in Paul Edwards, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 8 vols. (New York: Macmillan Publishing & The Free Press; London: Collier Macmillan, 1967), 5:149]

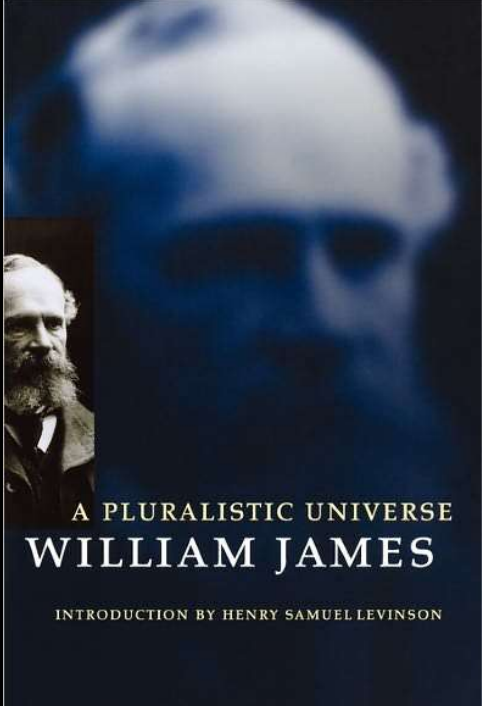


Mani
(216-276)

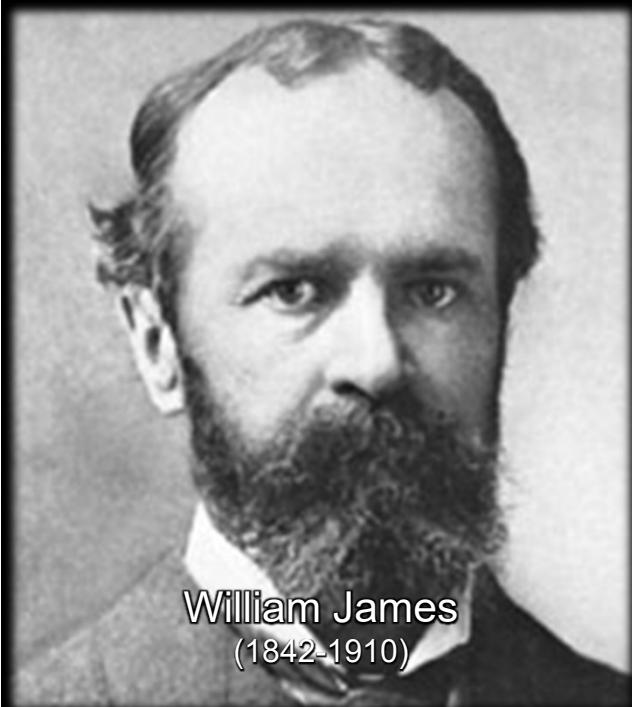
***God is not
all-powerful.***



William James
(1842-1910)



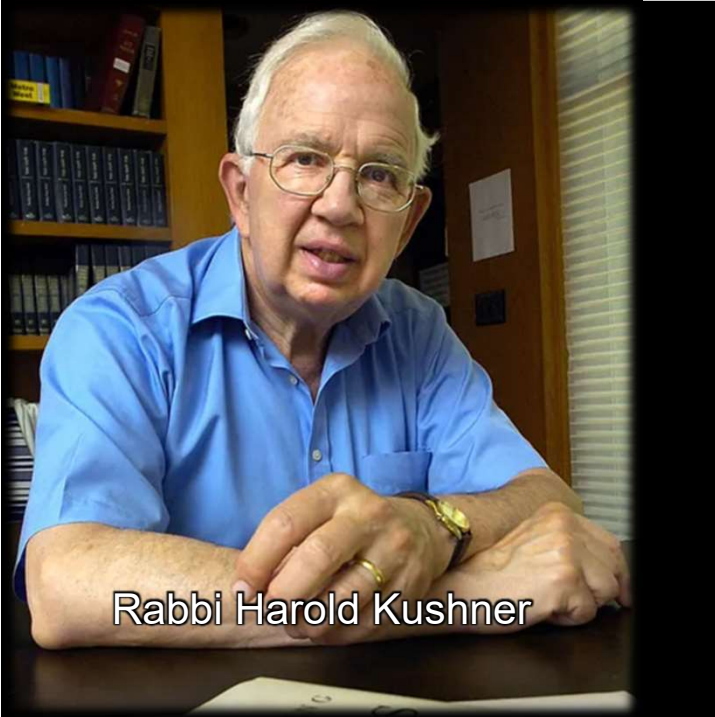
A PLURALISTIC UNIVERSE
WILLIAM JAMES
INTRODUCTION BY HENRY SAMUEL LEVINSON



William James
(1842-1910)

"The line of least resistance, then, as it seems to me, both in theology and in philosophy, is to accept, along with the superhuman consciousness, the notion that it is not all-embracing, the notion, in other words, that there is a God, but that he is finite, either in power or in knowledge, or in both at once."

[A Pluralistic Universe, Lecture VIII, Conclusions]

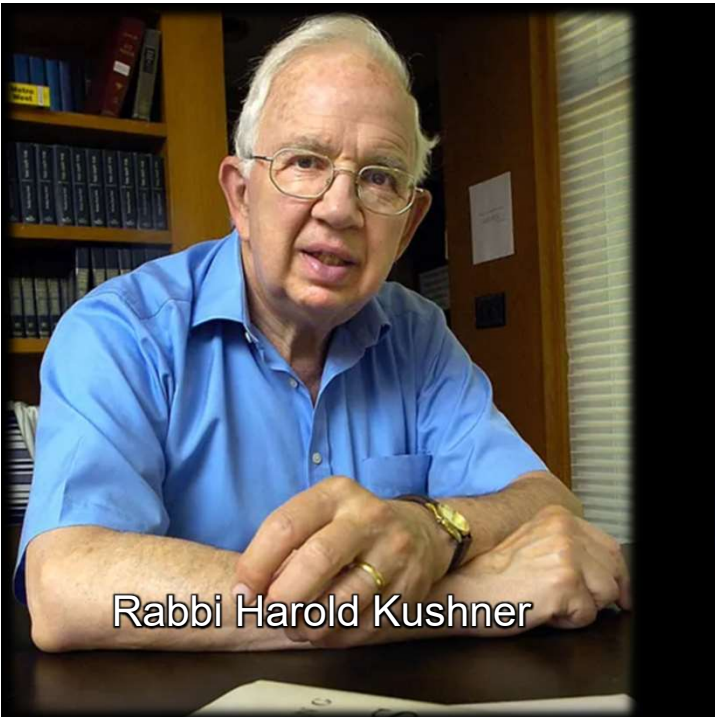


Rabbi Harold Kushner

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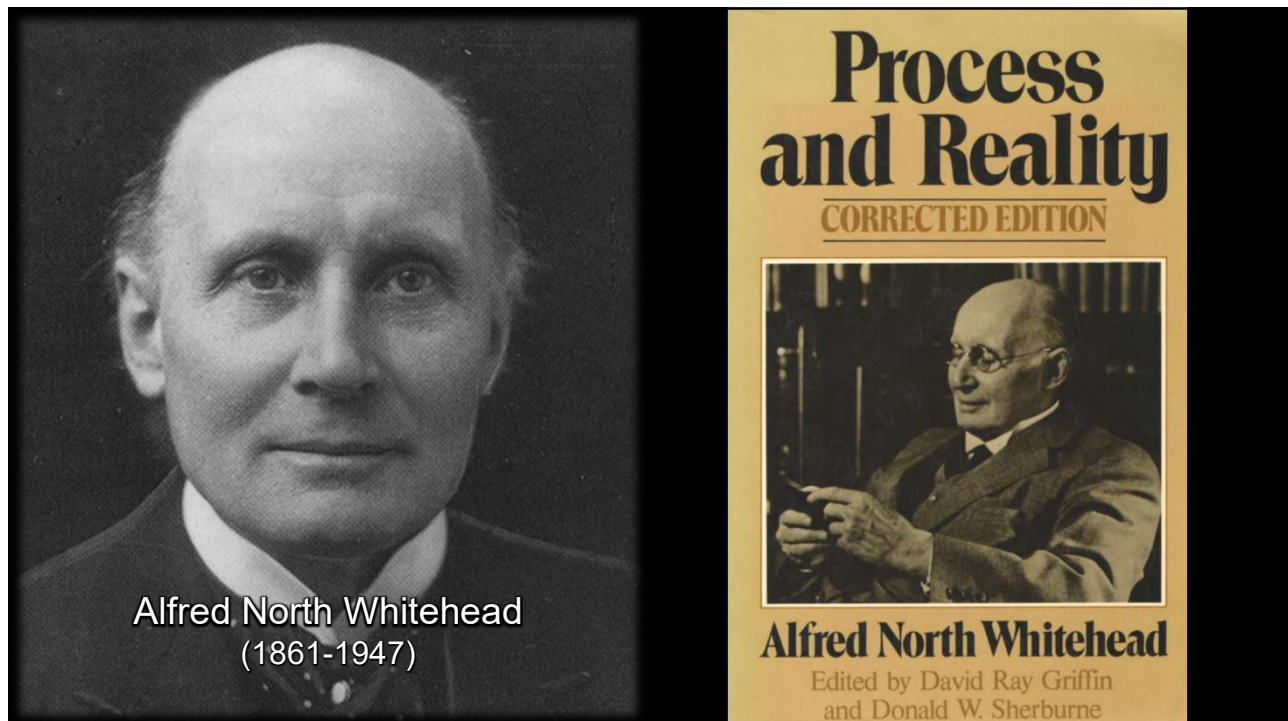


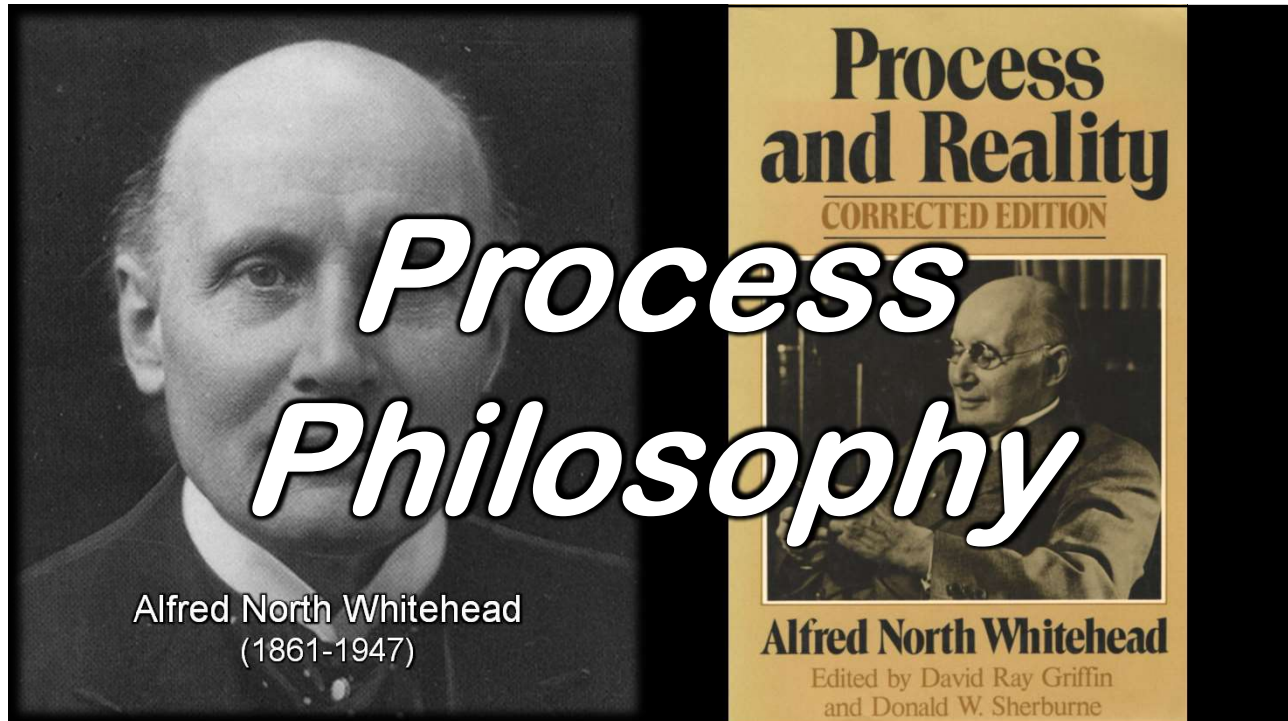
Rabbi Harold Kushner

"I recognize His limitations. He is limited in what He can do by the laws of nature and by the evolution of human nature and human moral freedom. ... Even God has a hard time keeping chaos in check and limiting the damage that evil can do"

[Harold S. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, pp. 134, 43, cited in Norman L. Geisler and William D. Watkins, *Worlds Apart: A Handbook on World Views*, 2nd ed. (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 203]

*God is not
all-knowing.*





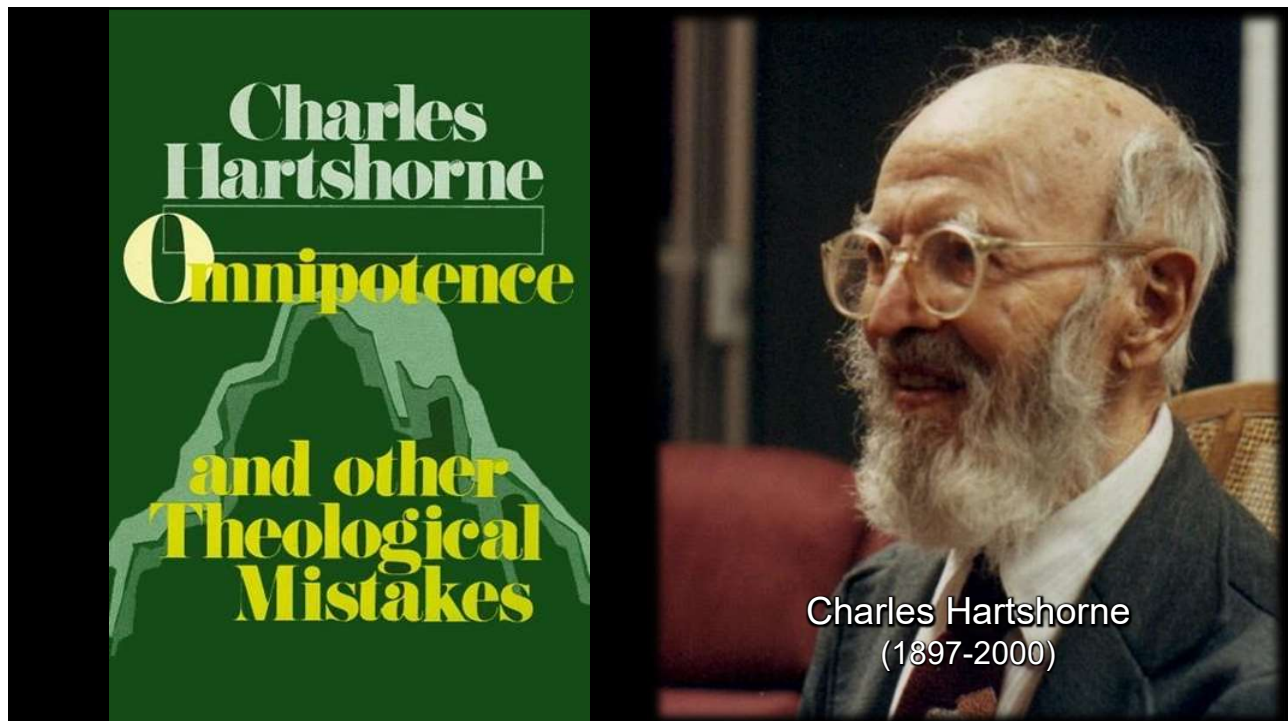
The image shows the cover of the book "Process and Reality" by Alfred North Whitehead. The cover is split into two main sections. On the left is a black and white portrait of Whitehead. On the right is a yellow background with the title "Process and Reality" in large black letters, followed by "CORRECTED EDITION" in smaller letters. Below this is a smaller black and white portrait of Whitehead. At the bottom of the yellow section, it says "Alfred North Whitehead" and "Edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne".

*Process
Philosophy*

Alfred North Whitehead
(1861-1947)

**Process
and Reality**
CORRECTED EDITION

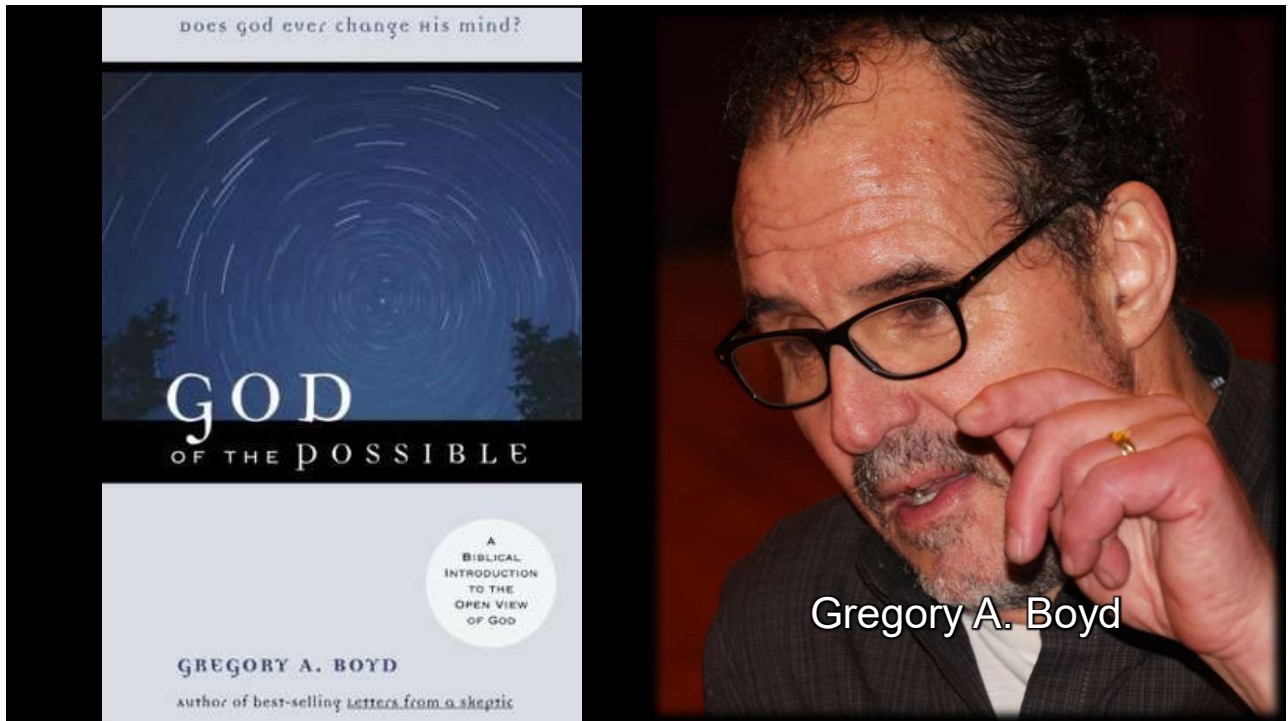
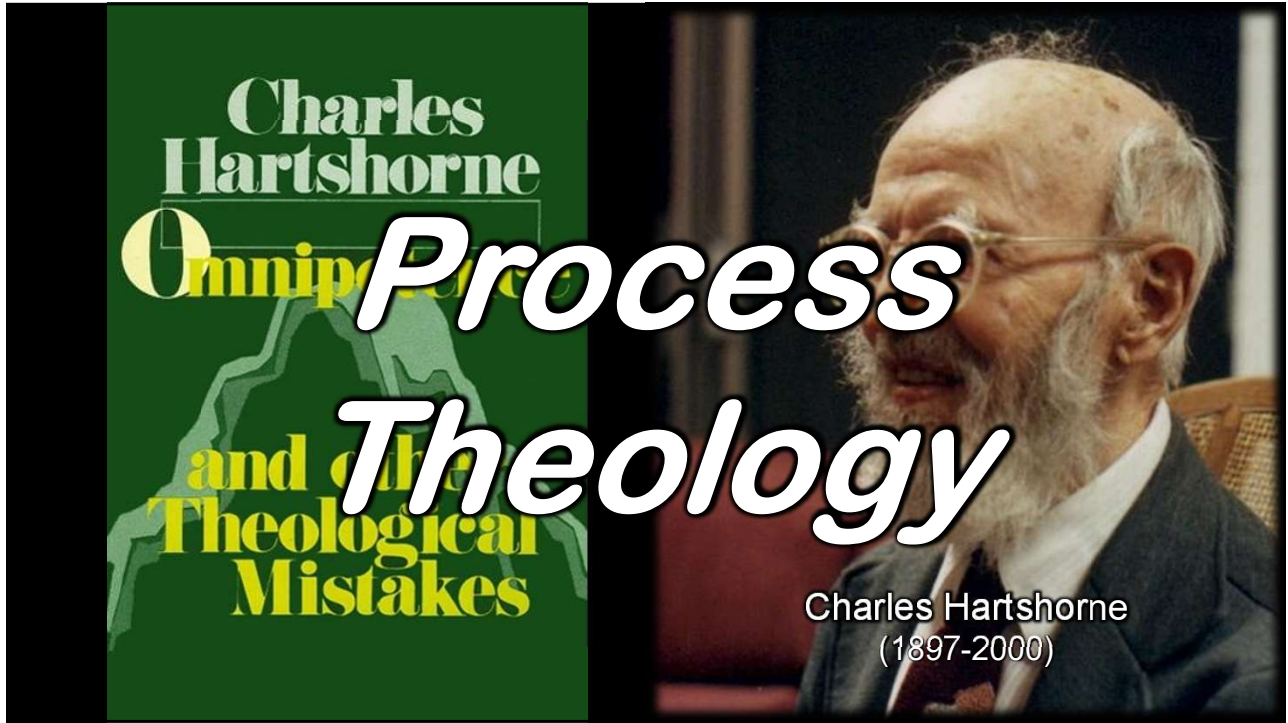
Alfred North Whitehead
Edited by David Ray Griffin
and Donald W. Sherburne

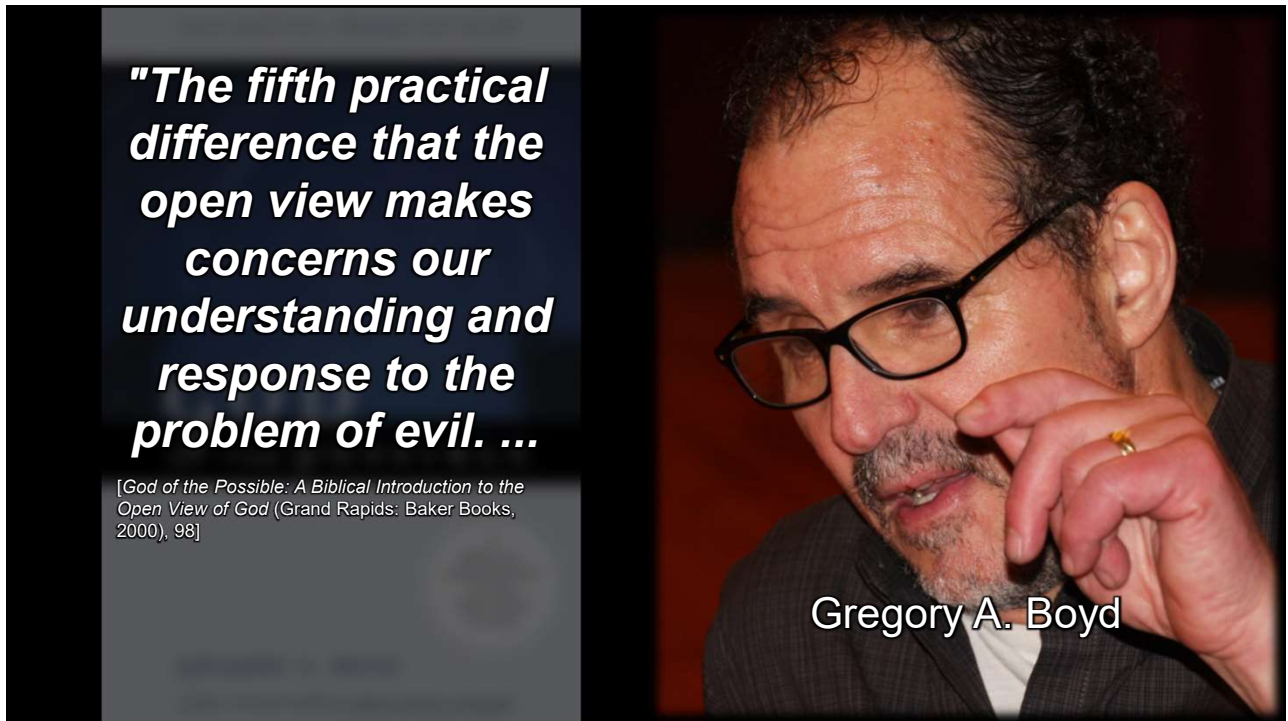
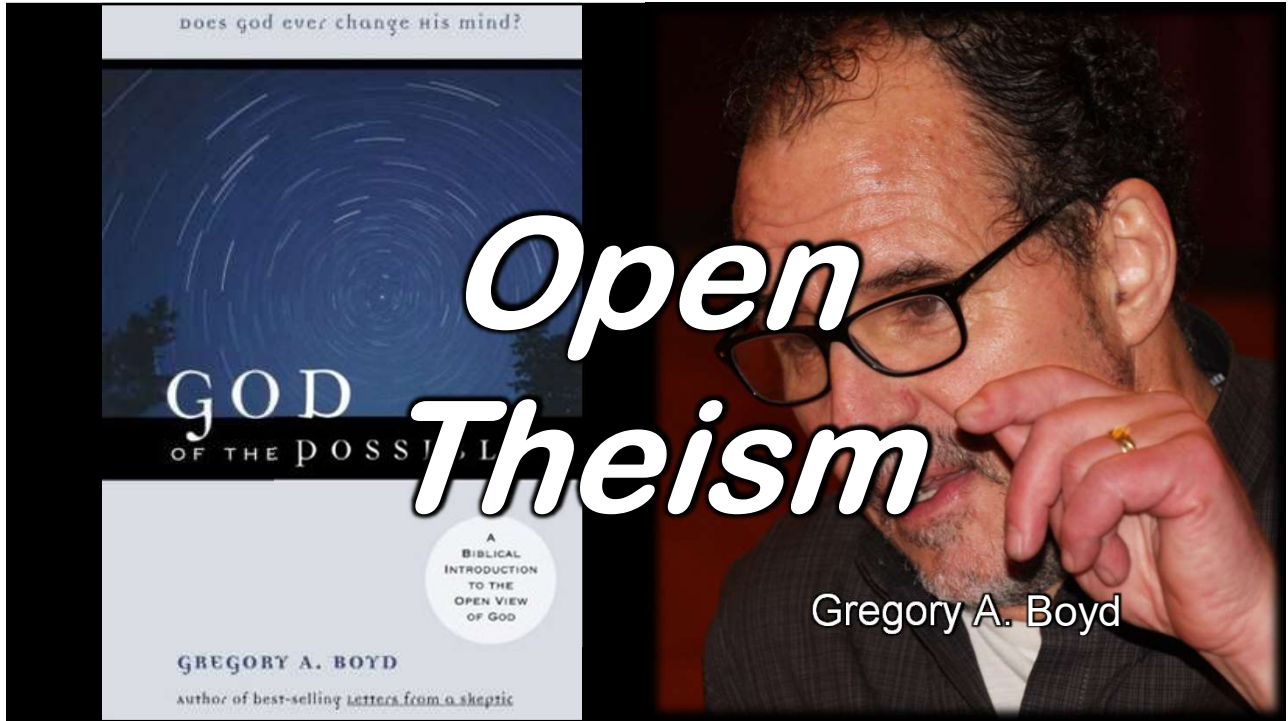


The image shows the cover of the book "Omnipotence and other Theological Mistakes" by Charles Hartshorne. The cover is split into two main sections. On the left is a green background with the author's name "Charles Hartshorne" in white, followed by "Omnipotence" in large yellow letters. Below this is a stylized green mountain range graphic. At the bottom of the green section, it says "and other Theological Mistakes" in yellow. On the right is a color photograph of Charles Hartshorne, an older man with a white beard and glasses, wearing a suit and tie.

Charles Hartshorne
Omnipotence
and other
**Theological
Mistakes**

Charles Hartshorne
(1897-2000)





"My agnostic father ... asked me why God would allow Adolf Hitler to be born if he foreknew that this man would massacre millions of Jews. ...



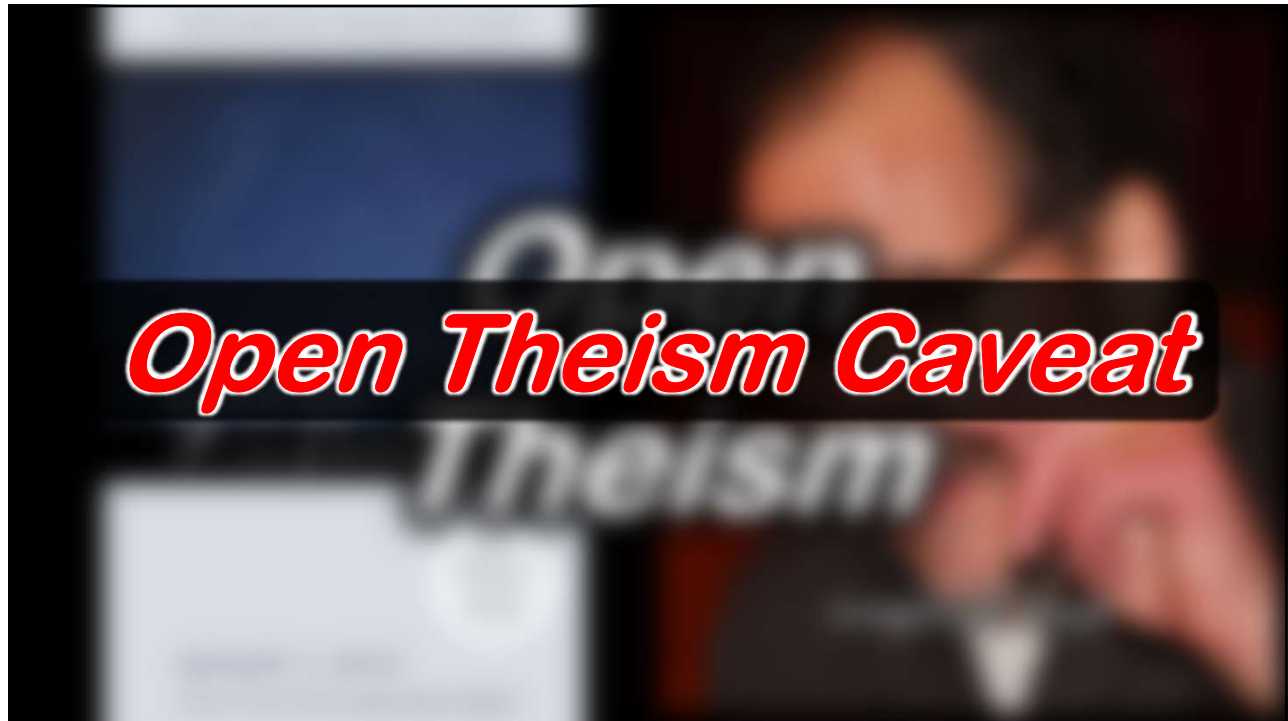
Gregory A. Boyd

"The only response I could offer then, and the only response I continue to offer now is that this was not foreknown as a certainty at the time God created Hitler."

[God of the Possible, 98]



Gregory A. Boyd



**In Fairness to
Hartshorne and Boyd:**

- *They claim to hold to the doctrine of God's omniscience.*
- *But they would maintain a different definition of 'omniscience' than the Classical Theist.*
- *They would claim that propositions about the future are unknowable.*



In Fairness to Hartshorne and Boyd:

- *Thus, in their estimation, God is "omniscient" because God knows everything that can be known but God does not know the future because (in their view) the future is not knowable.*



***God does
not exist.***

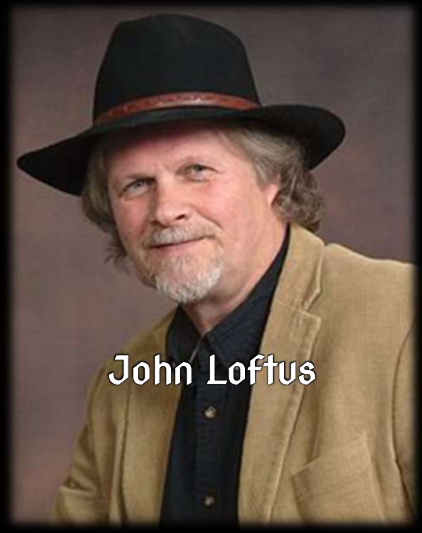
Popular Atheism



Dan Barker

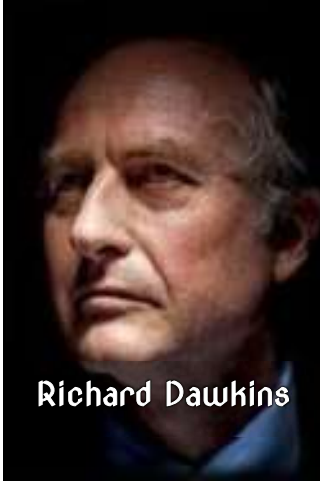


George Smith



John Loftus

The New Atheism



Richard Dawkins



Sam Harris



Christopher Hitchens
(1949-2011)

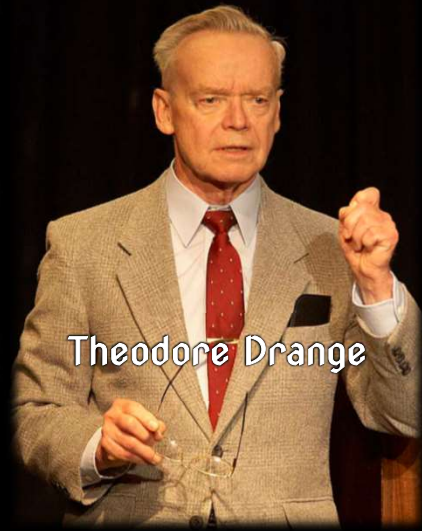


Daniel Dennett

Academic Atheism



J. L. Mackie
(1917-1981)



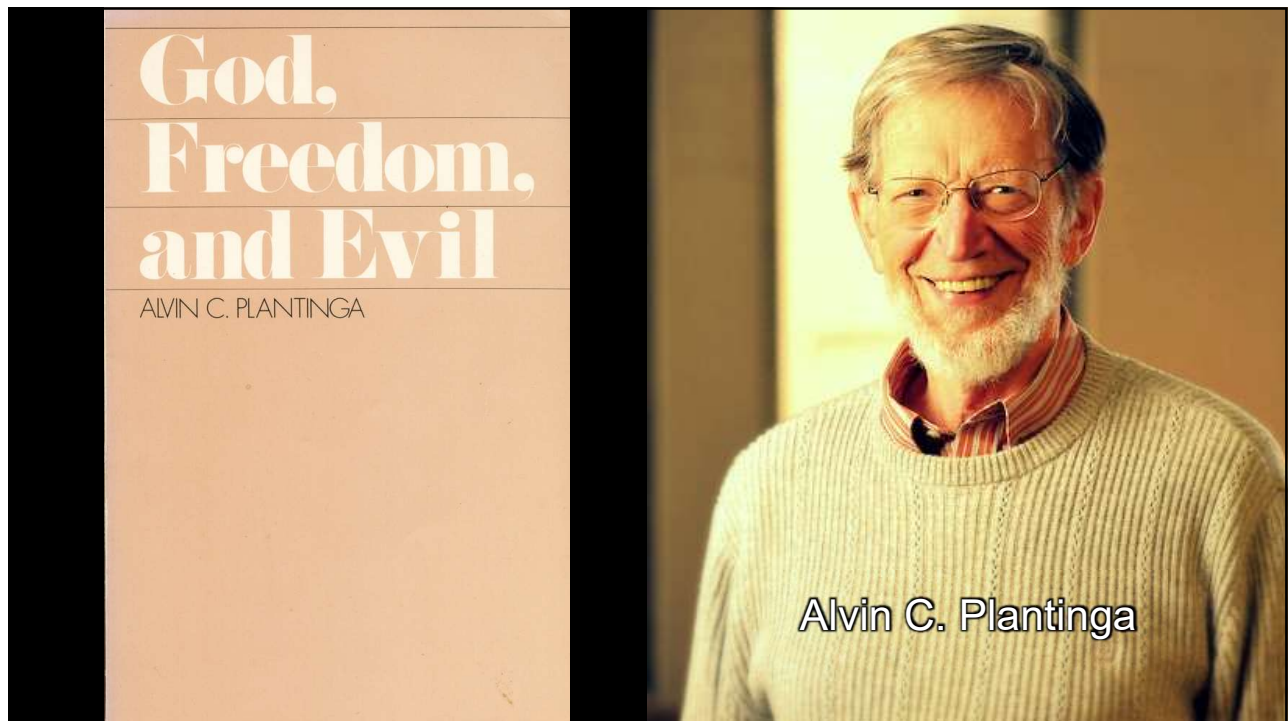
Theodore Drange

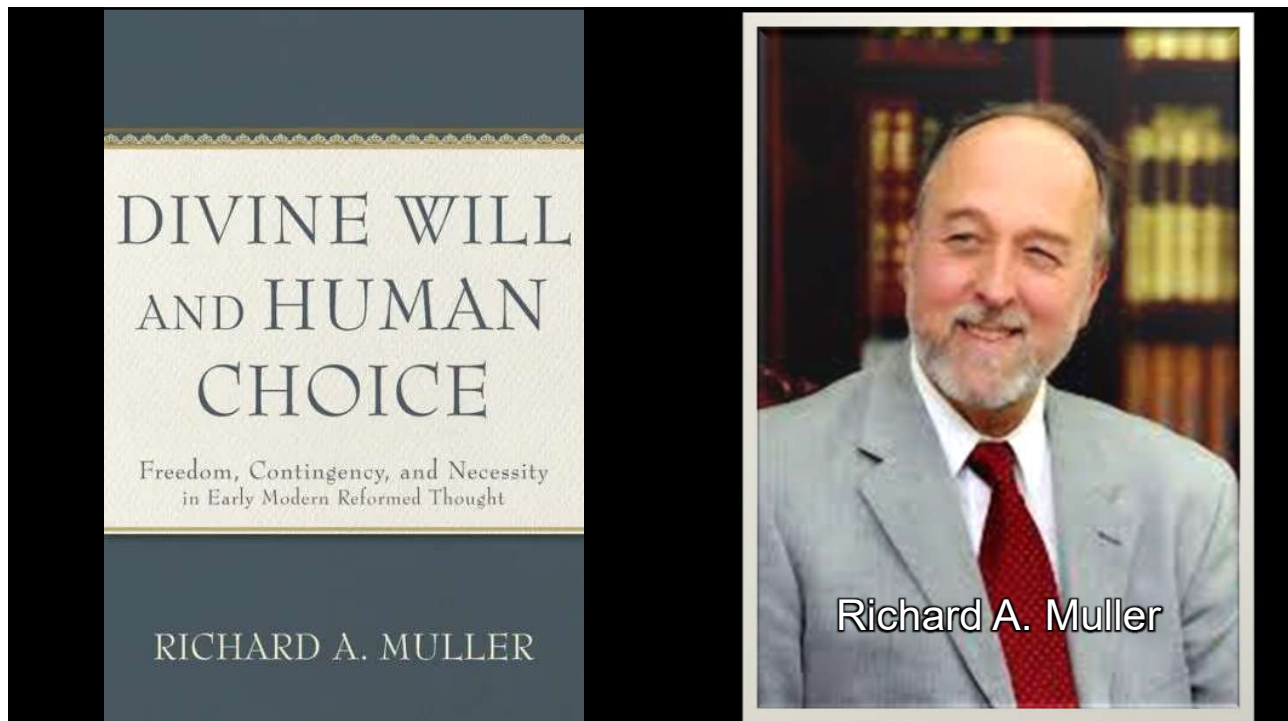


Michael Martin
(1932-2015)

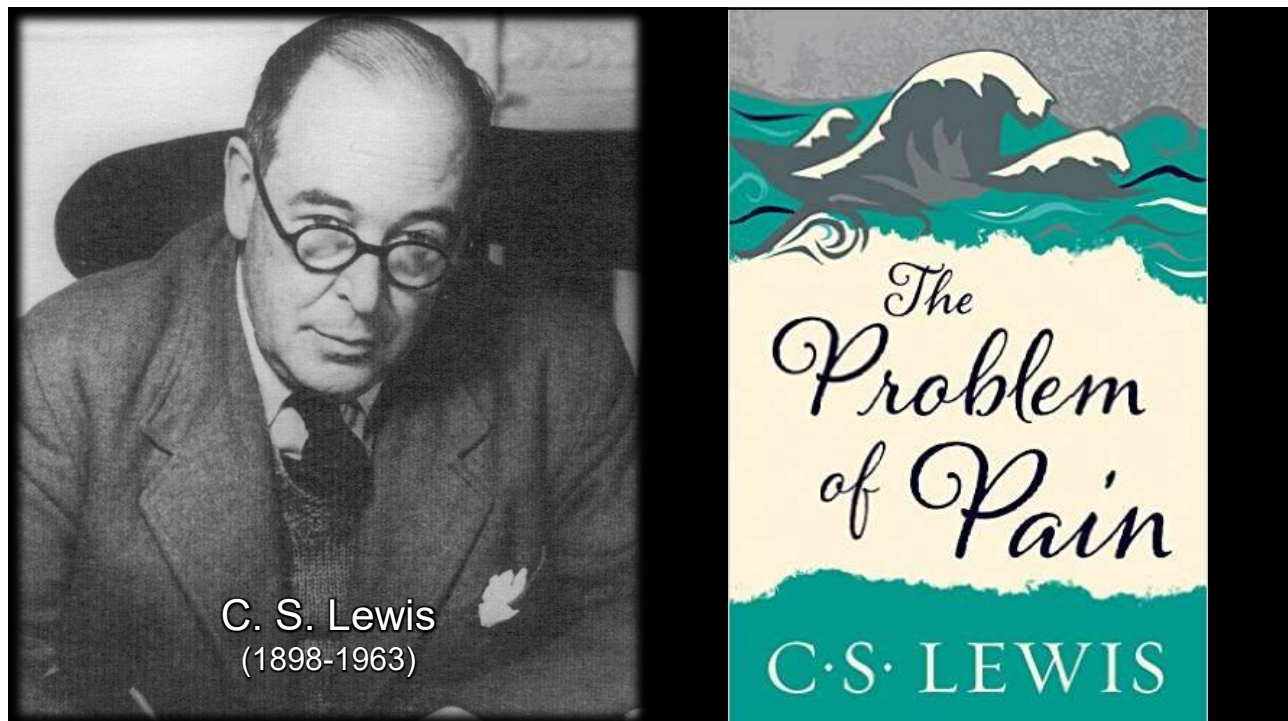


The Free Will Defense





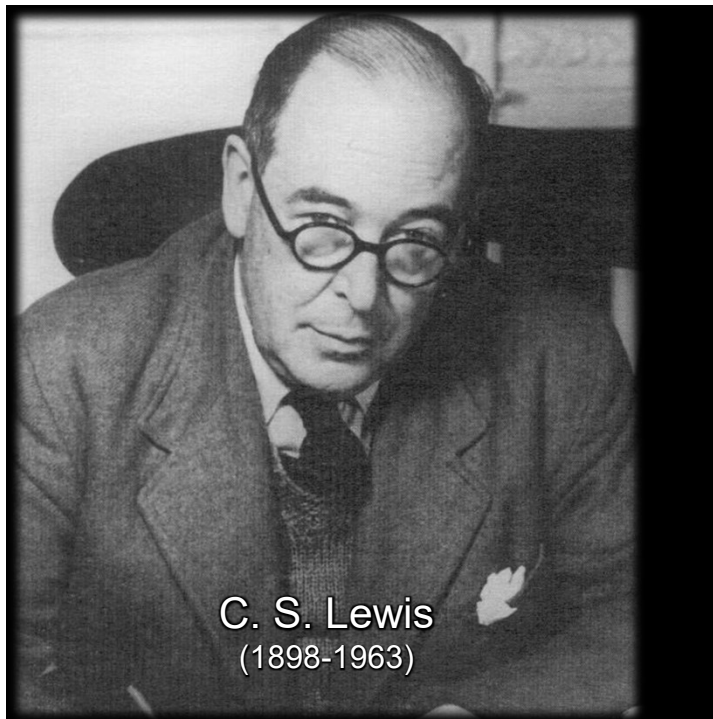
The Natural Order Defense of C. S. Lewis





C. S. Lewis
(1898-1963)

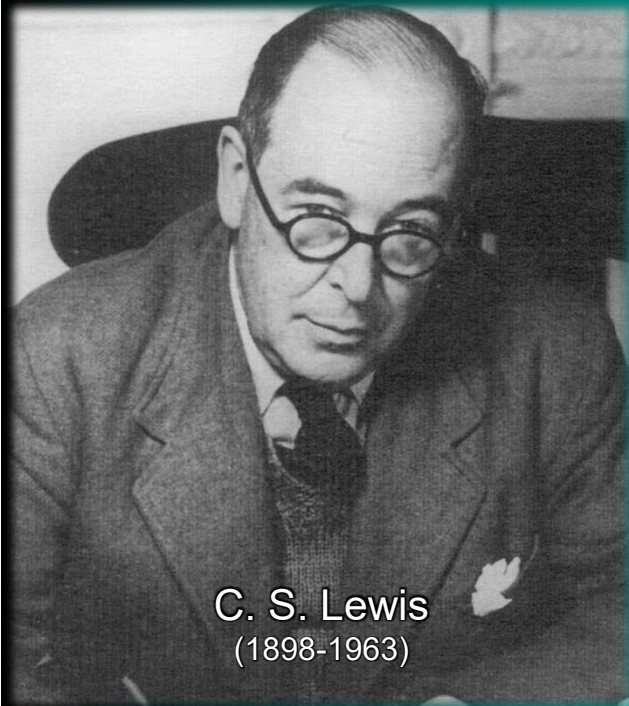
"Fixed laws, consequences unfolding by causal necessity, the whole natural order, are at once the limits within which their common life is confined and also the sole condition under which any such life is possible."



C. S. Lewis
(1898-1963)

"Try to exclude the possibility of suffering which the order of nature and the existence of free-wills involve, and you find that you have excluded life itself."

[The Problem of Pain (London: The Centenary Press, 1940), 22]



C. S. Lewis
(1898-1963)

C. S. Lewis's Natural Order Defense

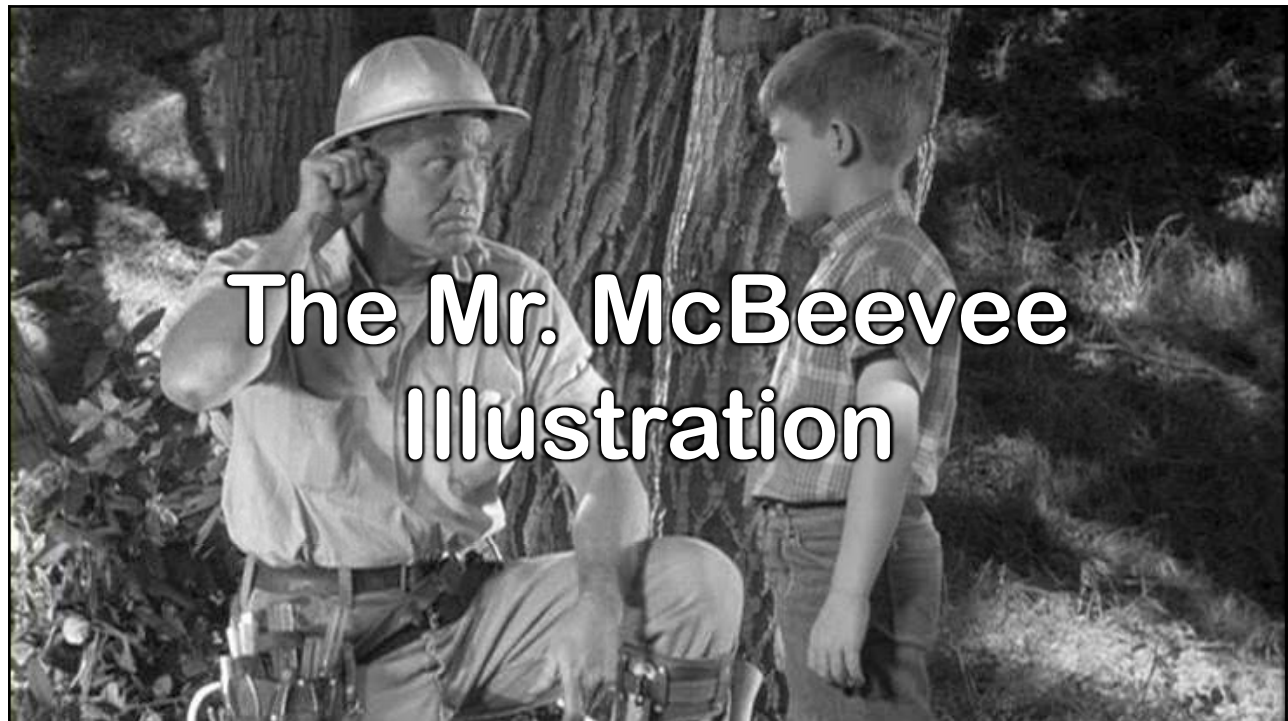
- *God created humans with free will.*
- *The responsible exercise of free will requires a world of non-capricious physical regularities (laws).*
- *These regularities create the possibility of natural evil.*





Since it is most often the Christian who is challenged with the problem of evil, it behooves the Christian to cull from the entire Christian world view in responding.

- *In the consummation of history, all will be good.*
- *All moral goods will be rewarded. (which is good)*
- *All moral evils will be punished. (which is good)*



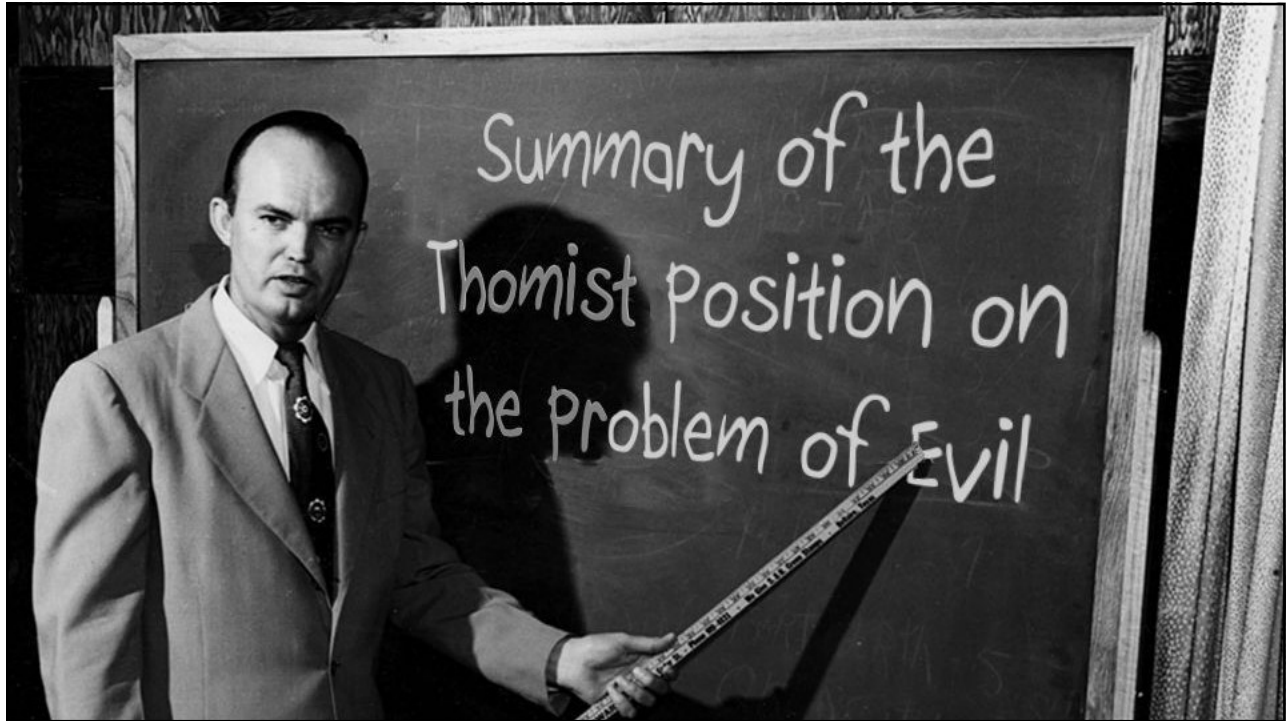
"While it might be easy to imagine what we would do if we had God's power, it is impossible to know what we would do if we had God's knowledge."



Doug Geivett







Since God has not explicitly revealed in His word why He has allowed evil, we can only speculate about how to reconcile evil within creation with God as the Creator.

Our speculation should be informed and constrained by what God has revealed about Himself:

- ❖ ***through creation (General Revelation and Natural Theology) and***
- ❖ ***through Scripture (Special Revelation and Systematic Theology).***

As for Special Revelation, Scripture unequivocally affirms the goodness of God.

☞ Nahum 1:7 ☞

*The LORD is good, A stronghold in
the day of trouble; And He knows
those who trust in Him.*



☞ 1 Chronicles 16:34 ☞

*Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He
is good! For His mercy endures
forever.*



☞ Psalm 25:8 ☞

*Good and upright is the LORD;
Therefore He teaches sinners
in the way.*



☞ Psalm 34:8 ☞

*Oh, taste and see that the LORD is
good; Blessed is the man who
trusts in Him!*

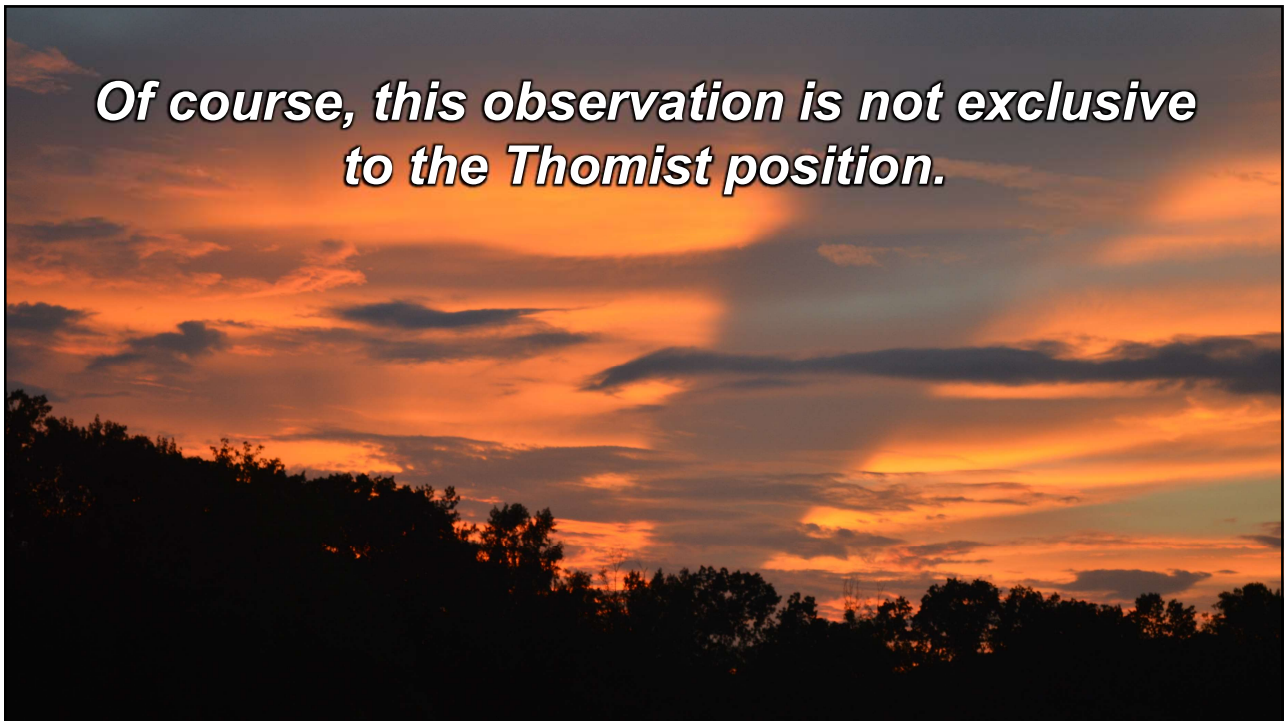


∞ Psalm 100:5 ∞

For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations.

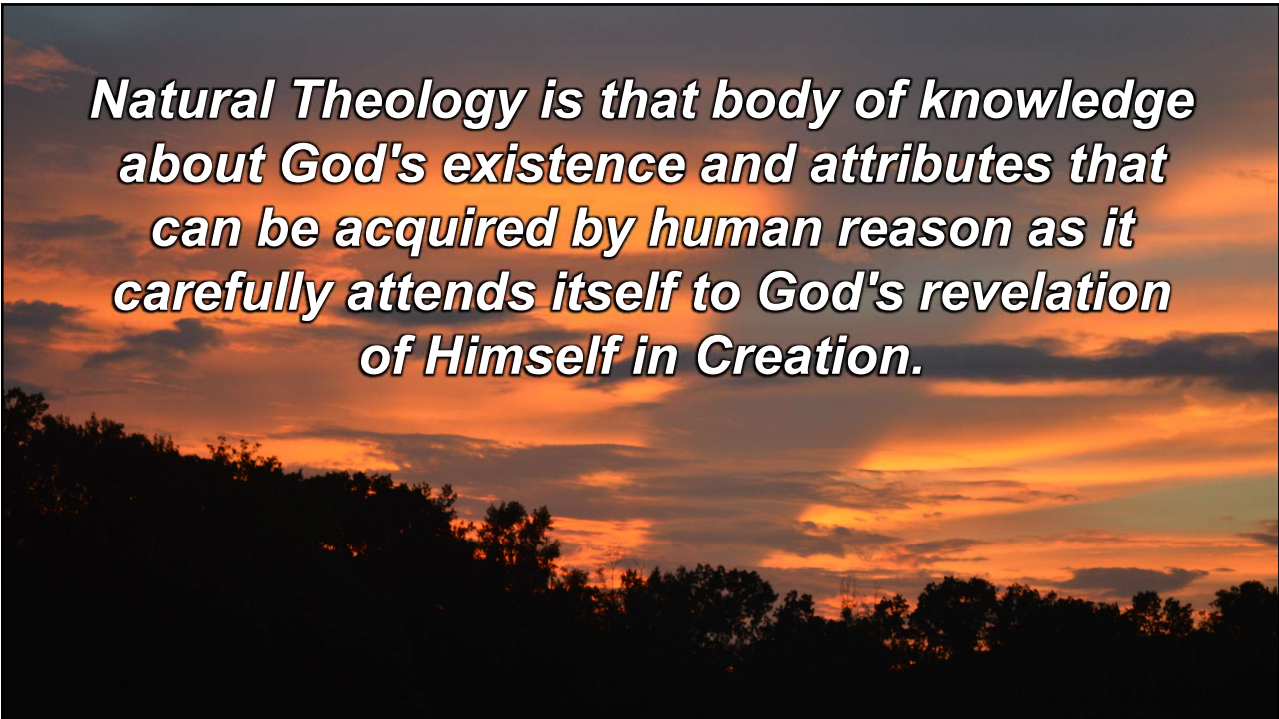


Of course, this observation is not exclusive to the Thomist position.

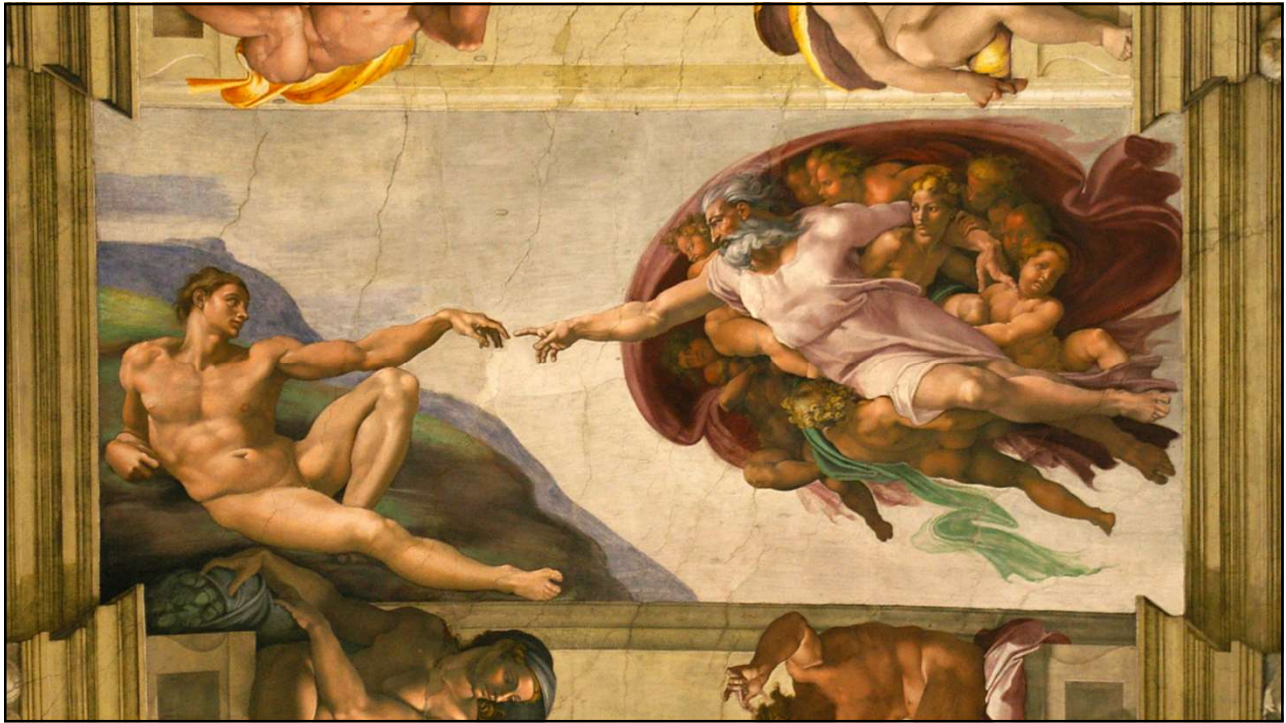




As for General Revelation, Thomists put great emphasis on Natural Theology.

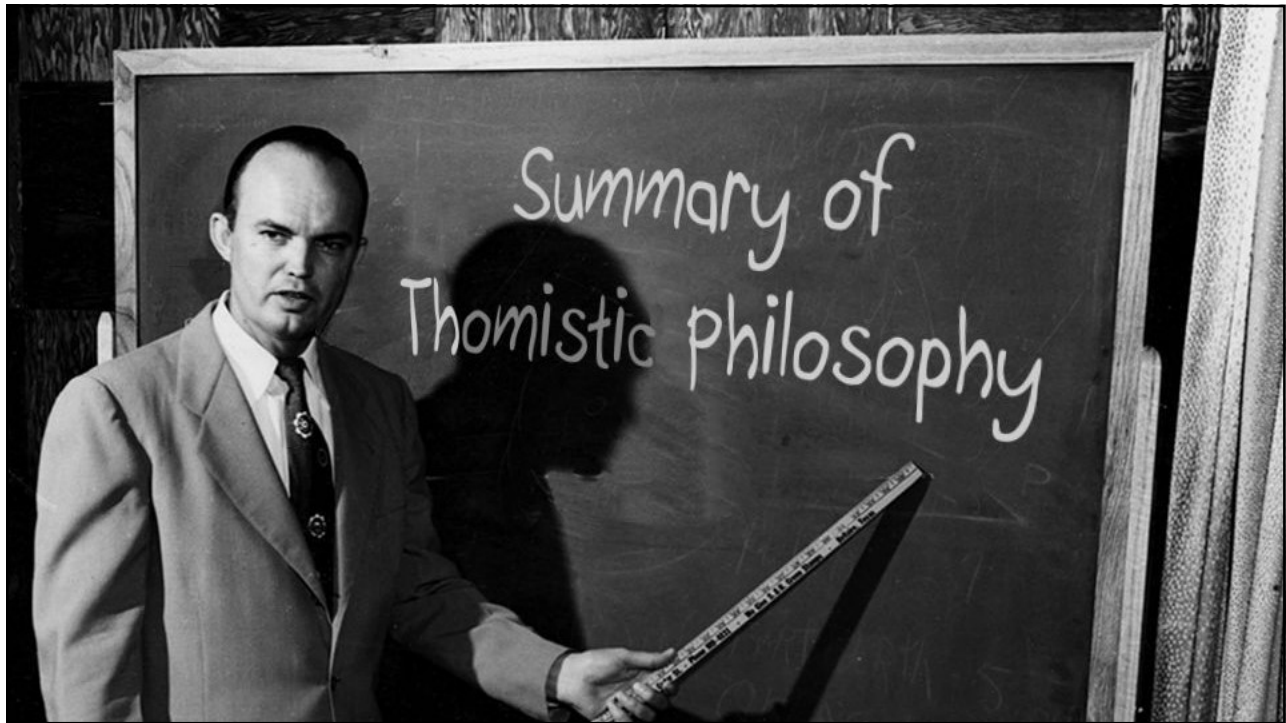


Natural Theology is that body of knowledge about God's existence and attributes that can be acquired by human reason as it carefully attends itself to God's revelation of Himself in Creation.

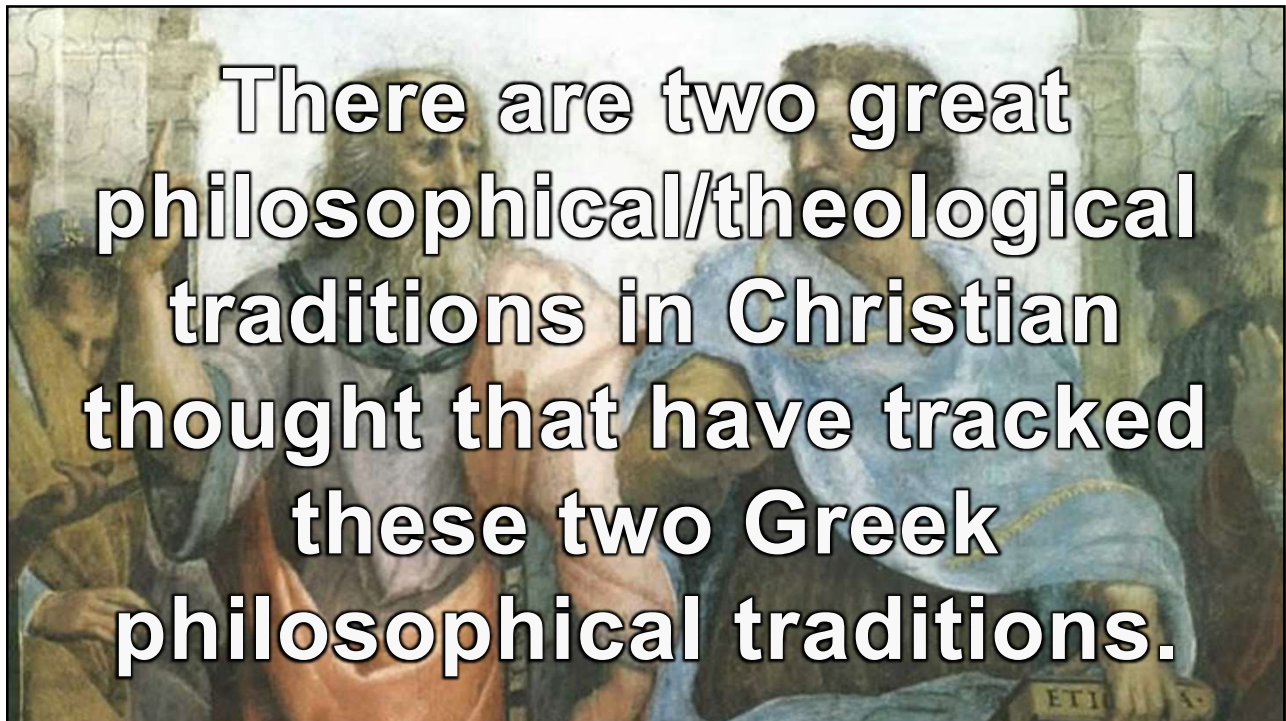


For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead ...

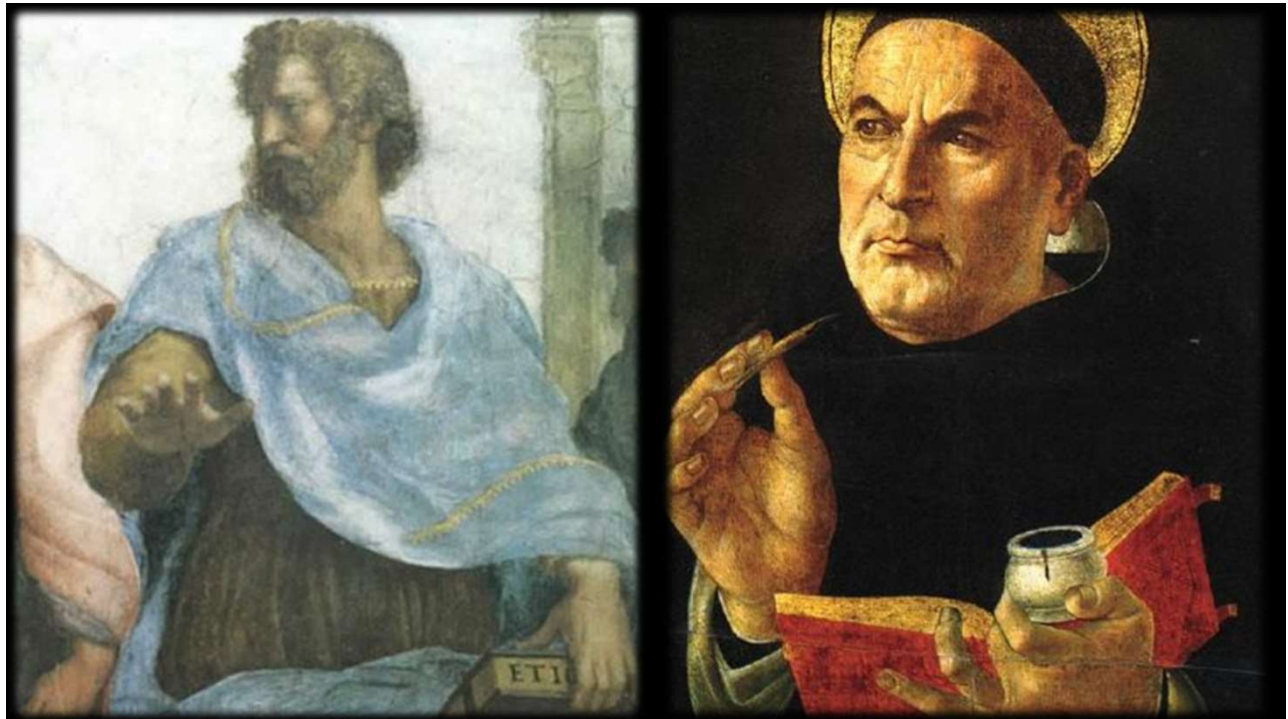
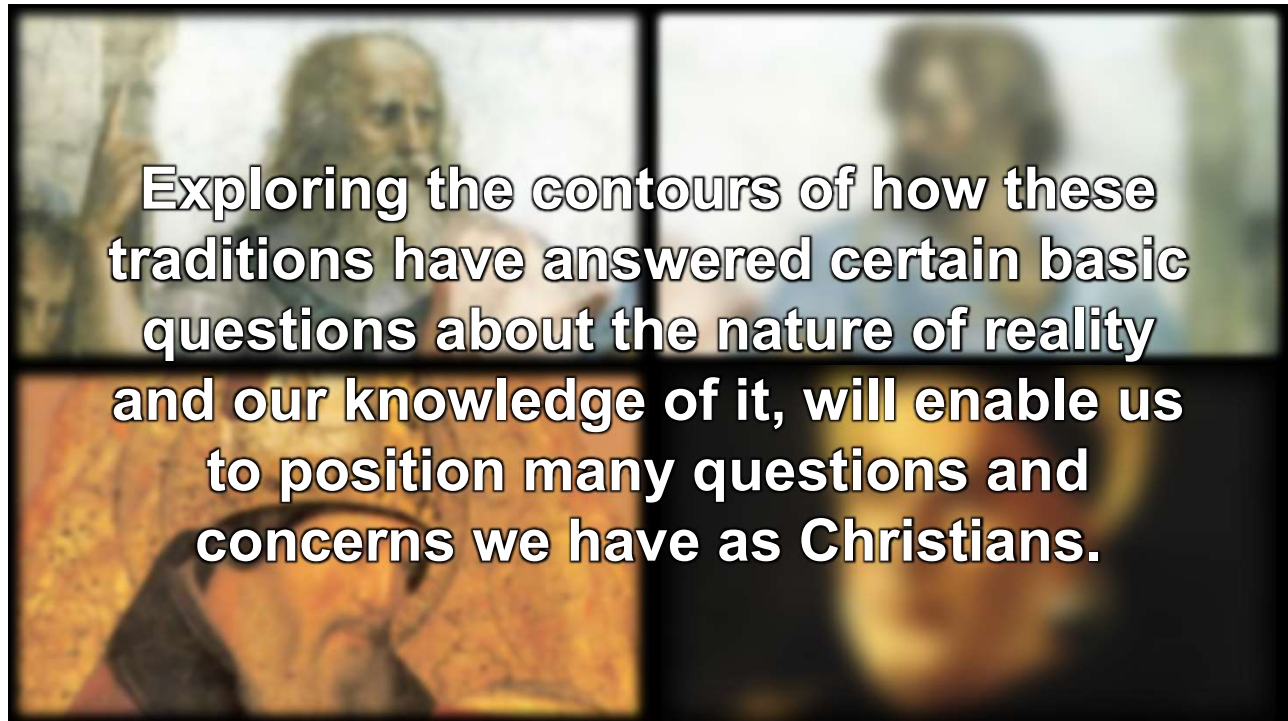
Rom. 1:20a

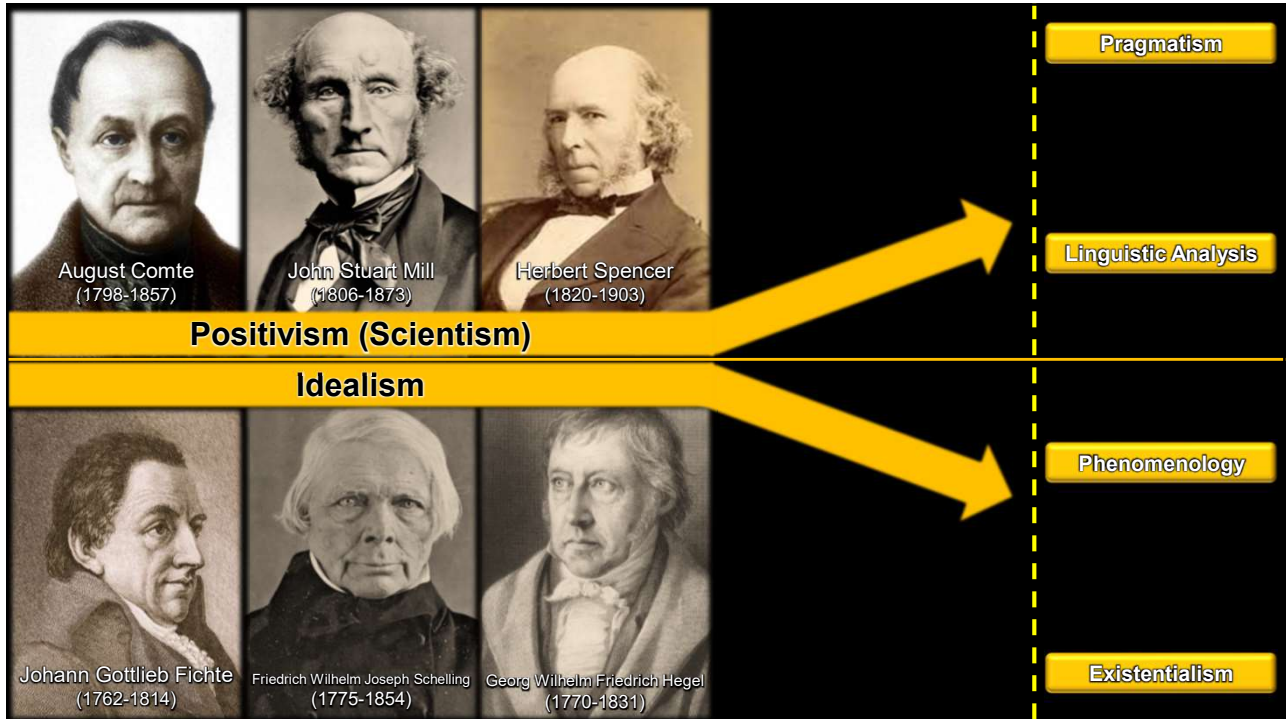
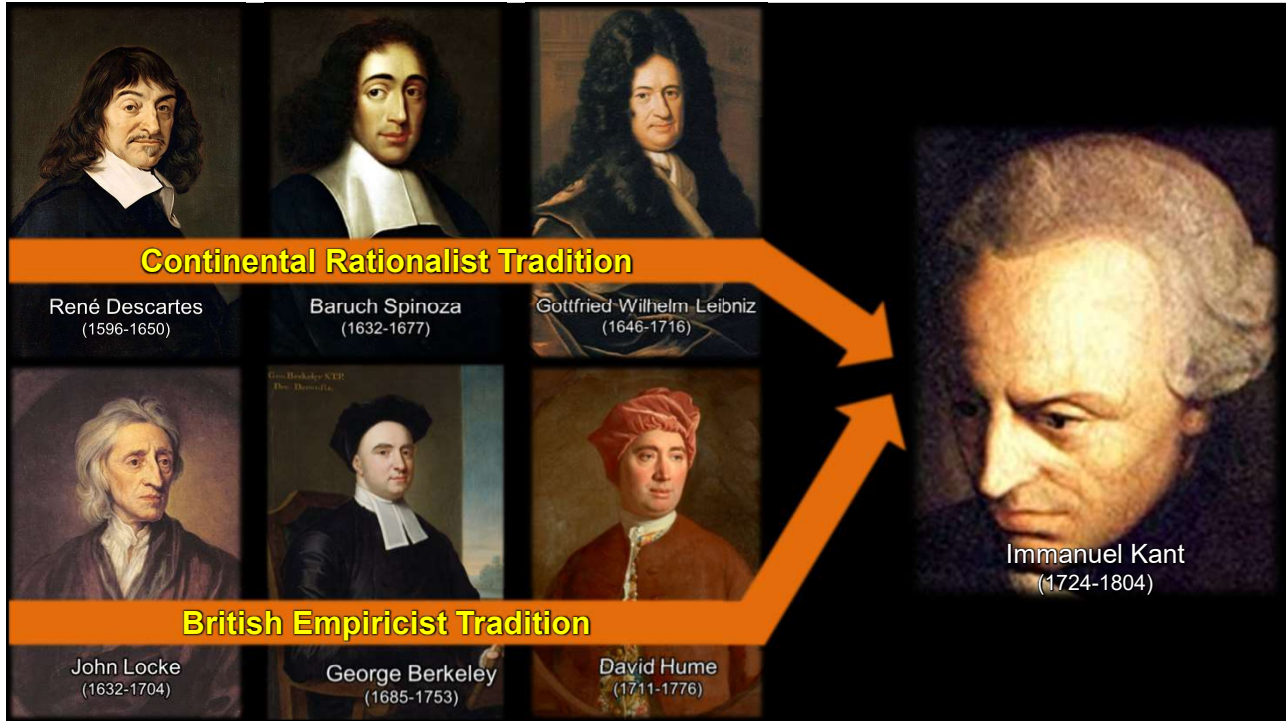


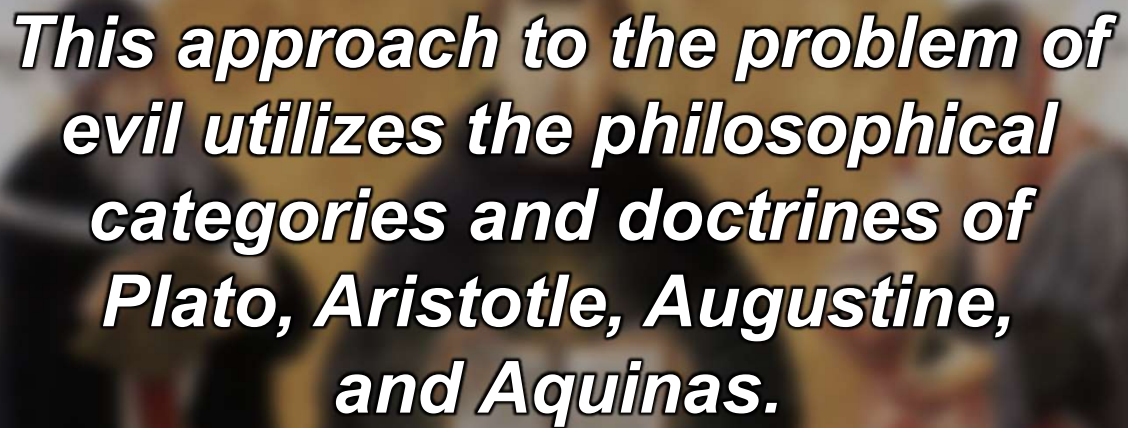
There are two great philosophical traditions in Western thought that have endured since the ancient Greeks.



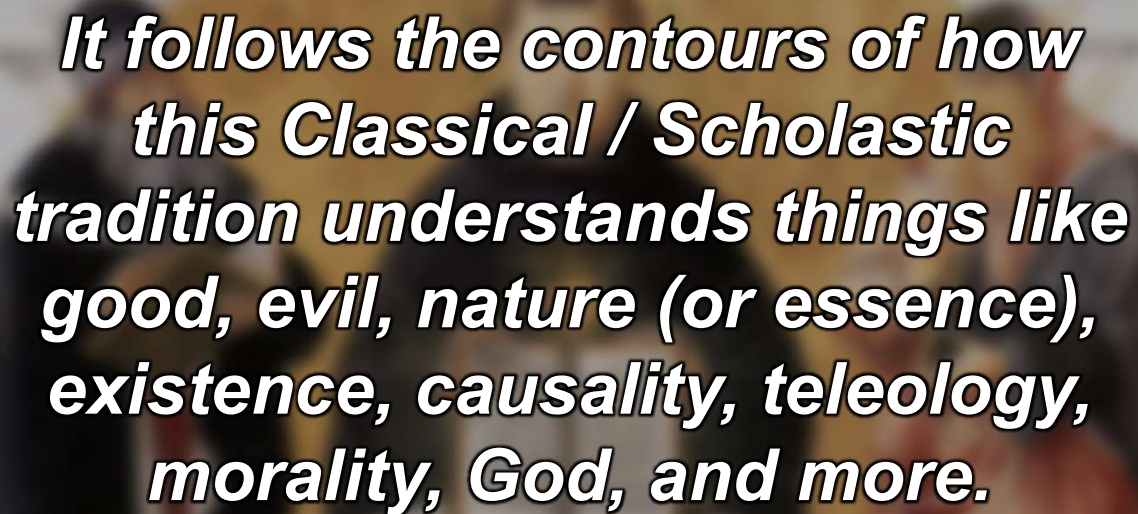




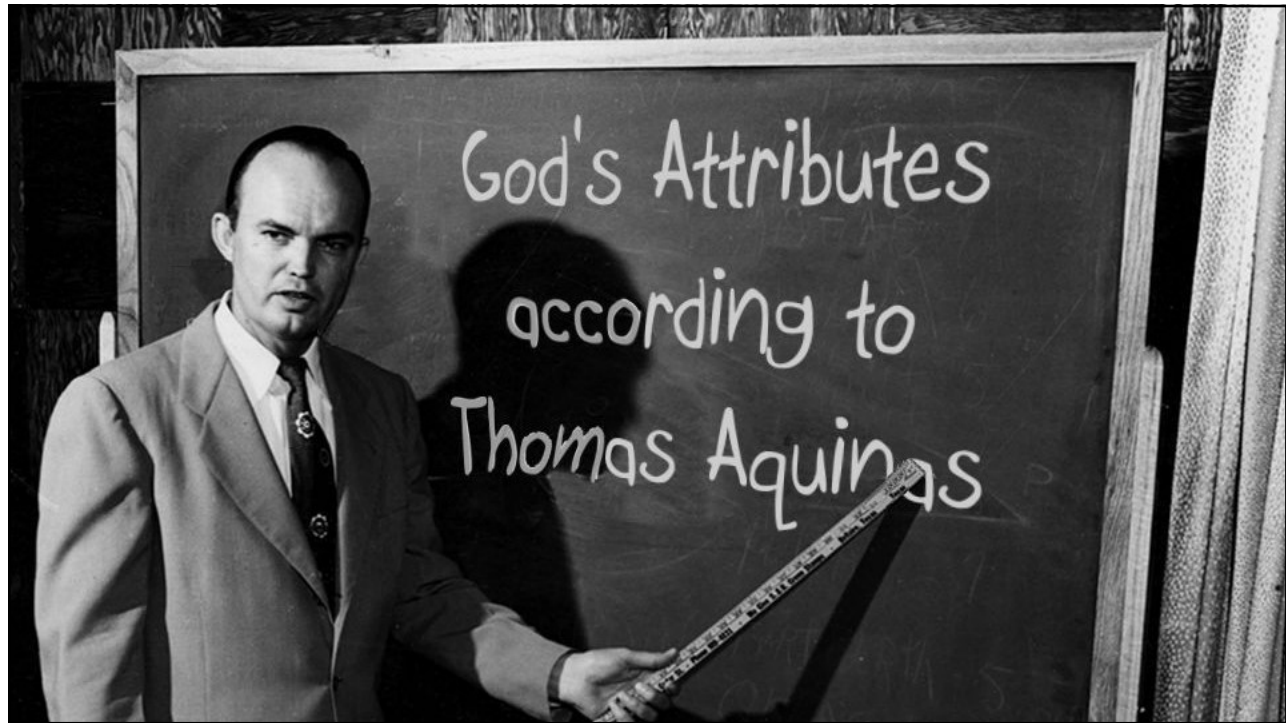




This approach to the problem of evil utilizes the philosophical categories and doctrines of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas.



It follows the contours of how this Classical / Scholastic tradition understands things like good, evil, nature (or essence), existence, causality, teleology, morality, God, and more.

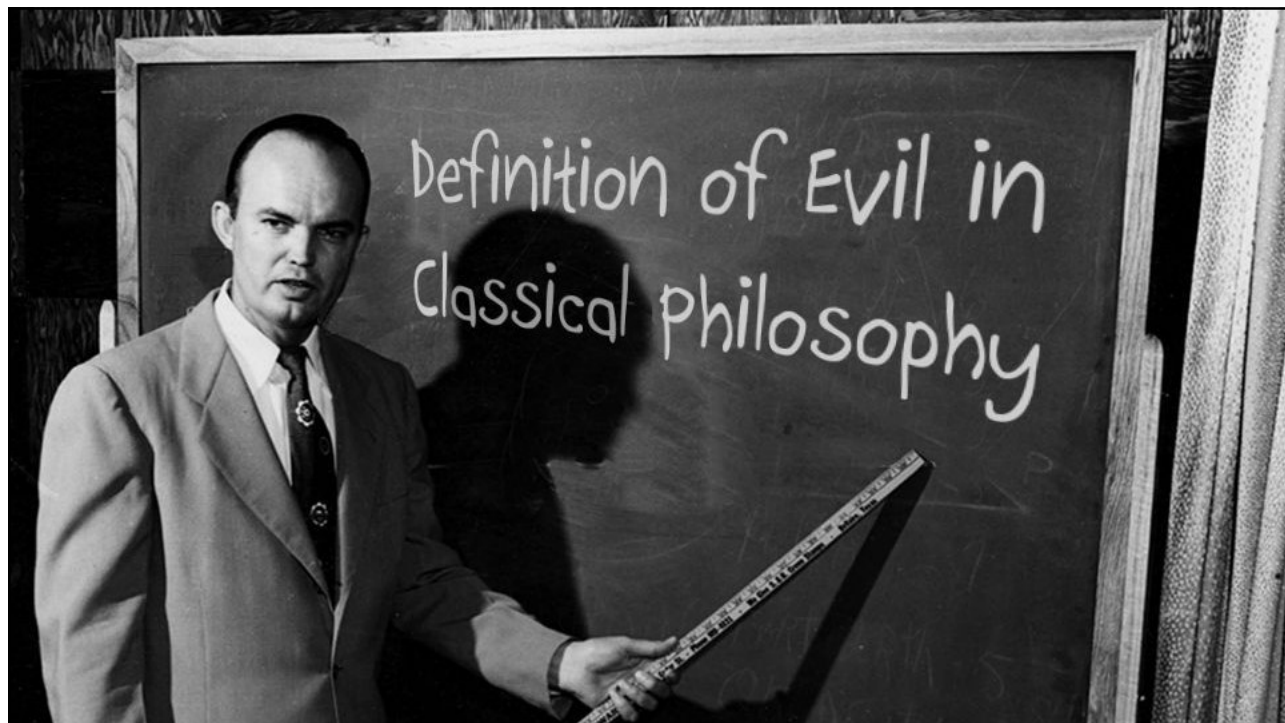


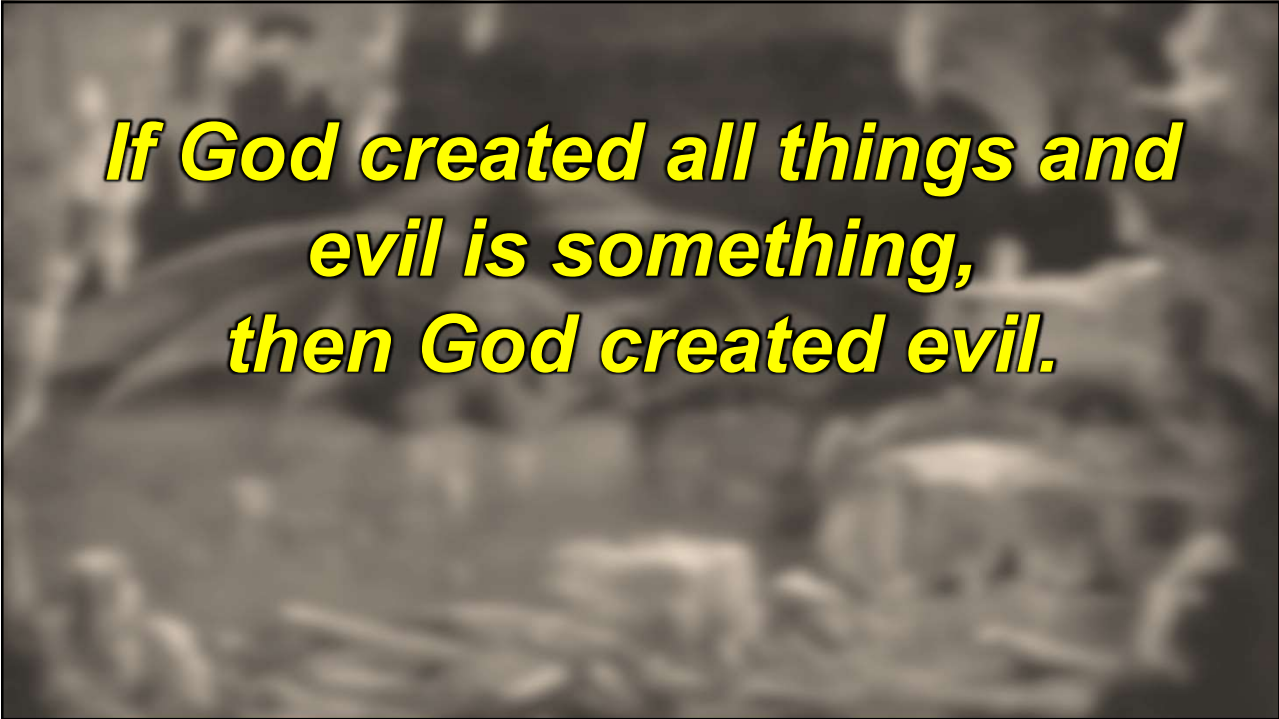
✓ Simple	✓ True		
✓ Perfect	✓ Living		
✓ Good	✓ Personal		
✓ Infinite	✓ Loving		
✓ Immutable	✓ Just		
✓ Eternal	✓ Merciful		
✓ One	✓ Providential		
✓ Omniscient	✓ Omnipresent		
			<p>Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)</p>



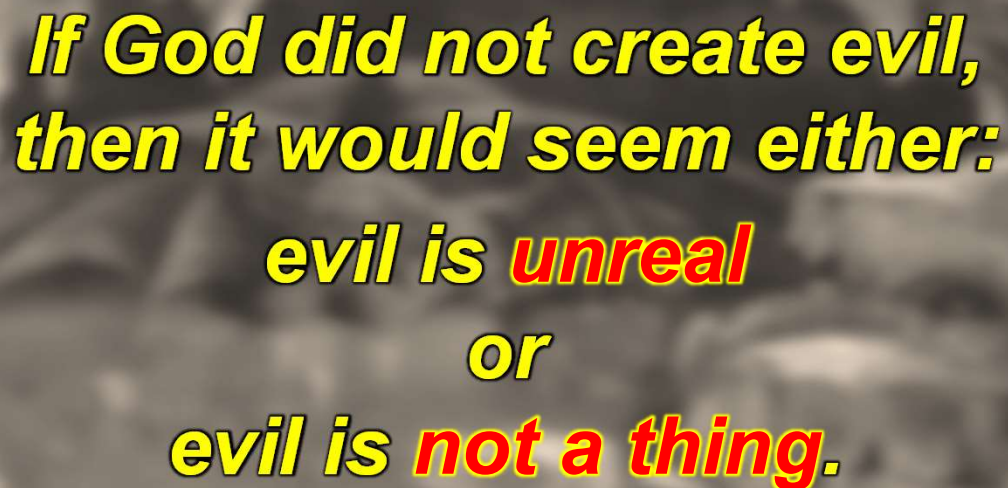
Norman L. Geisler
(1932-2019)

- ✓ Pure Actuality
- ✓ Simplicity
- ✓ Aseity
- ✓ Necessity
- ✓ Immutability
- ✓ Eternality
- ✓ Impassibility
- ✓ Infinity
- ✓ Immateriality
- ✓ Immensity
- ✓ Omnipotence
- ✓ Omnipresence
- ✓ Omniscience
- ✓ Wisdom
- ✓ Light
- ✓ Majesty
- ✓ Beauty
- ✓ Ineffability
- ✓ Life
- ✓ Immortality
- ✓ Unity
- ✓ Holiness
- ✓ Righteousness
- ✓ Truthfulness
- ✓ Goodness
- ✓ Mercy

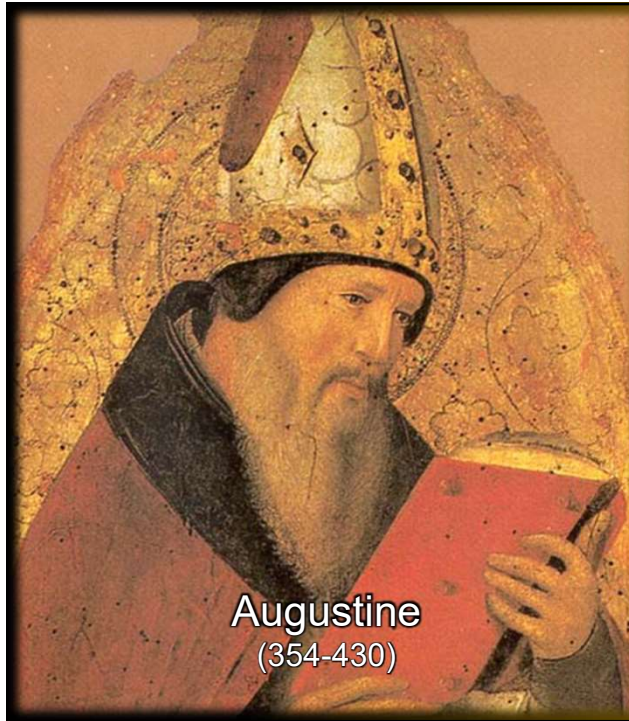




***If God created all things and
evil is something,
then God created evil.***

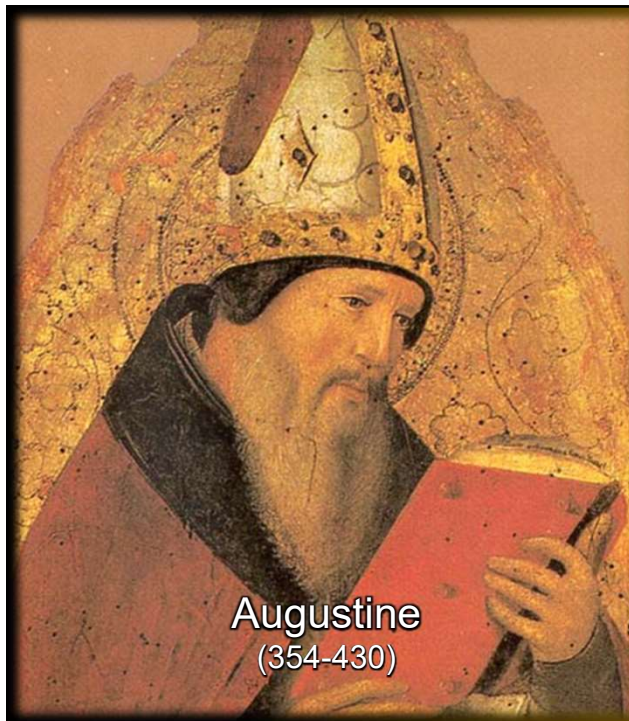


***If God did not create evil,
then it would seem either:
evil is **unreal**
or
evil is **not a thing**.***



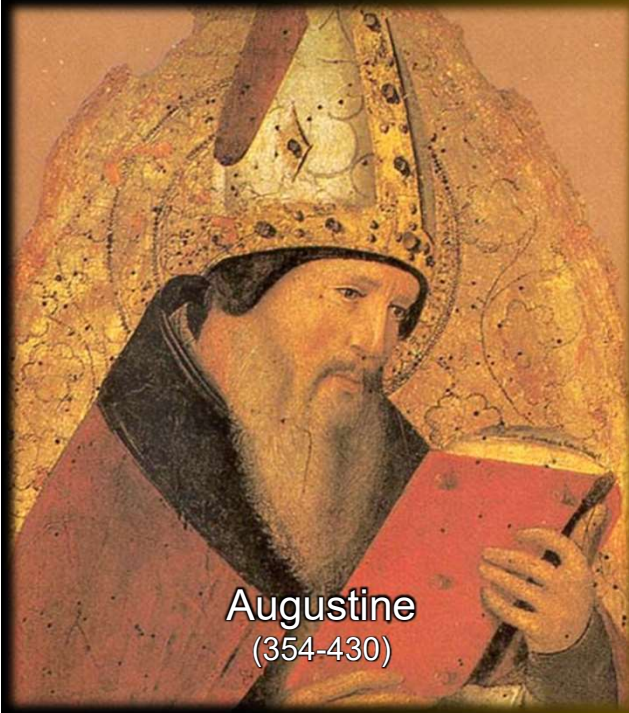
Augustine
(354-430)

Augustine on Evil as Privation



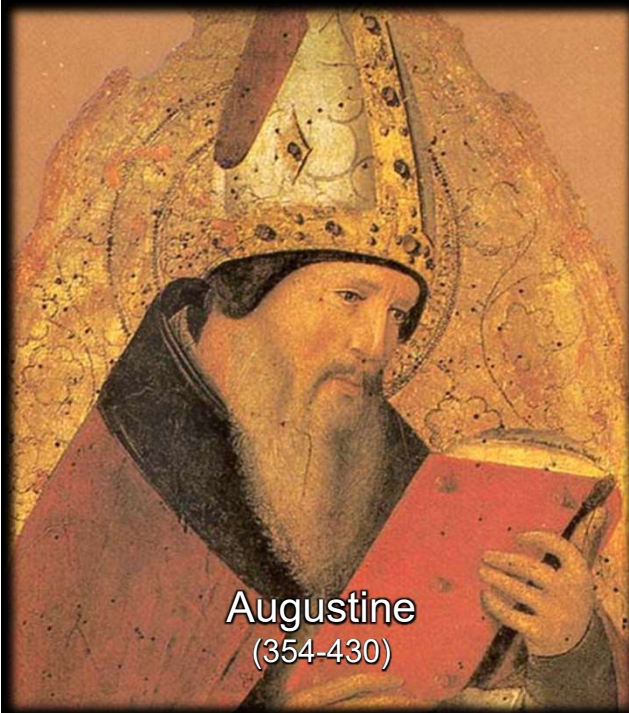
Augustine
(354-430)

There is a
difference
between:
being nothing
(unreal)
and
not being a thing.



Augustine
(354-430)

Augustine argued that evil is real but is not a thing. Rather, it is a **privation** or a **lack** in things.



Augustine
(354-430)

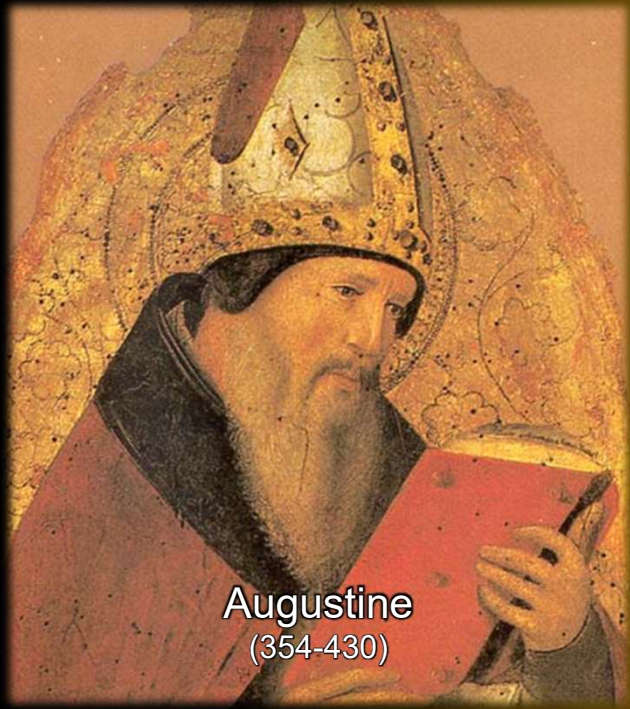
A DOUBLEDAY IMAGE BOOK

THE
Confessions
OF
St. Augustine

*Translated, with an introduction and notes, by
John K. Ryan*

The Greatest Spiritual Autobiography
of All Time, in a Distinguished New
Translation for the Modern Reader

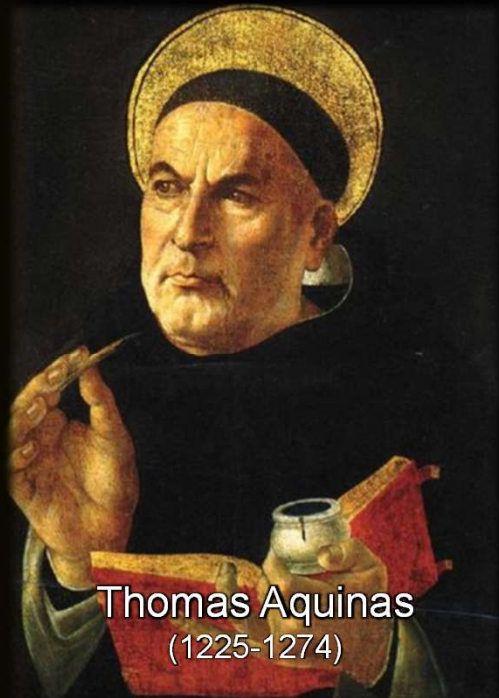
AN IMAGE BOOK ORIGINAL
COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED



Augustine
(354-430)

“ ... evil is only the privation of a good ... ”

[Augustine, *Confessions* III, 7, §12, trans. John K. Ryan (New York: Doubleday, 1960), 85. *malum non esse nisi privationem boni*]



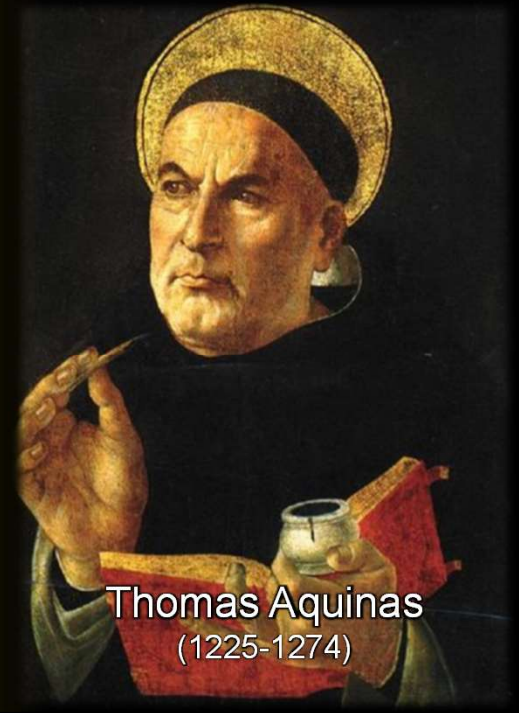
“Now evil is in a substance because something which it was originally to have, and which it ought to have, is lacking in it.”

[*Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, 6, §1]

Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

“Evil is simply a privation of something which a subject is entitled by its origin to possess and which it ought to have.”

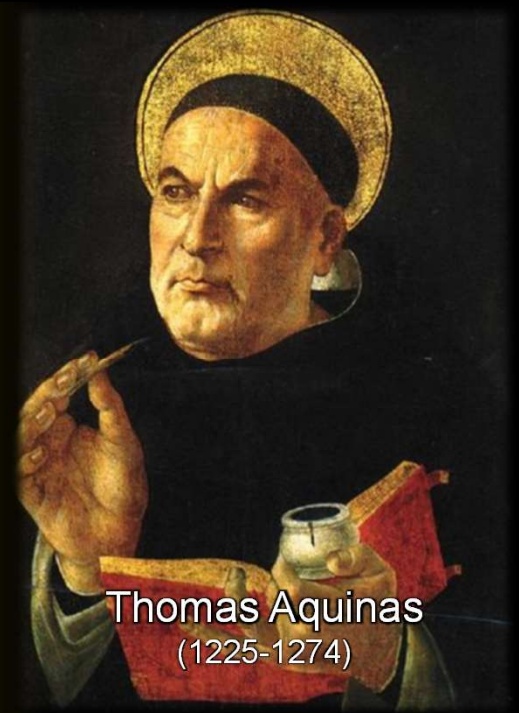
[*Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, 7, §2, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), Pt. 1, 48]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

“Evil is the absence of the good, which is natural and due to a thing.”

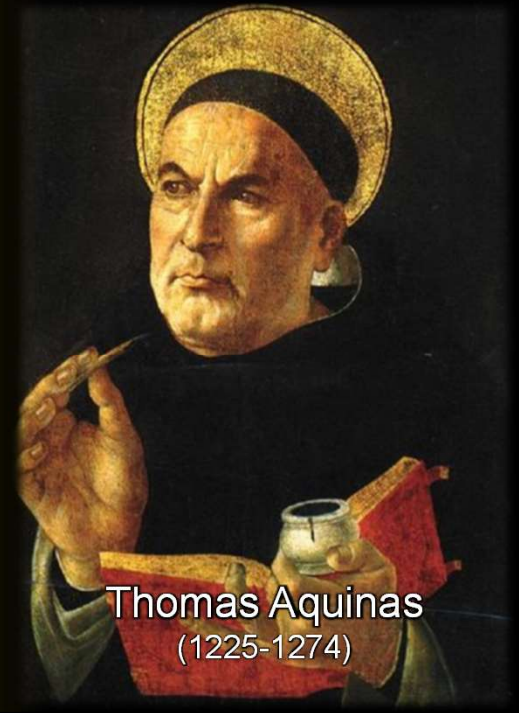
[*Summa Theologiae*, I, Q49, art. 1]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

“Evil cannot exist by itself, since it has no essence... Therefore, evil must be in a subject.”

[*Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, 11, §2]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

Note that there is a difference between a **privation** and a **negation.**

A **negation** is the mere absence or removal of something.

A **privation** is the absence or removal of something that "ought" to be there.



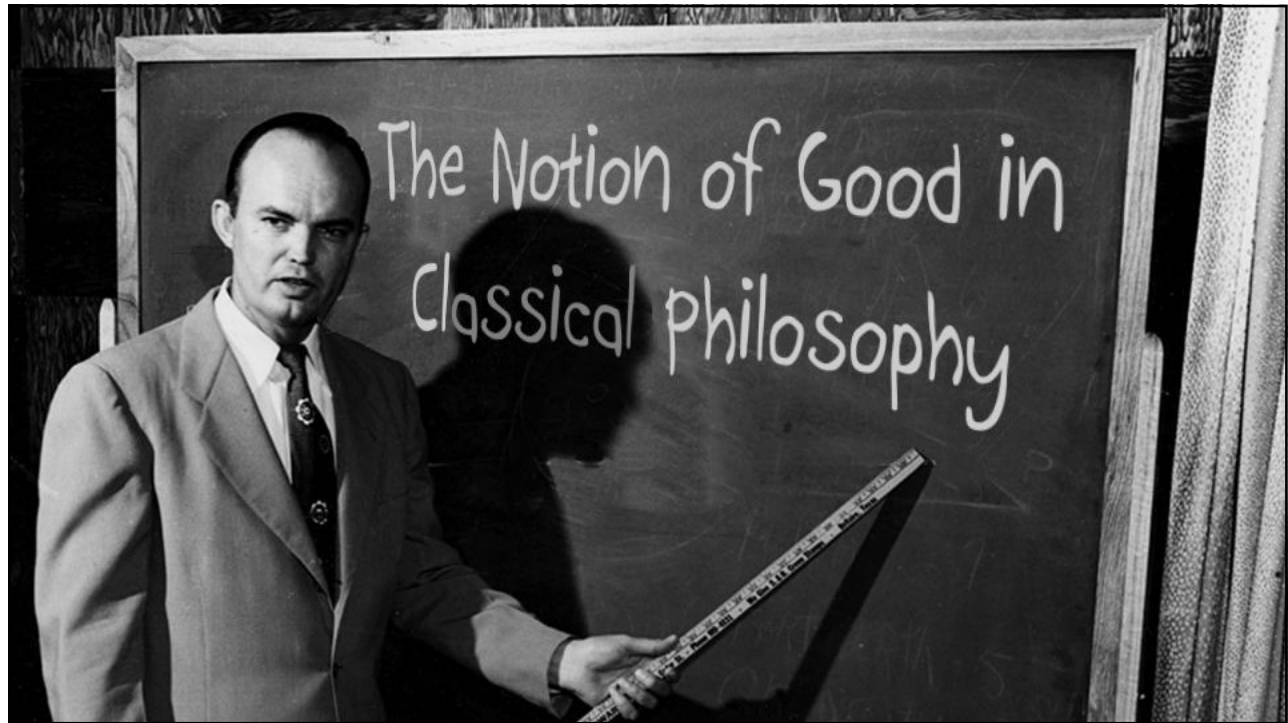
privation

**Blindness is the privation of sight.
But blindness is not a thing in itself.**

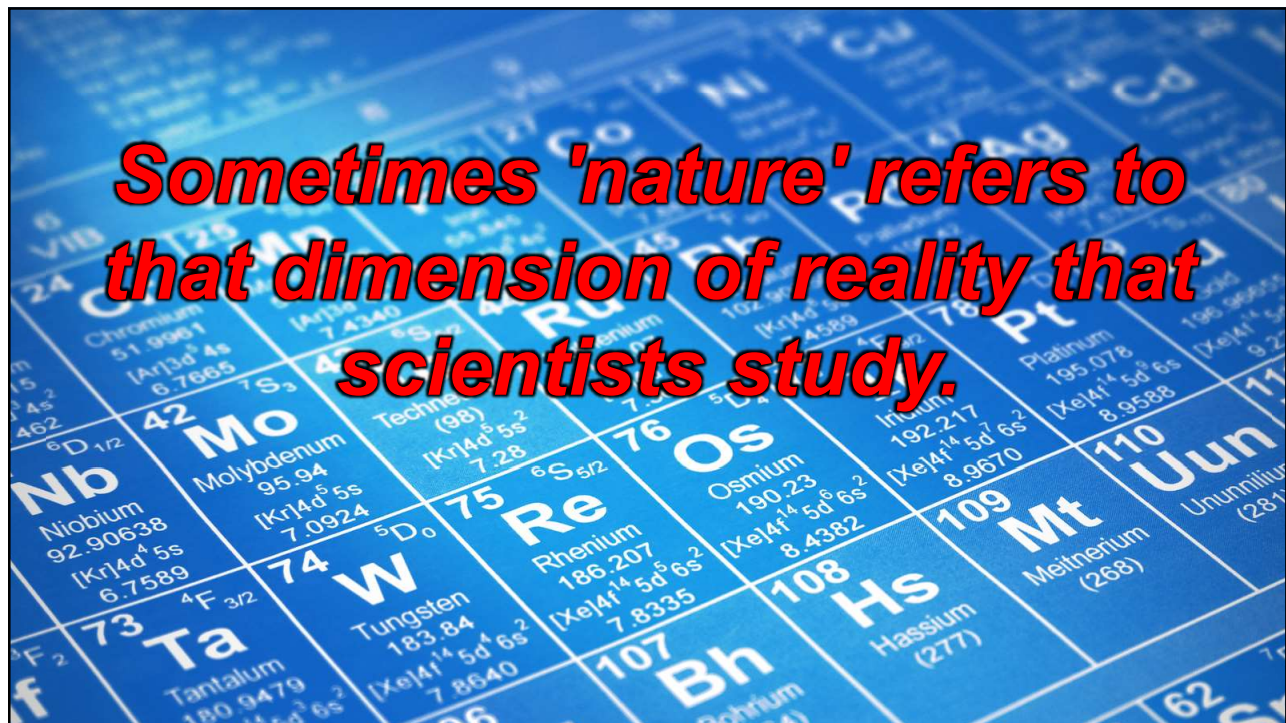
A rock cannot see, but it is not blind because it "ought" not be able to see.



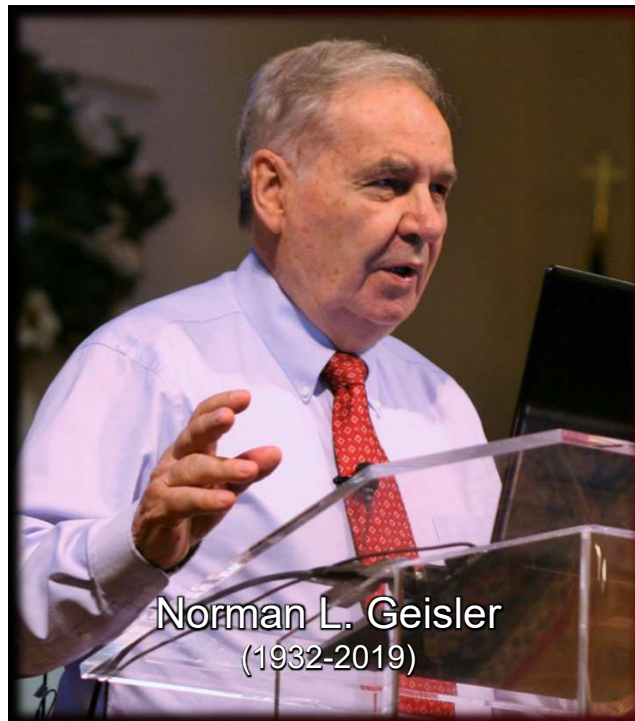
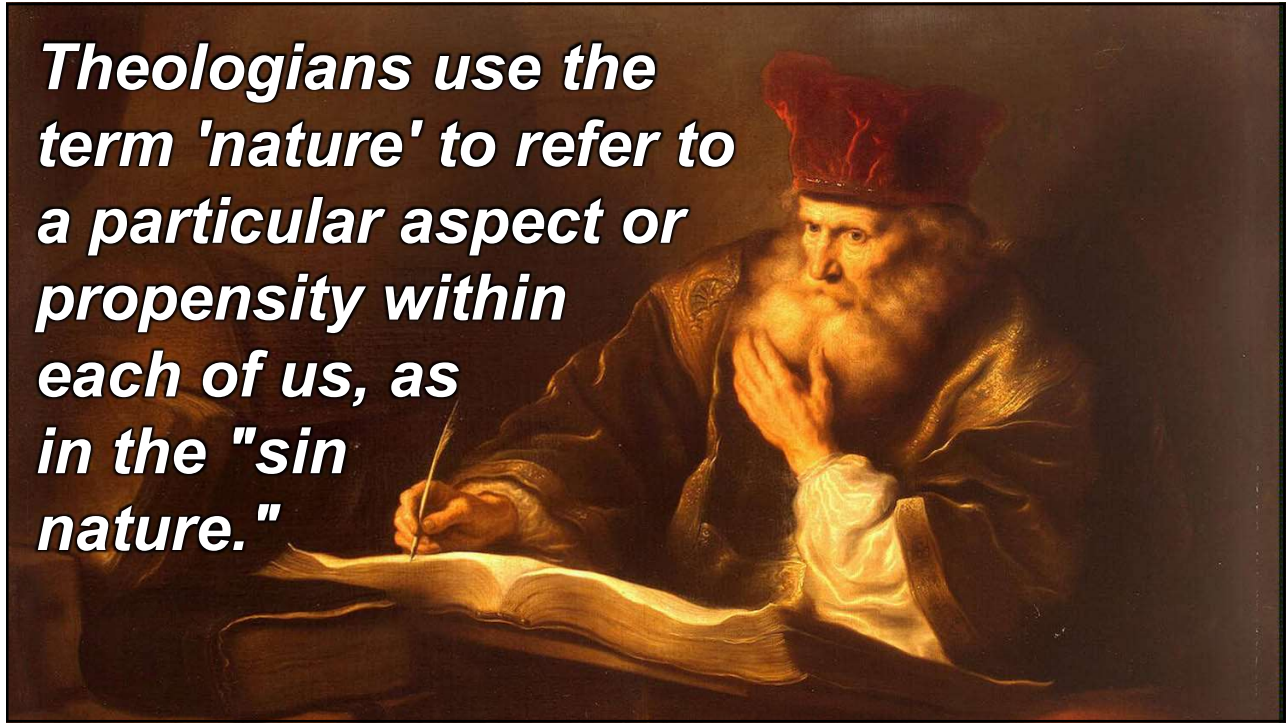
negation



In the Classical/Scholastic Tradition, the "good" of a thing is fundamentally understood along the lines of the "nature" of that thing.



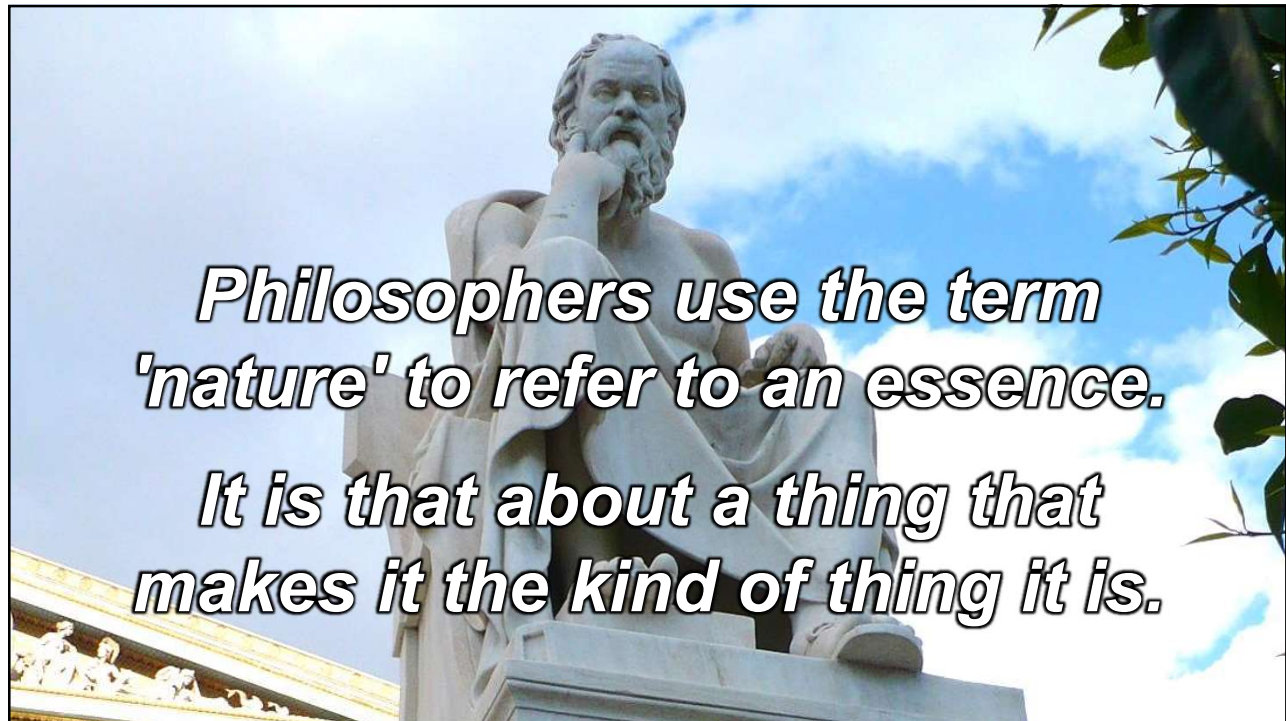
Theologians use the term 'nature' to refer to a particular aspect or propensity within each of us, as in the "sin nature."



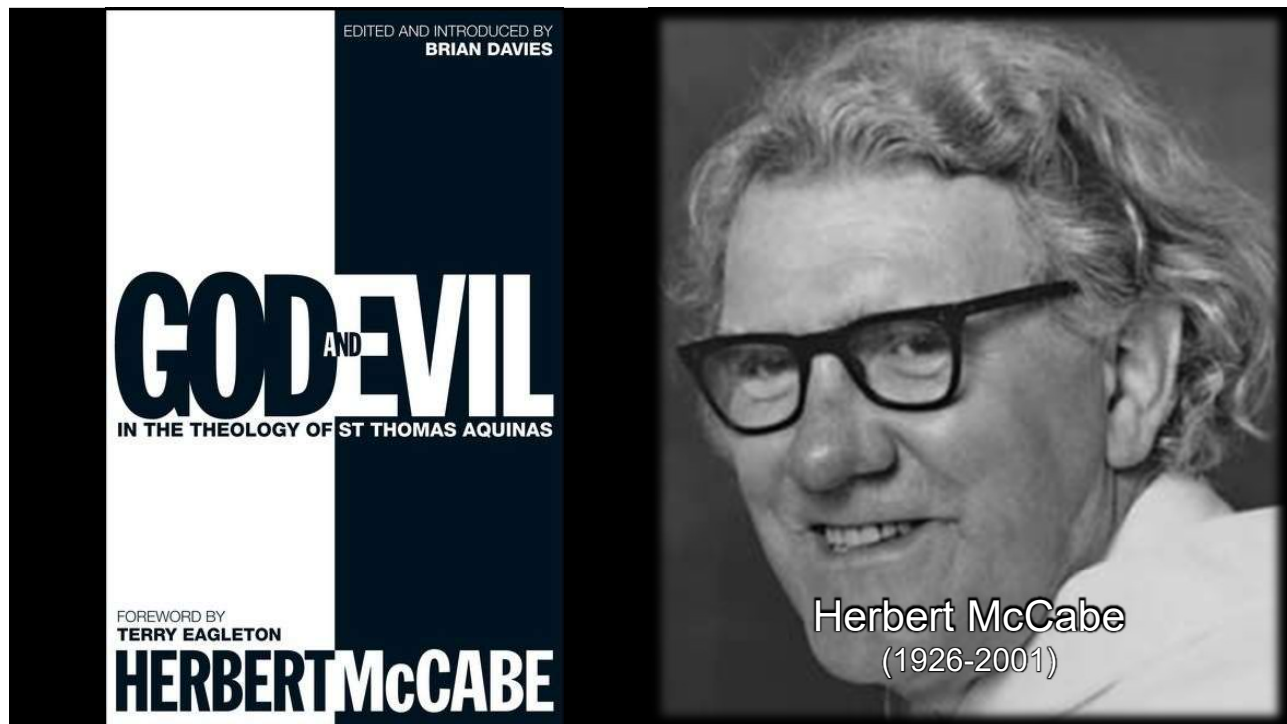
Norman L. Geisler
(1932-2019)

"Everyone who is naturally generated from Adam—every human—inherits a sinful nature from him. ... Being sinners by nature, short of and without salvation, we inevitably are and do what comes naturally: We sin."

[Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology: Vol. Three: Sin Salvation* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2004, 125.)]









♪ **Genus** ♪
animal

♪ **Specific difference** ♪
rationality

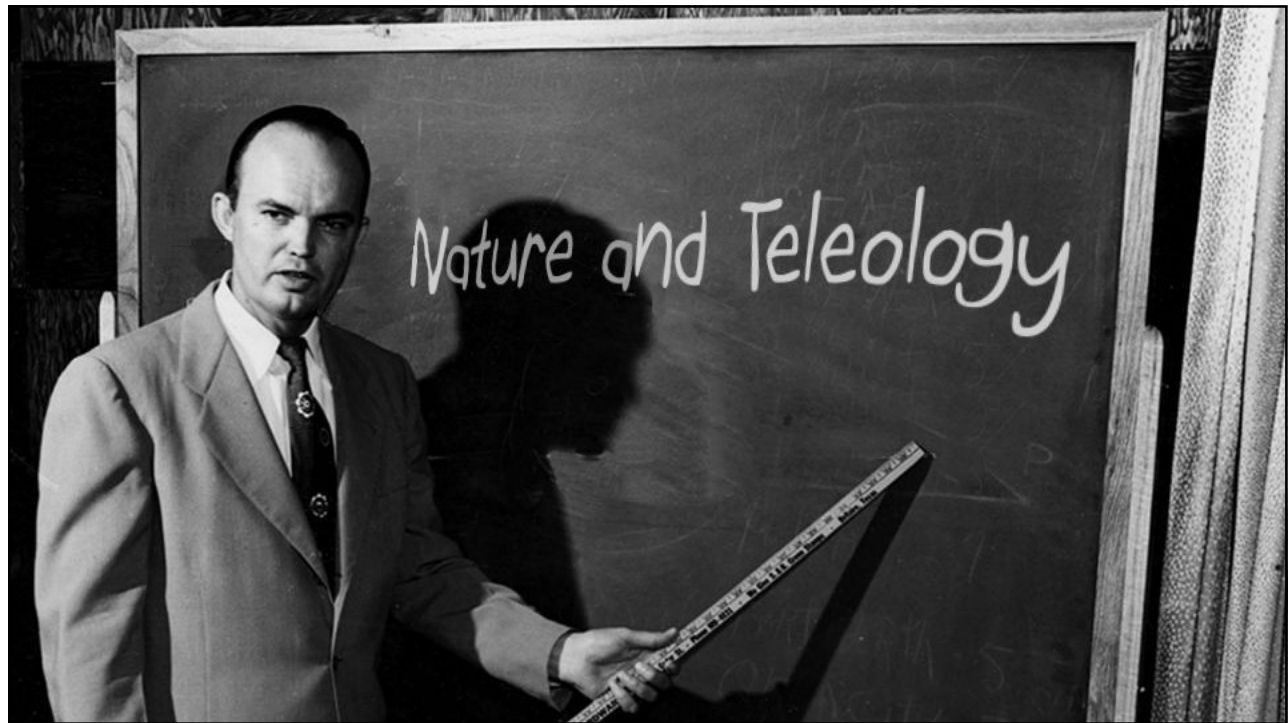
♪ **Species** ♪
human

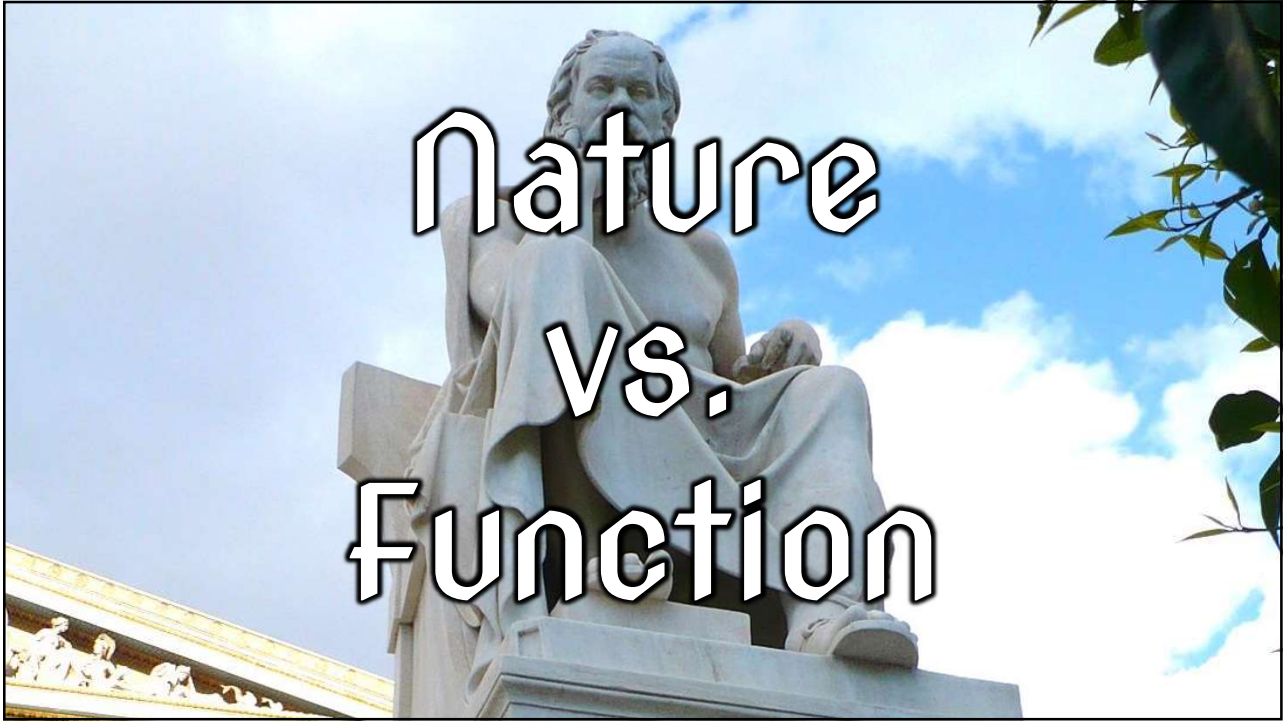
♪ **Proper accident** ♪
five fingers

♪ **Accident** ♪
black hair

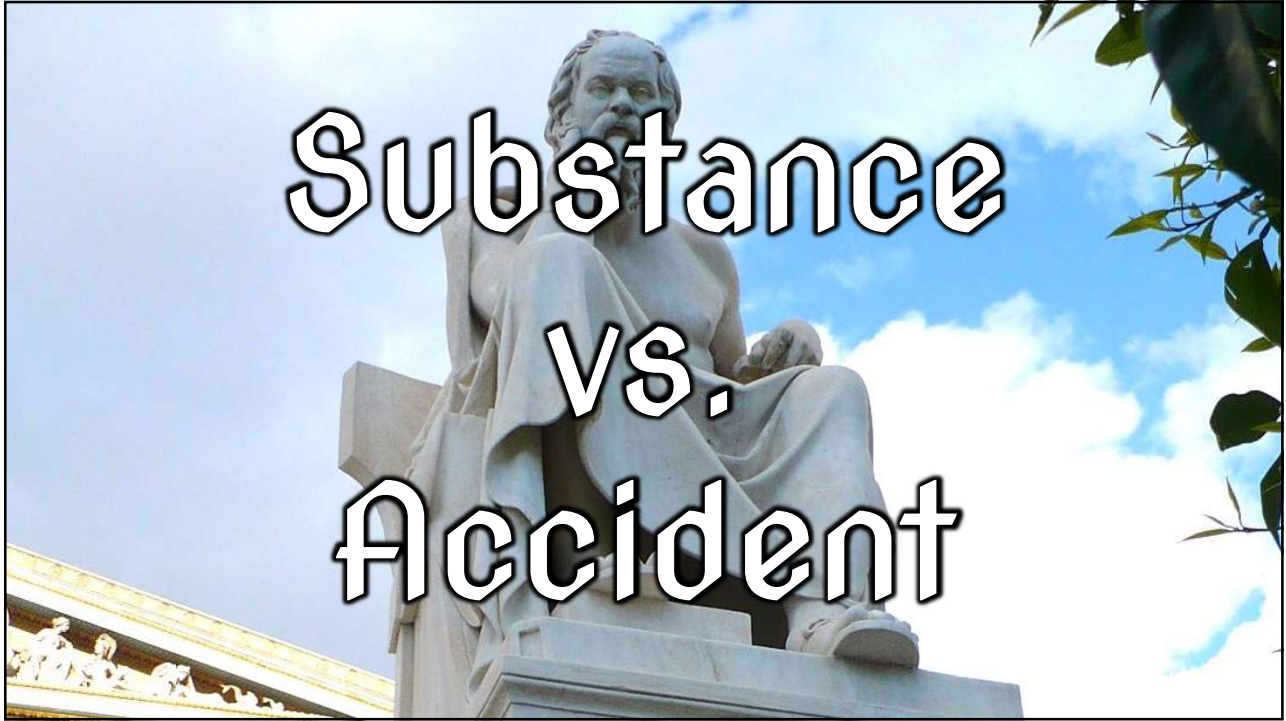


Aristotle
(384-322 BC)



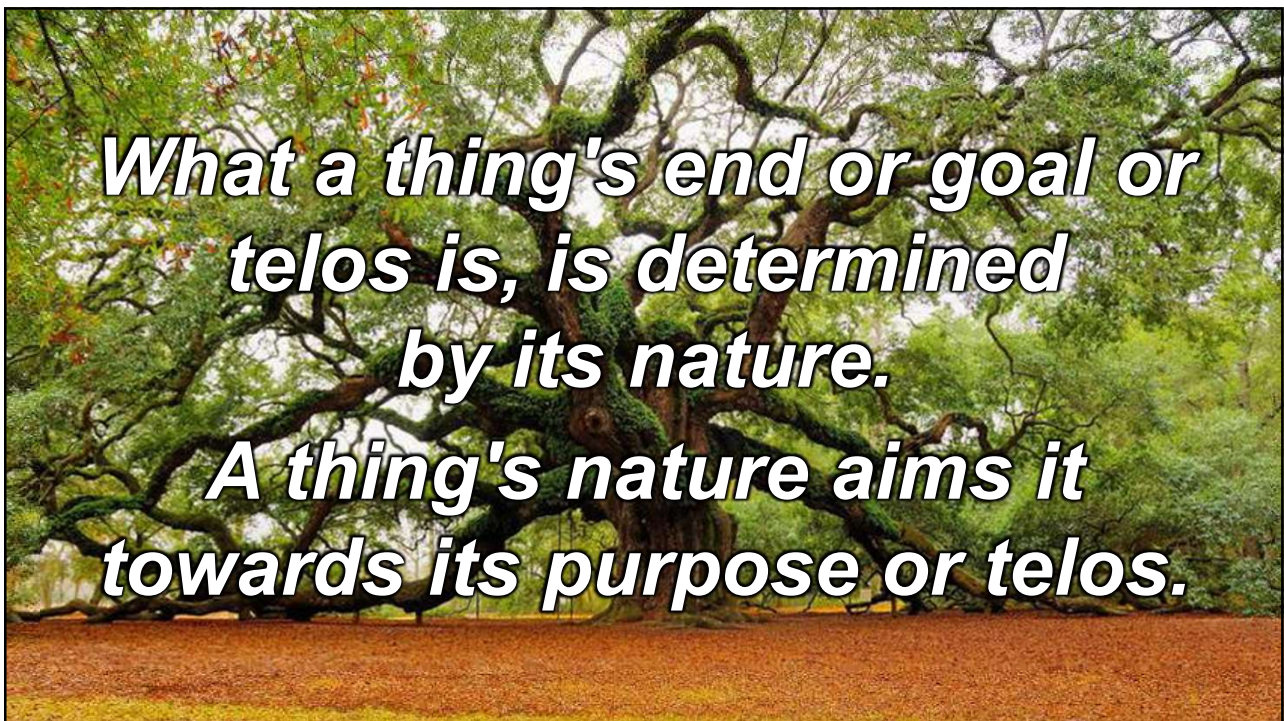




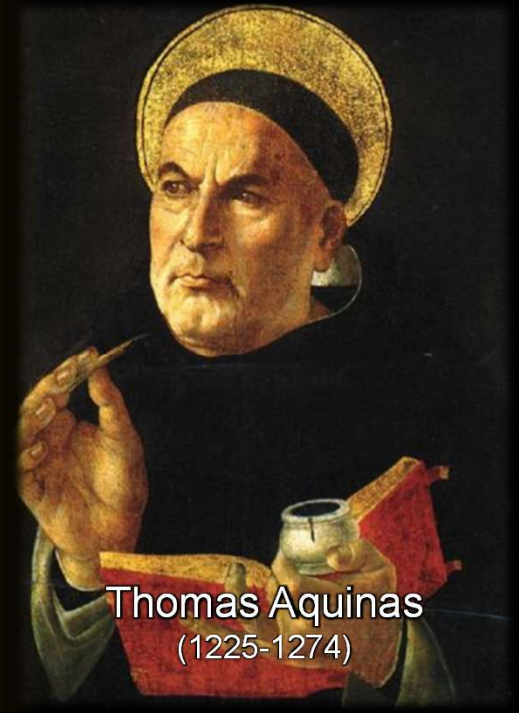




As a living thing grows and matures, it does so, if unimpeded, towards its proper end or goal or telos.



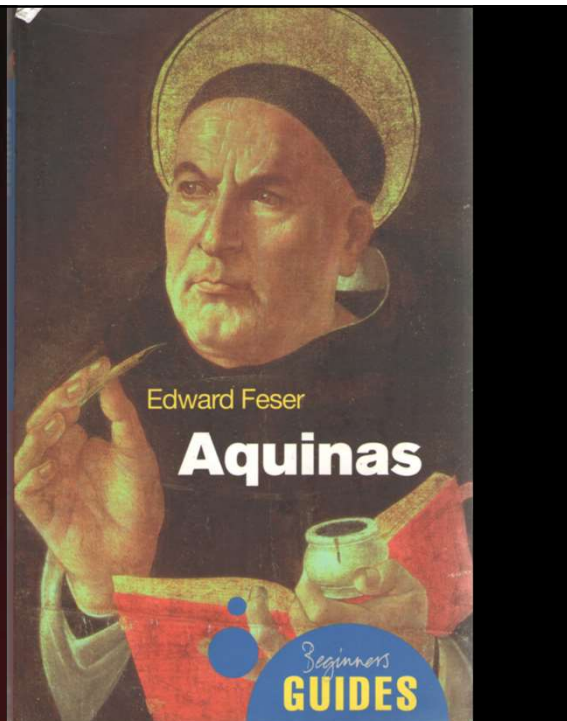
"Whenever things have such a definite nature ... the operation appropriate to a given being is a consequent of that nature."

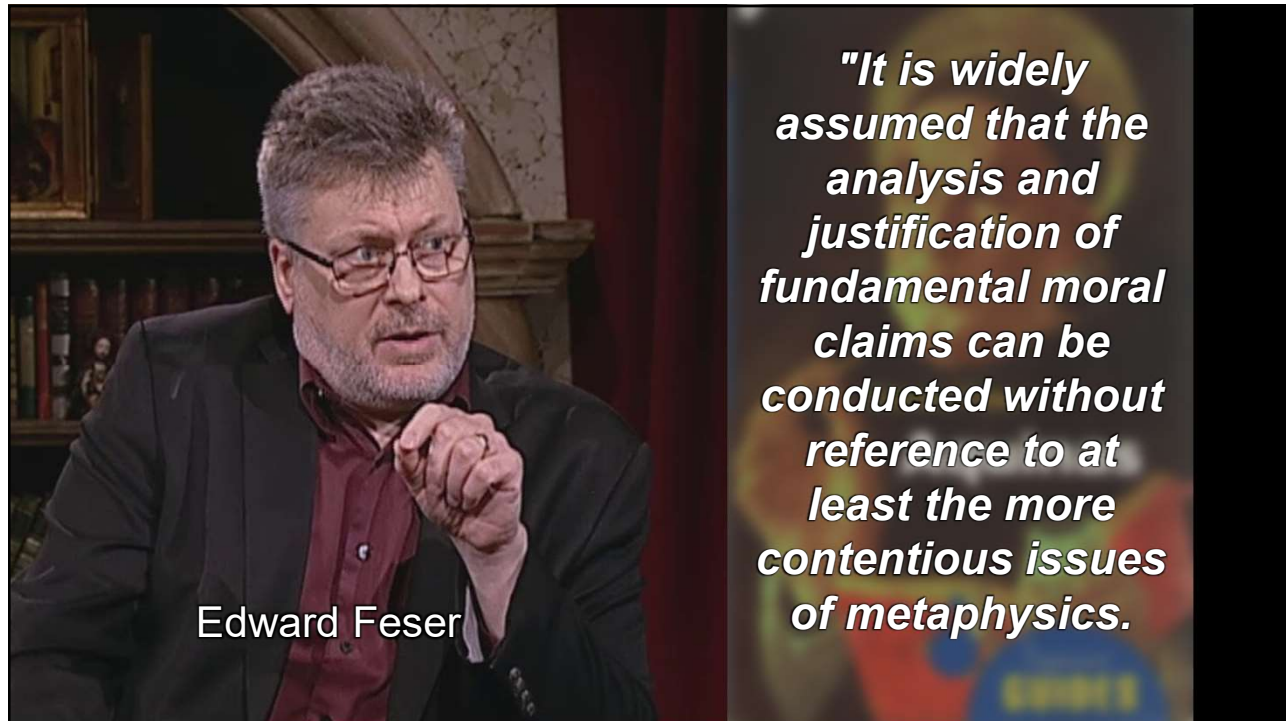


Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

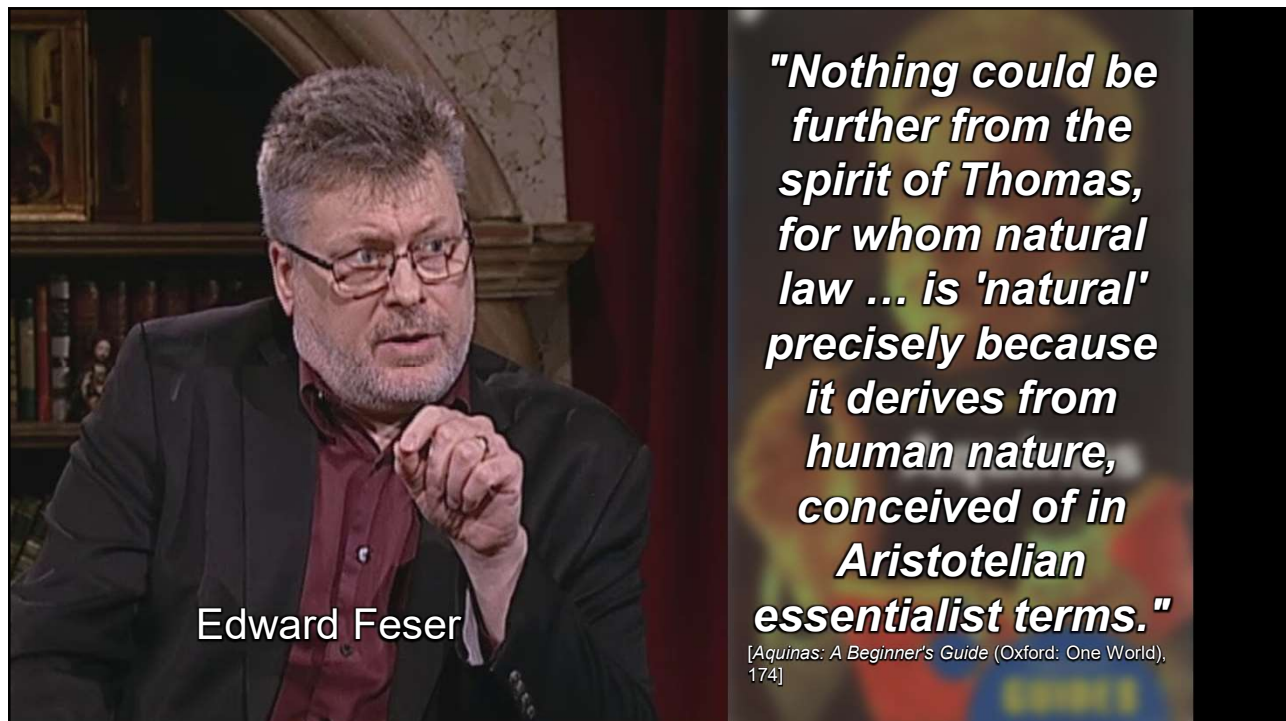


Edward Feser



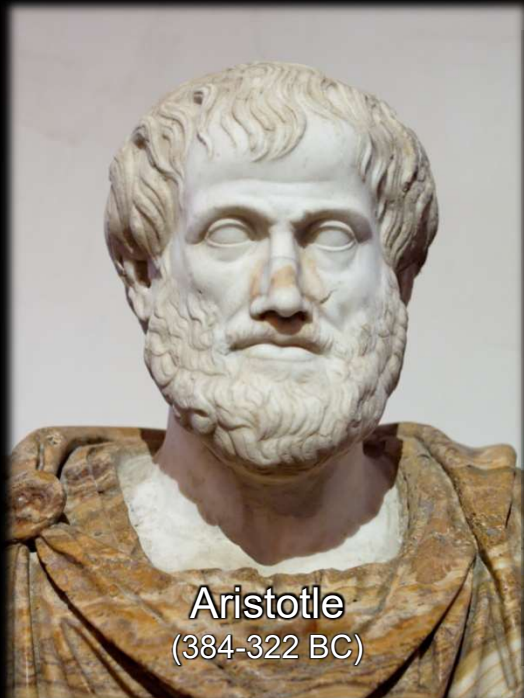


"It is widely assumed that the analysis and justification of fundamental moral claims can be conducted without reference to at least the more contentious issues of metaphysics."



"Nothing could be further from the spirit of Thomas, for whom natural law ... is 'natural' precisely because it derives from human nature, conceived of in Aristotelian essentialist terms."

[Aquinas: A Beginner's Guide (Oxford: One World), 174]

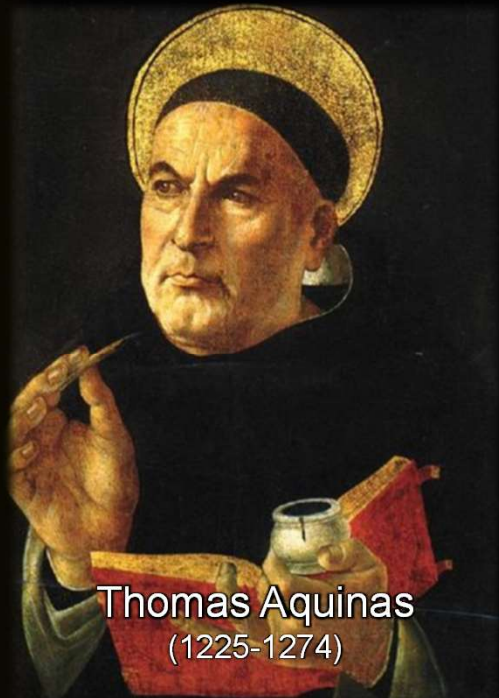


Aristotle
(384-322 BC)

"Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has been rightly declared to be that at which all things aim."

[Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 1, 1094a1-2, trans. W. D. Ross in Richard McKeon, ed. *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: Random House, 1941), 935]

"The essence of goodness consists in this, that it is in some way desirable."

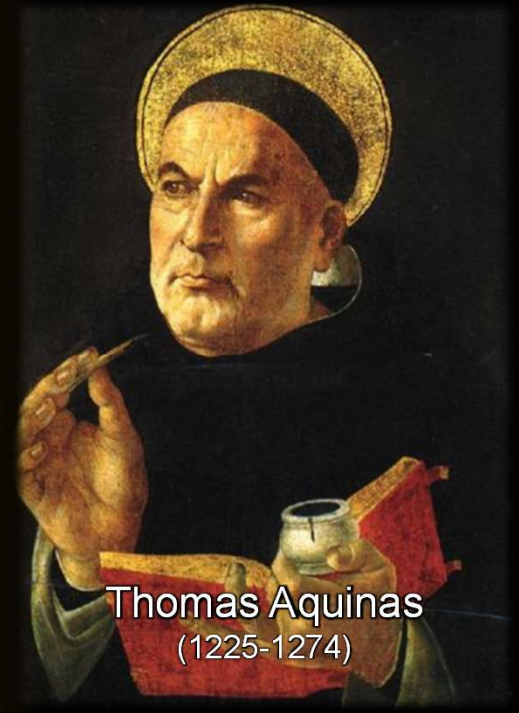


Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

[*Summa Theologiae* I, Q5, art. 1, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province in *St. Thomas Aquinas Summa Theologica: Complete English Edition in Five Volumes* (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), 23]

***"Goodness
signifies
perfection which
is desirable."***

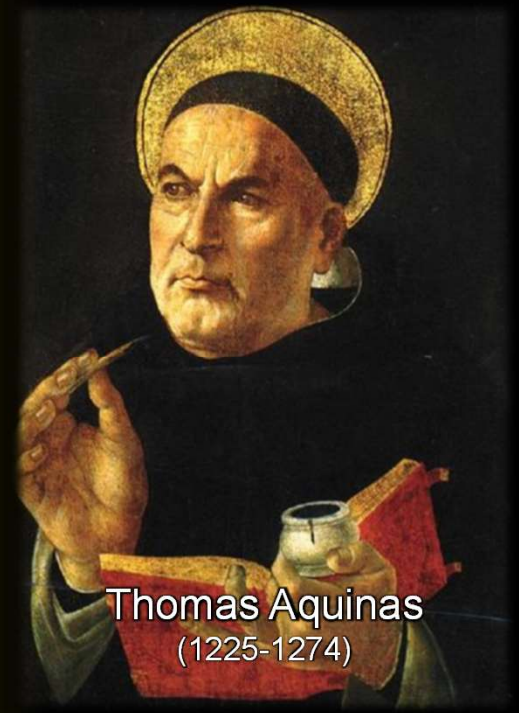
[ST I, Q5, art. 1]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)



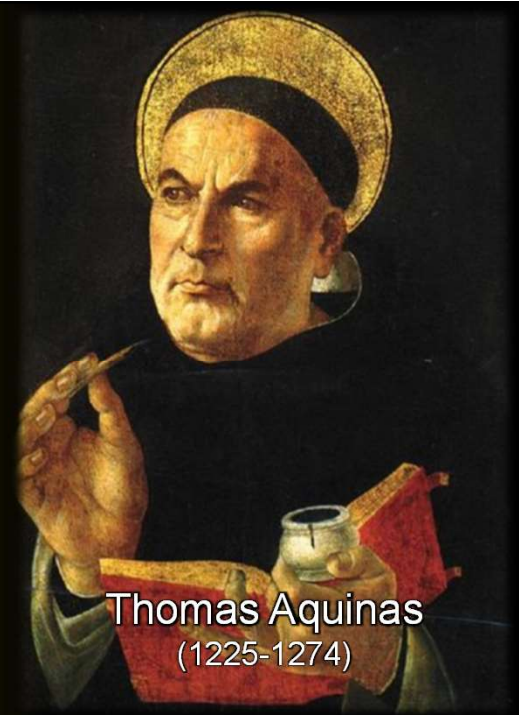
"Whenever things have such a definite nature ... the operation appropriate to a given being is a consequent of that nature."



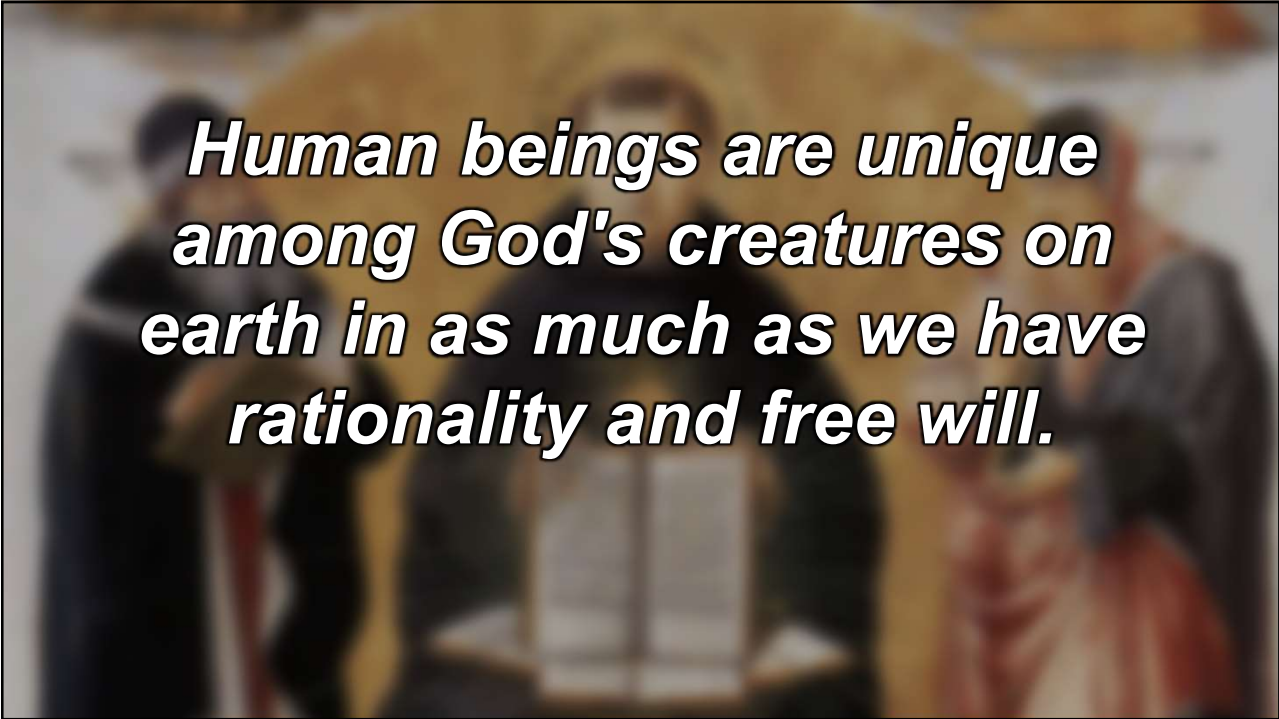
Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"Now, it is obvious that there is a determinate kind of nature for man. Therefore, there must be some operations that are in themselves appropriate for man."

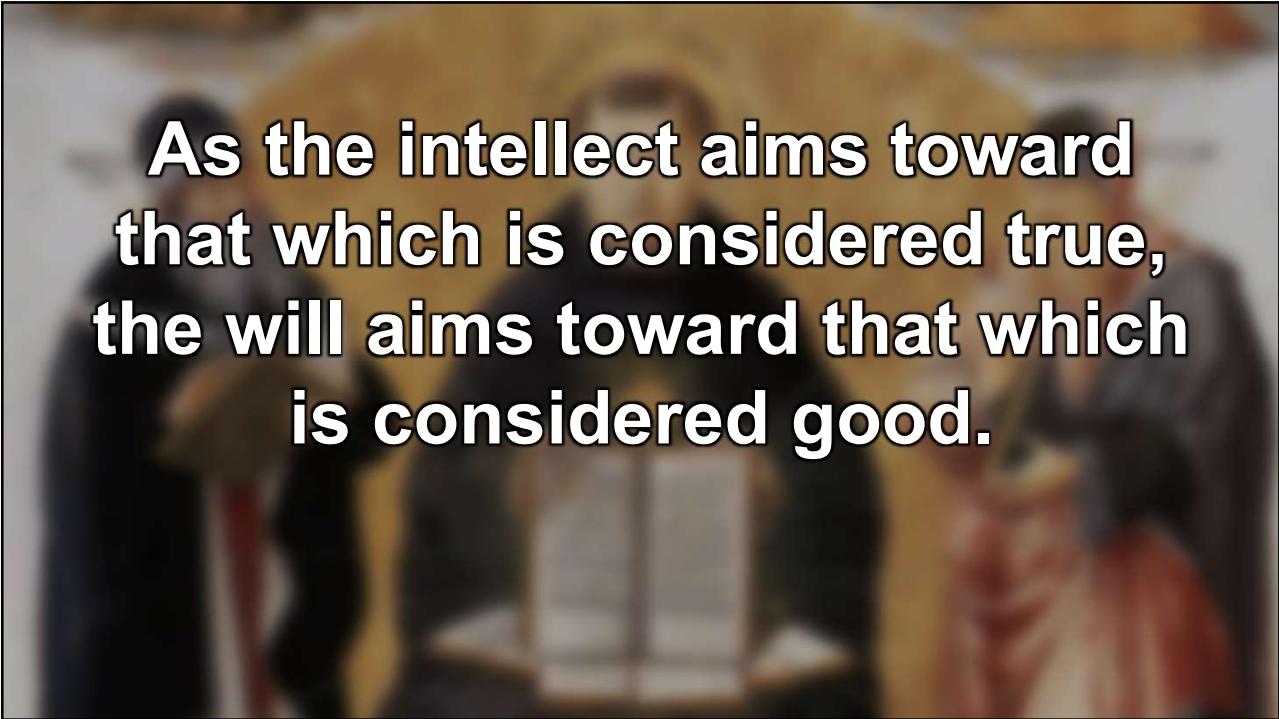
[SCG III, 129, §4, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (University of Notre Dame Press Edition) vol. 3:II, p. 163. Reprint of *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith* (Garden City, NY: Hanover House, 1956)]



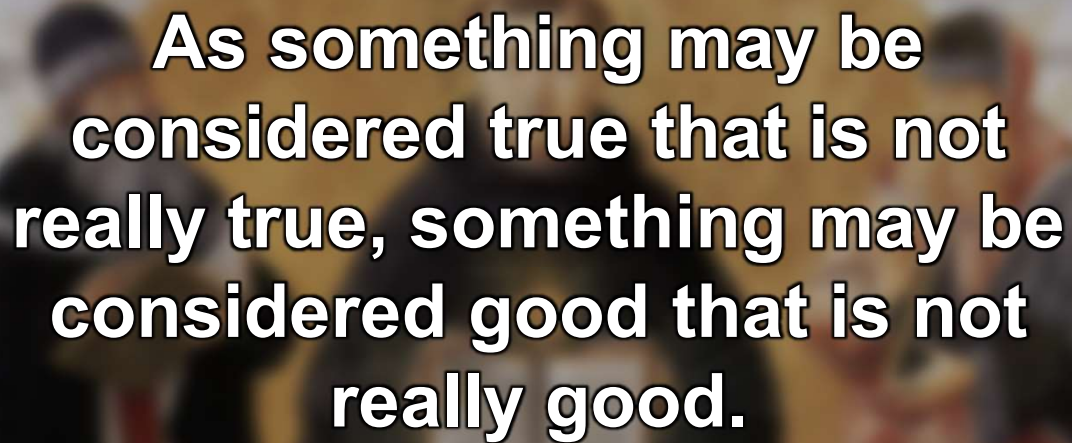
Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)



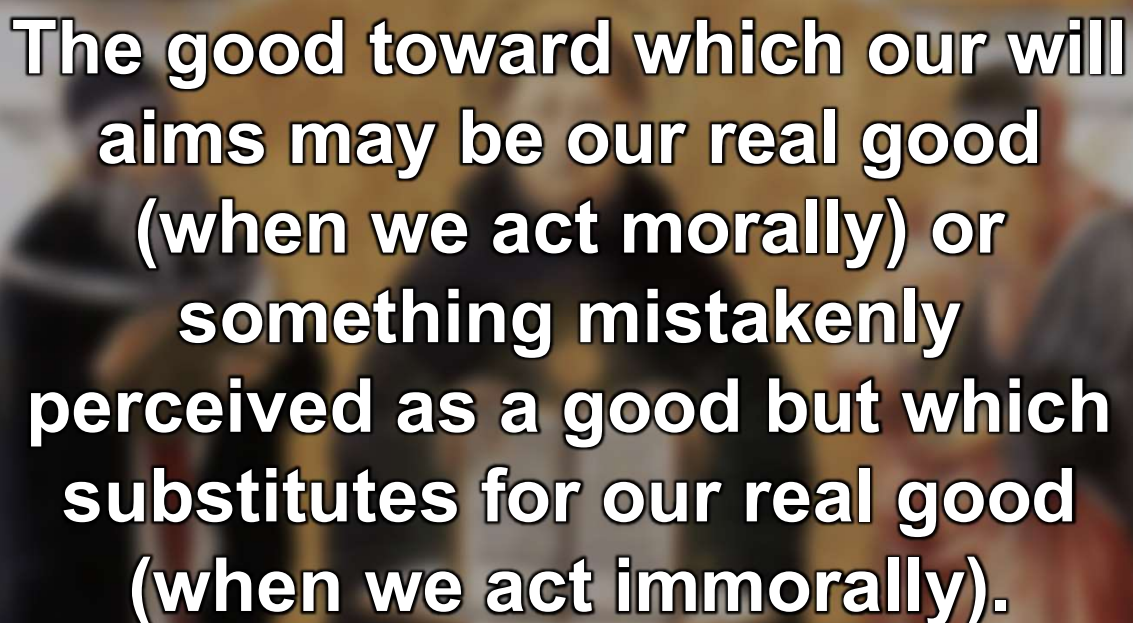
Human beings are unique among God's creatures on earth in as much as we have rationality and free will.



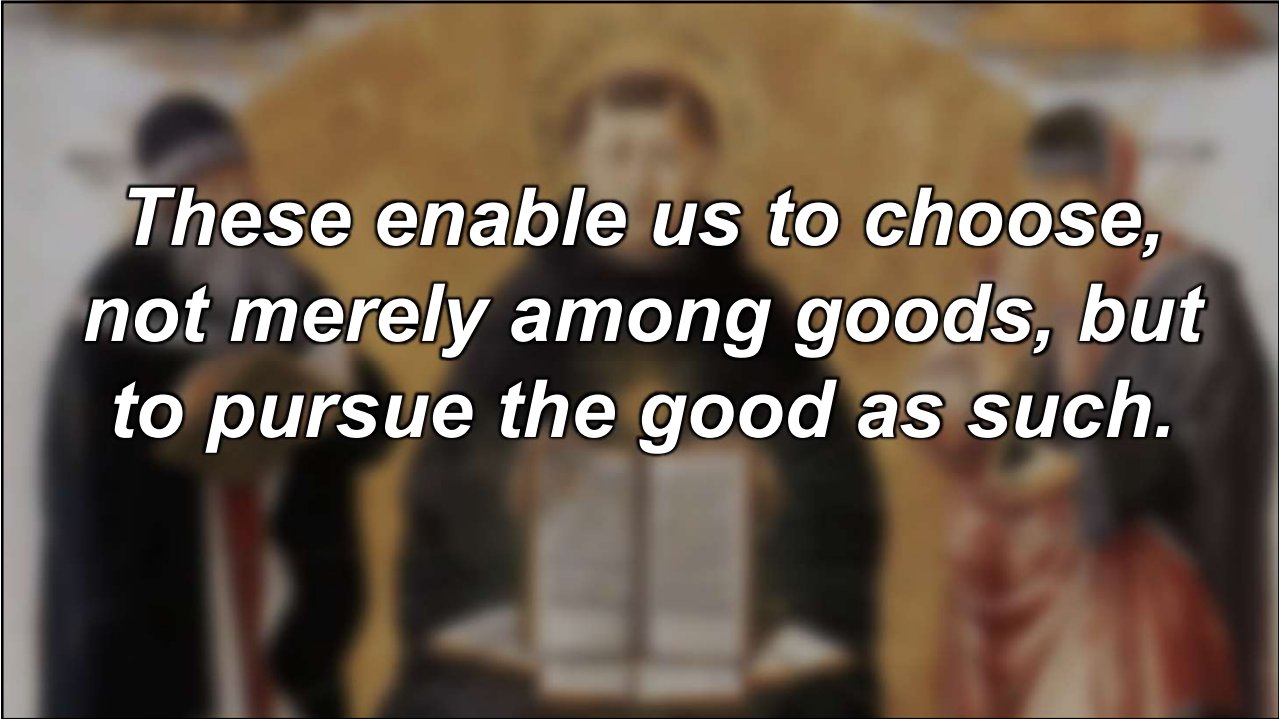
As the intellect aims toward that which is considered true, the will aims toward that which is considered good.



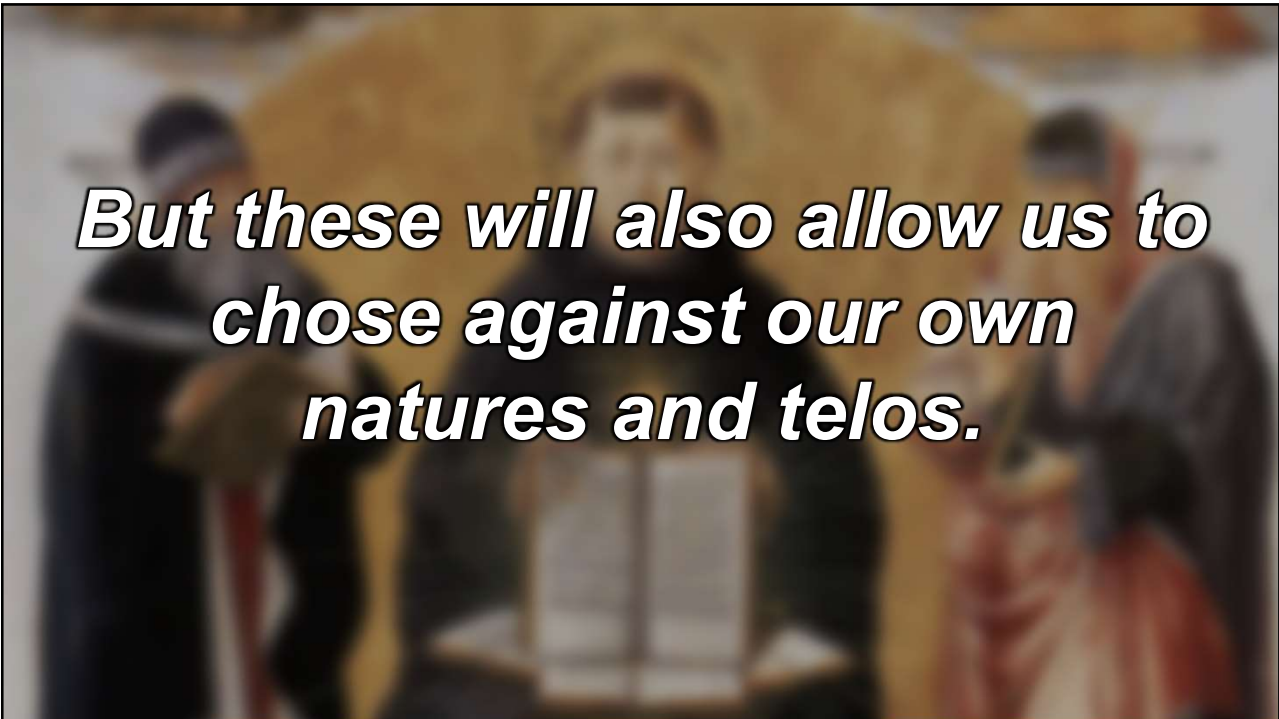
As something may be considered true that is not really true, something may be considered good that is not really good.



The good toward which our will aims may be our real good (when we act morally) or something mistakenly perceived as a good but which substitutes for our real good (when we act immorally).

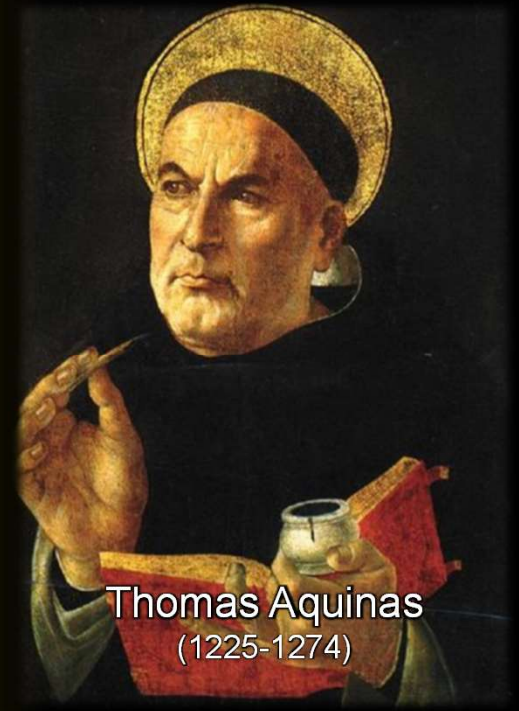


***These enable us to choose,
not merely among goods, but
to pursue the good as such.***



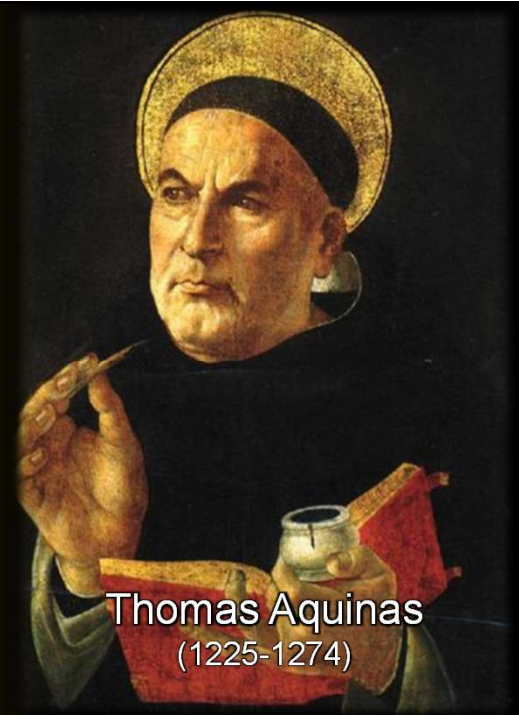
***But these will also allow us to
chose against our own
natures and telos.***

"Evil may be considered either in a substance or in an action



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"Moral fault is found primarily and principally in the act of the will only ... so ... an act is moral because it is voluntary. ...



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"The root and source of moral wrongdoing is to be sought in the act of the will."

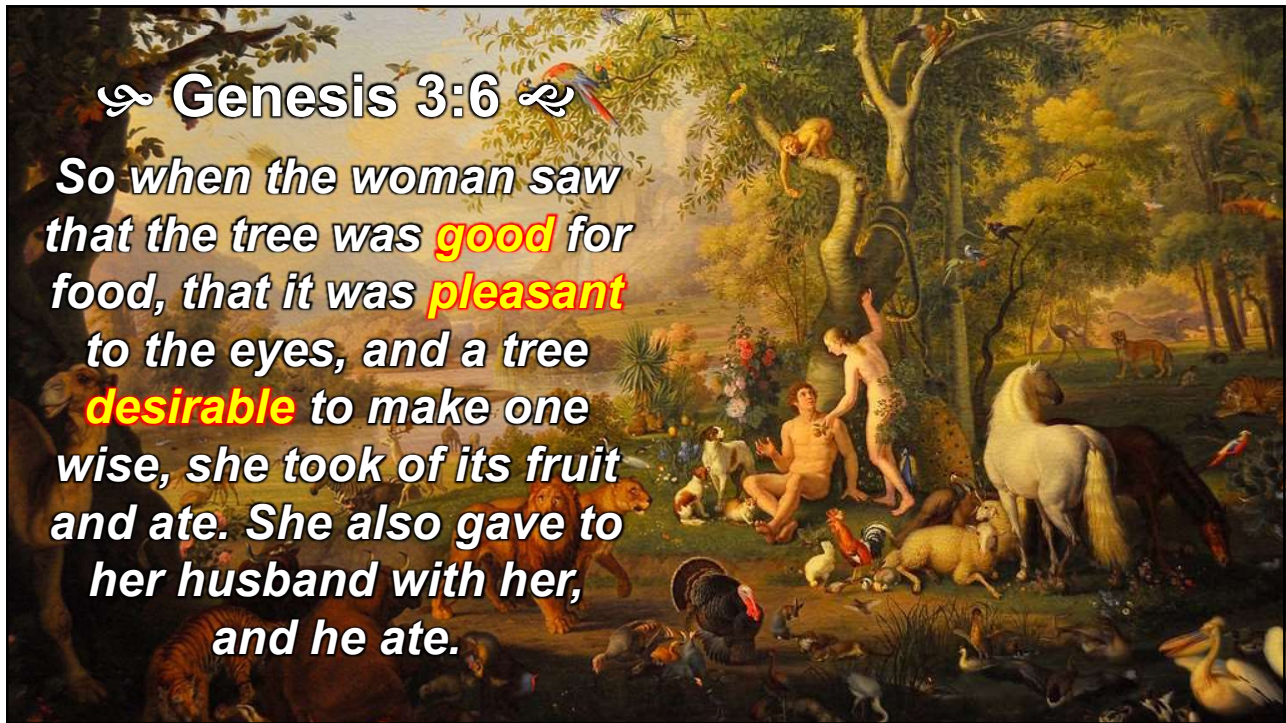
Summa Contra Gentiles, III, 10, §13



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

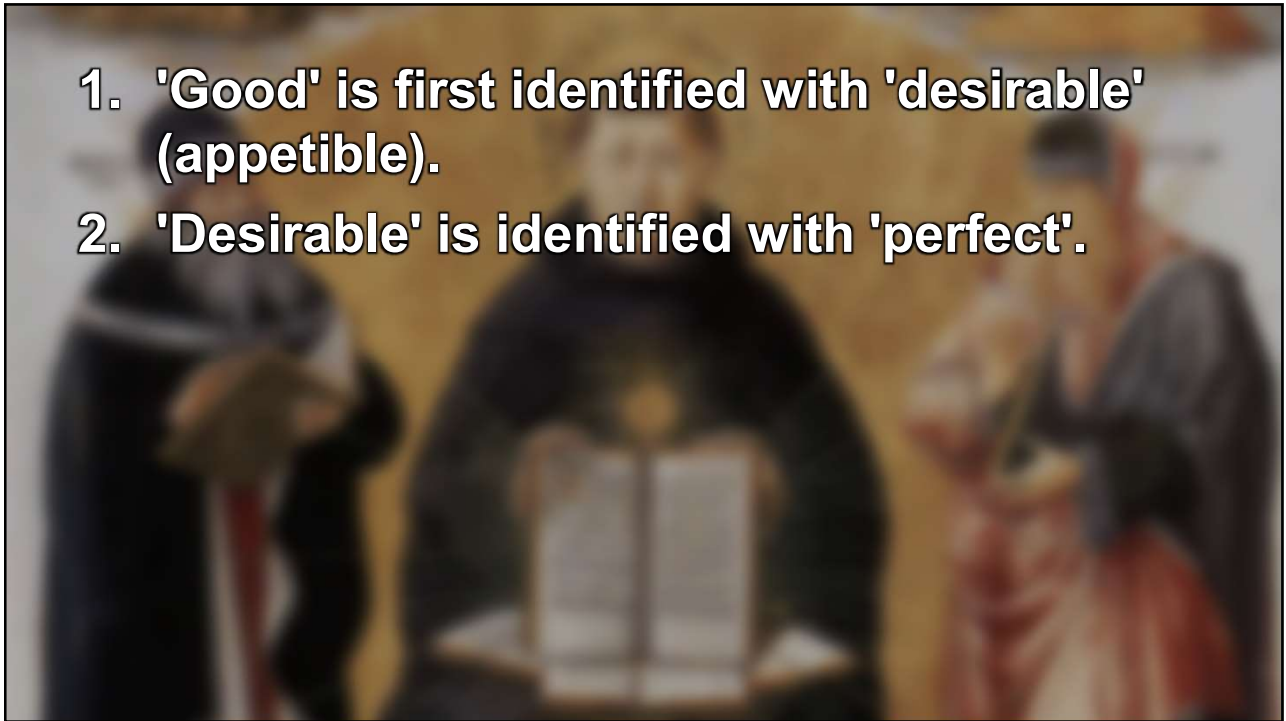
✧ Genesis 3:6 ✧

So when the woman saw that the tree was **good** for food, that it was **pleasant** to the eyes, and a tree **desirable** to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.





1. 'Good' is first identified with 'desirable' (appetible).
2. 'Desirable' is identified with 'perfect'.



***"Now it is clear
that a thing is
desirable only in
so far as it is
perfect; for all
desire their own
perfection."***

(ST1, Q5, art. 1)

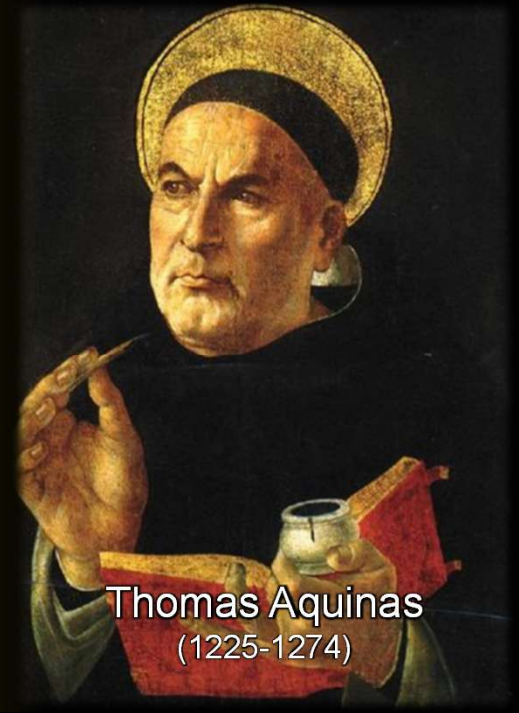


Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

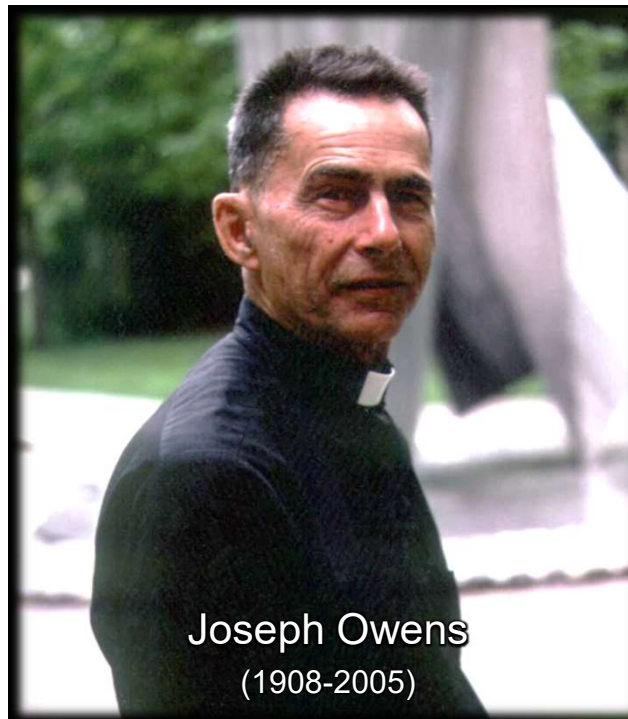
1. 'Good' is first identified with 'desirable' (appetible).
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3. 'Perfect' is identified with 'act' or 'actuality'.

"Everything is perfect so far as it is actual."

(ST I, Q5, art. 1)

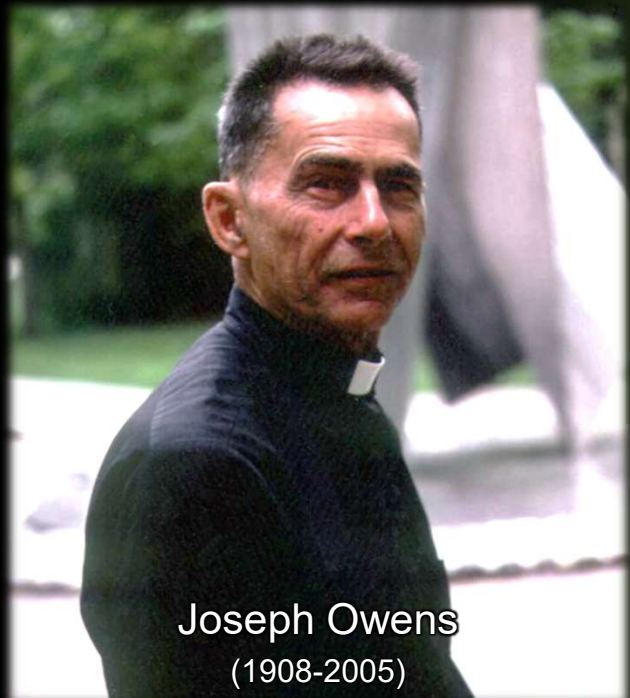


Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)



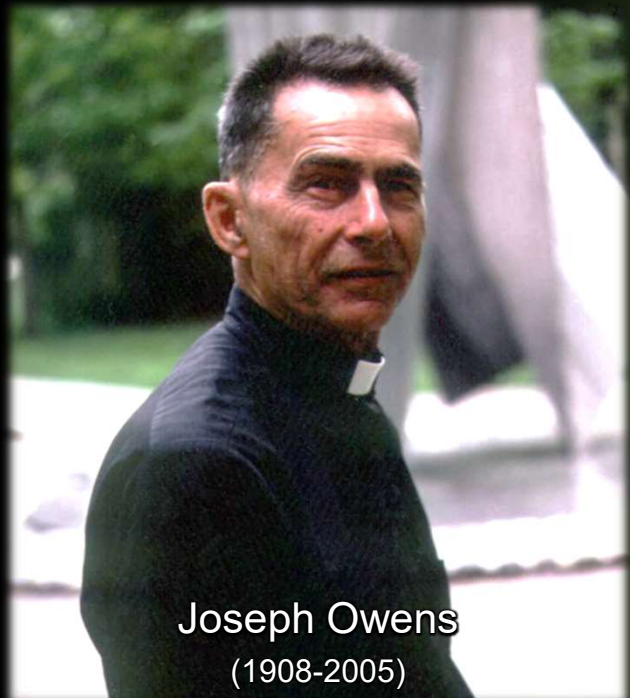
Joseph Owens
(1908-2005)

"An alternate word for actuality in this respect is "perfection" (entelecheia). It was used by Aristotle along with actuality to designate the formal elements in the things."

A portrait of Joseph Owens, a man with short dark hair, wearing a black clerical shirt with a white collar. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is blurred, showing green foliage and a white structure.

Joseph Owens
(1908-2005)

"These perfected the material element in the sense of filling its potentiality and completing the thing."

A portrait of Joseph Owens, a man with short dark hair, wearing a black clerical shirt with a white collar. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is blurred, showing green foliage and a white structure.

Joseph Owens
(1908-2005)

"Since existence is required to complete the thing and all the formal elements and activities, it may be aptly called the perfection of all perfections."

[An Interpretation of Existence (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1968), 52-53]

perfection

(entelecheia, ἐντελέχεια)

en, ἐν = in

+

telos, τέλος = end, goal

+

echein, ἔχειν = to have

perfection

(entelecheia, ἐντελέχεια)

to have the end or goal in

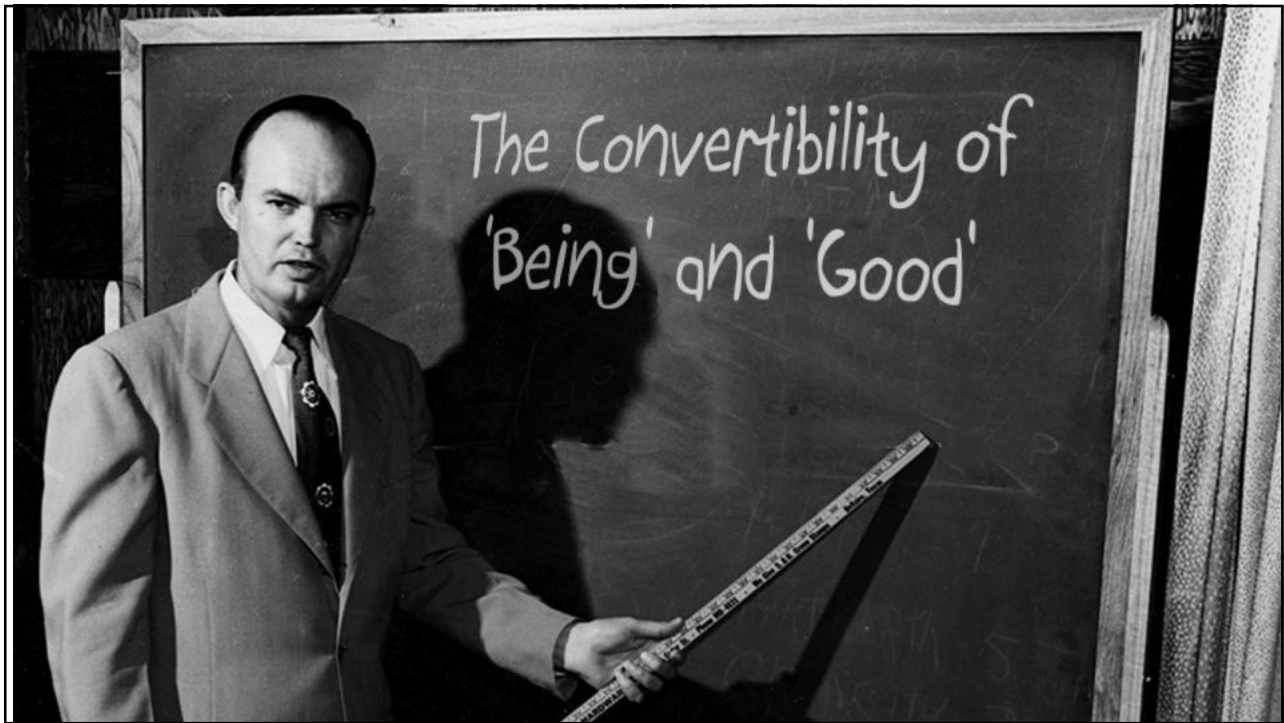
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2. 'Desirable' is identified with 'perfect'.
3. 'Perfect' is identified with 'act' or 'actuality'.
4. 'Actuality' is identified with 'being'.

"Goodness and being are really the same, and differ only in idea; which is clear from the following argument. The essence of goodness consists in this, that it is in some way desirable. Hence the Philosopher says [Ethic i]: 'Goodness is what all desire.' Now is it clear that a thing is desirable only in so far as it is perfect; for all desire their own perfection. But everything is perfect so far as it is actual. Therefore it is clear that a thing is perfect so far as it exists; for it is existence that makes all things actual, as is clear from the foregoing [Q. 3, A. 4; Q. 4, A. 1]. Hence it is clear that goodness and being are the same reality."

(ST I, Q5, art. 1)



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)



A full exploration of how it is that 'being' and 'good' are convertible, which is to say that 'being' and 'good' are really the same, requires a examination of the Medieval doctrine of the Transcendentals.

New Scholasticism 59 (1985): 449-470

The Convertibility of Being and Good in St. Thomas Aquinas

by Jan A. Aertsen

IN MANY medieval thinkers, e.g. Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, the statement can be found: "being and good are convertible" (*ens et bonum convertuntur*).¹ That is to say, "being" and "good" are interchangeable terms in predication (*converti enim est concessim praedicari*).² Wherever "being" is predicated of something, the predicate "good" is involved as well.

That must imply that "good" is here not a concept that adds a real content or a new quality to "being", as a result of which "being" is restricted. For in that case there would be no question of convertibility.³ "Good" is an attribute which pertains to every being, it is a property of being as such, a "mode that is common, and consequent upon every being."⁴ In other words, "good" is coextensive with "being", it is one of the so-called *transcendentia*⁵ which, since Suarez, are usually referred to as "transcendentals".

¹ Alexander of Hales, *Summa I*, Inq. 1, Tract. 3, q. 3, membrum 1, e. 1, a. 1, "An idem sit bonum et ens"; Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, fundam. 5, "Res et bonum convertuntur, sicut vult Dionysius", d. 34, a. 2, q. 3, fundam. 4; Albert the Great, *De Bonis* q. 1, a. 6; *Summa Theol.* tract. 6, q. 28; Thomas Aquinas, *In I Sent.* 8, 1, 3; *De Ver.* XXI, 2; *In De Hebdomadibus*, lect. 3; *Summa Theol.* I, 16, 2.

² Thomas Aquinas, *De Ver.* I, 2 obj. 2.

³ *De Pot.* IX, 7 ad 5; Bonum quod est in genere qualitatis, non est bonum quod convertitur cum ente, quod nullam rem supra ens addit.

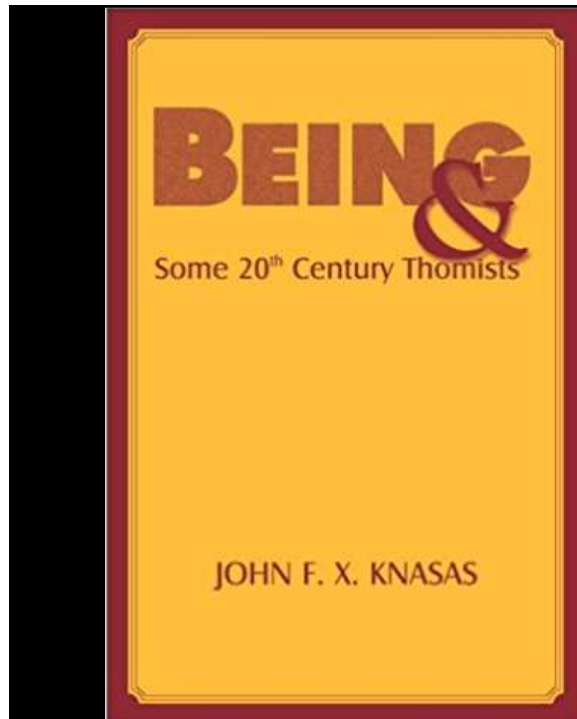
⁴ *De Ver.* I, 1; modus generaliter consequens omne ens.

⁵ Comp. Albert the Great, *Summa Theologiae* tract. 6, q. 27, c. 2; Bonum dicitur intentionem communem et est de transcendentibus omne genus sicut et ens.

449



Jan Aertsen
1938-2016



John F. X. Knasas

"To see man as the willer of the ratio boni is to engender a special status among things. ... No other thing in our experience so directly and intimately relates to the ratio boni. Only man has good as the proper object of his appetitive power ... and to understand this fact is for one to realize that one should treat oneself and others in a special way."

ST II, Q94, art. 2



John F. X. Knasas

Being and Goodness

THE CONCEPT OF THE GOOD
IN METAPHYSICS AND
PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY

EDITED BY

SCOTT MACDONALD

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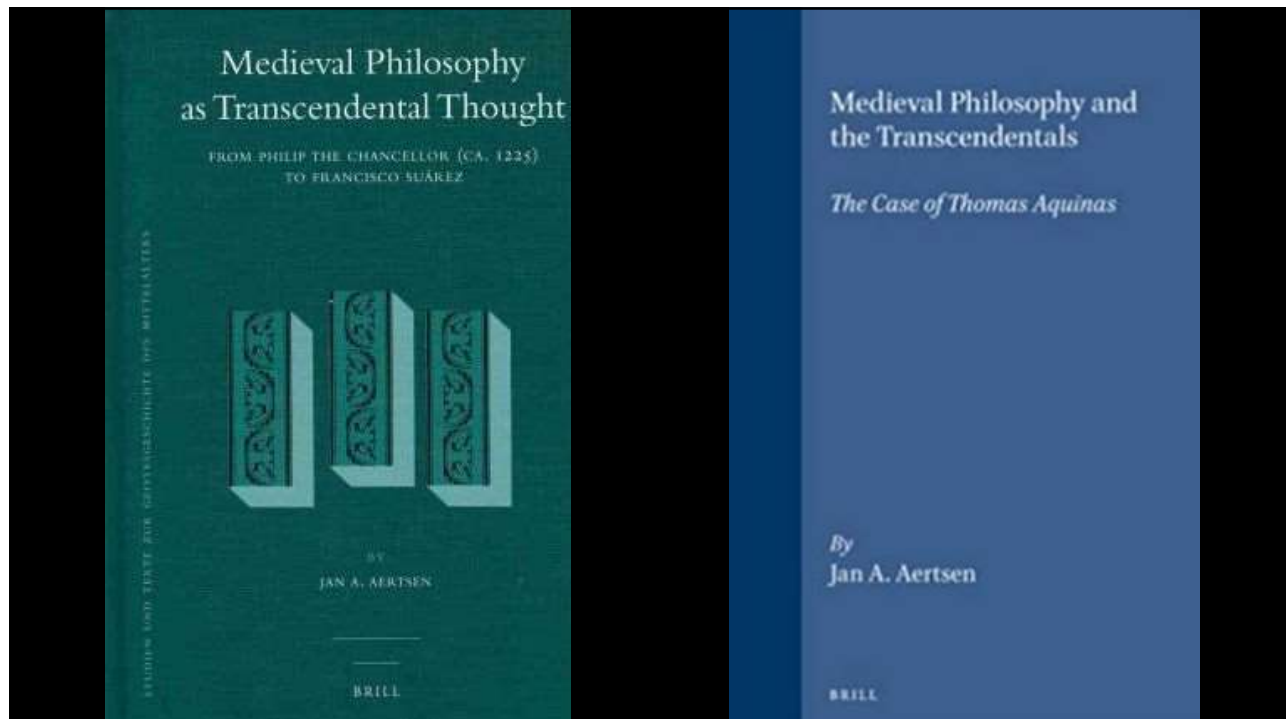
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Jan Aertsen
1938-2016

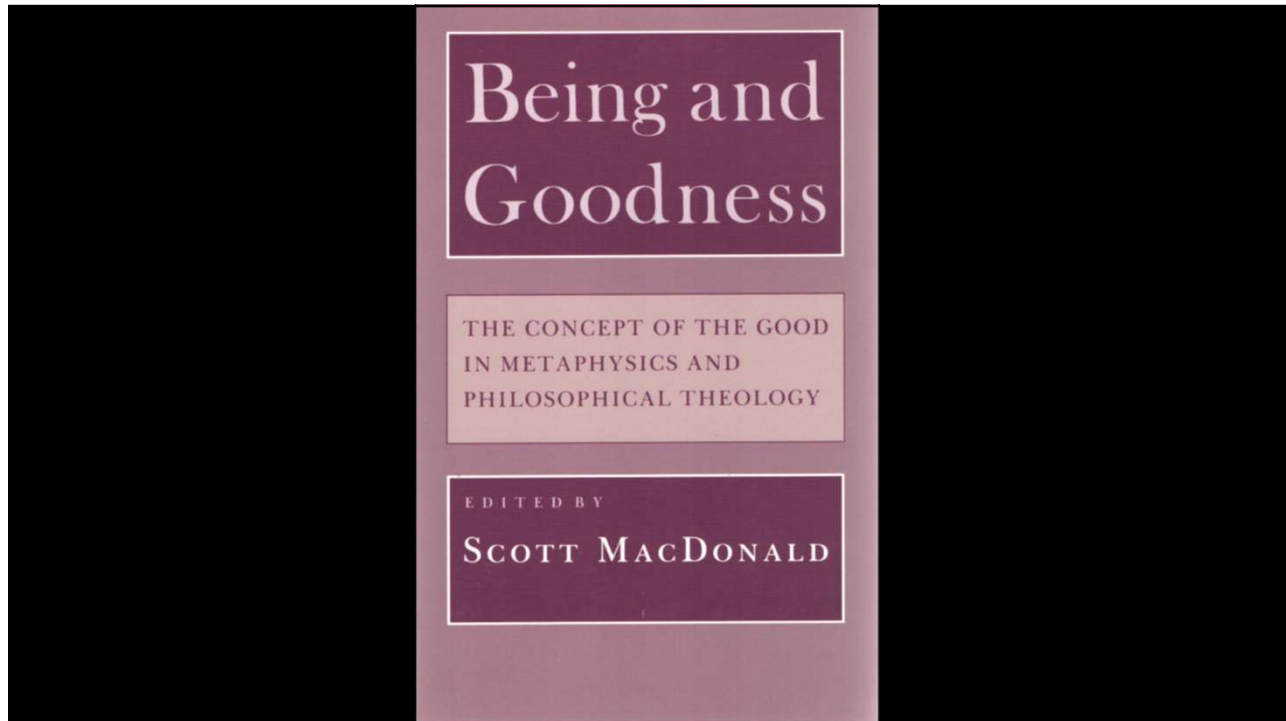


Medieval Philosophy and
the Transcendentals

The Case of Thomas Aquinas

By
Jan A. Aertsen

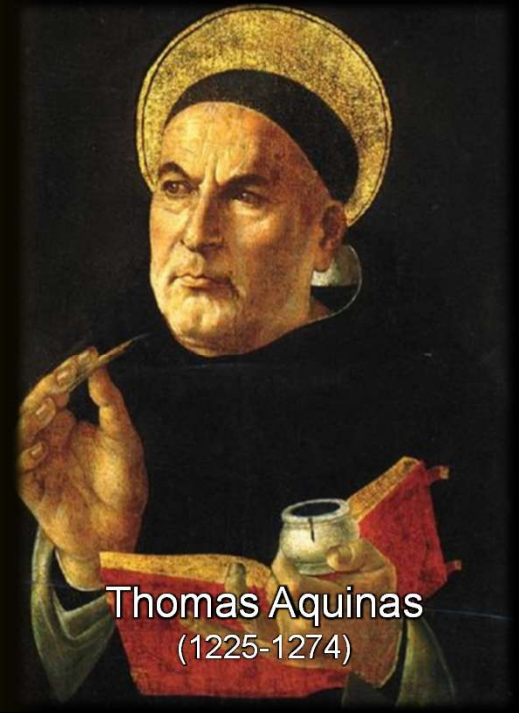
BRILL



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2. 'Desirable' is identified with 'perfect'.
3. 'Perfect' is identified with 'act' or 'actuality'.
4. 'Actuality' is identified with 'being'.
5. God is goodness itself in as much as God is being itself.

***"To God alone does
it belong to be His
own subsistent
being."***

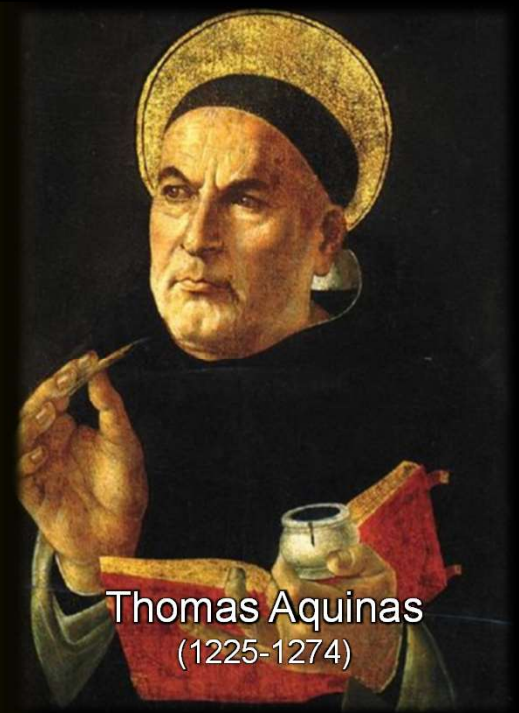
[ST 1, Q 12, art. IV]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

***"God is absolute
form, or rather
absolute being"***

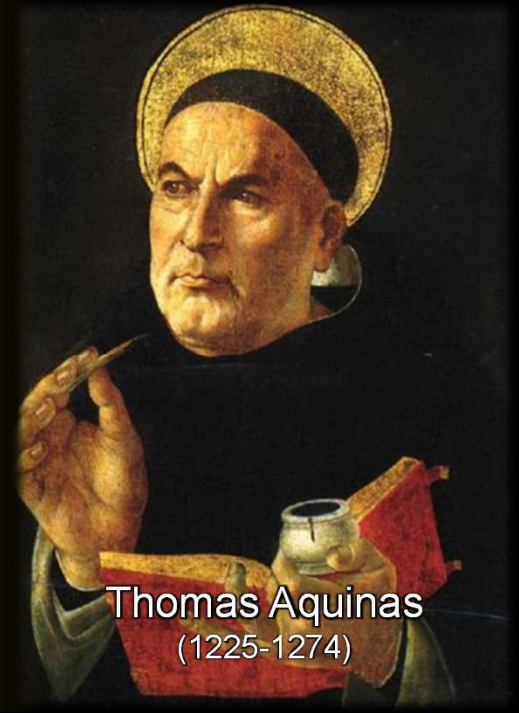
[ST, I, Q3, art. 7.]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"God is supremely being ... He is being itself, subsistent, absolutely undetermined."

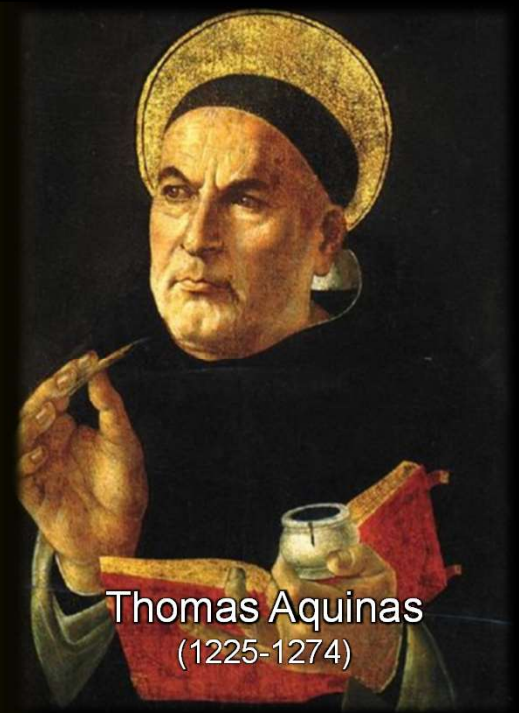
[ST 1, Q 11, art. iv.]



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

"Good belongs pre-eminently to God."

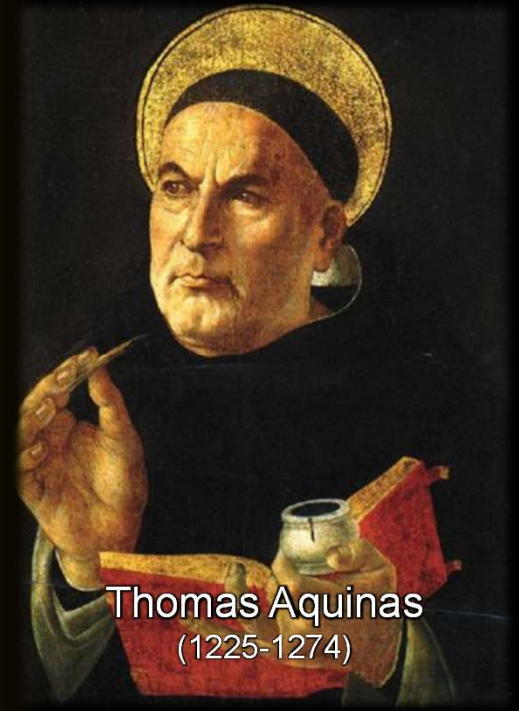
(ST 1, Q5, art. 1)



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

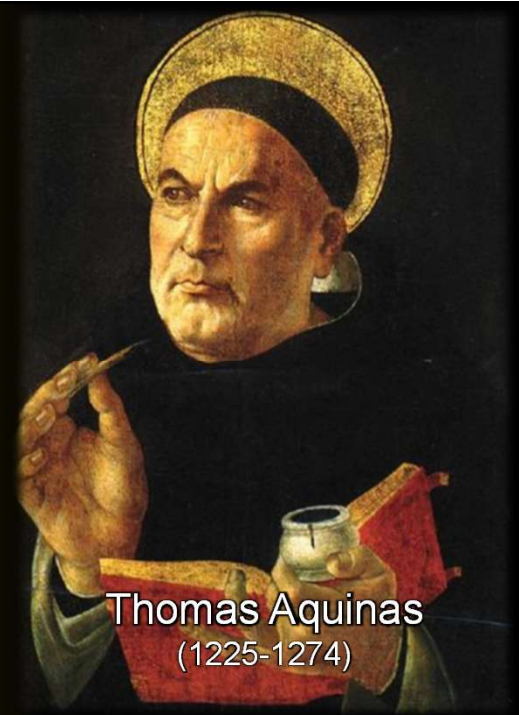
"The first indemonstrable principle is that **the same thing cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time** Now as being is the first thing that falls under the apprehension simply, so good is the first thing that falls under the apprehension of the practical reason, which is directed at action."

ST I-II, Q94, art. 2



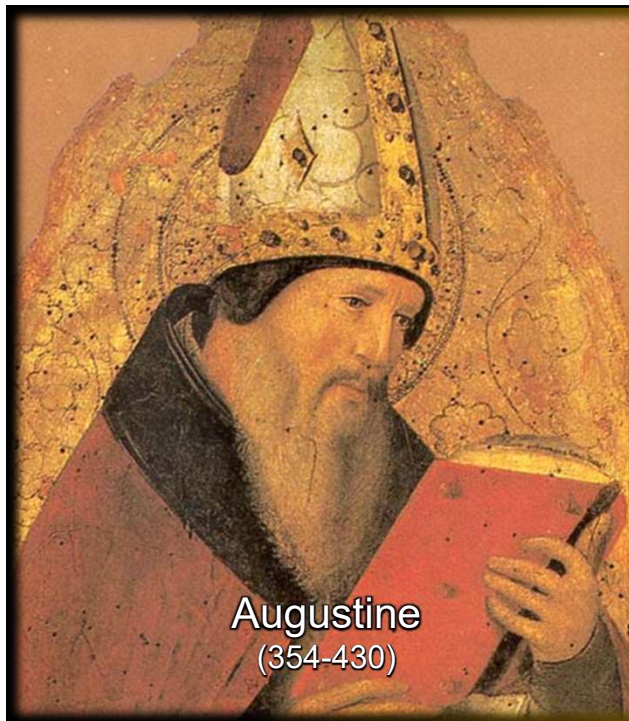
Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

Good is to be done and pursued and evil avoided.



Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

What, then, is Aquinas's "explanation" for evil?



Augustine
(354-430)

"For the Omnipotent God, whom even the heathen acknowledge as the Supreme Power over all, would not allow any evil in his works, unless in his omnipotence and goodness, as the Supreme Good, he is able to bring forth good out of evil."

[Augustine, *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love*, III, § 11, trans. Albert C. Outler, p. 5, available at <http://www.saintsbooks.net/books/St.%20Augustine%20-%20Enchiridion%20on%20Faith,%20Hope,%20and%20Love.pdf>, accessed 08/11/22]

"As Augustine says 'Since God is the highest good, He would not allow any evil in his works, unless His omnipotence and goodness were such as to bring good even out of evil.' This is part of the infinite goodness of God, that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good."

[ST, I, Q2, art. 3, ad. 1]

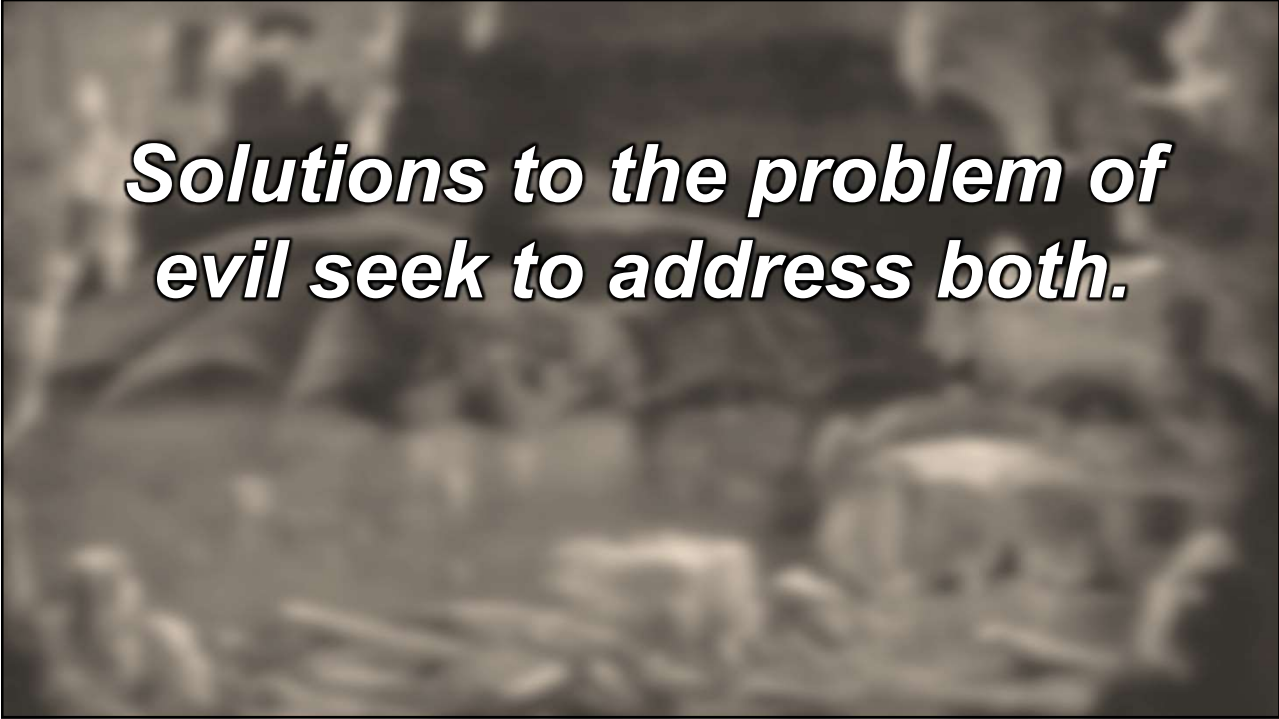


Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

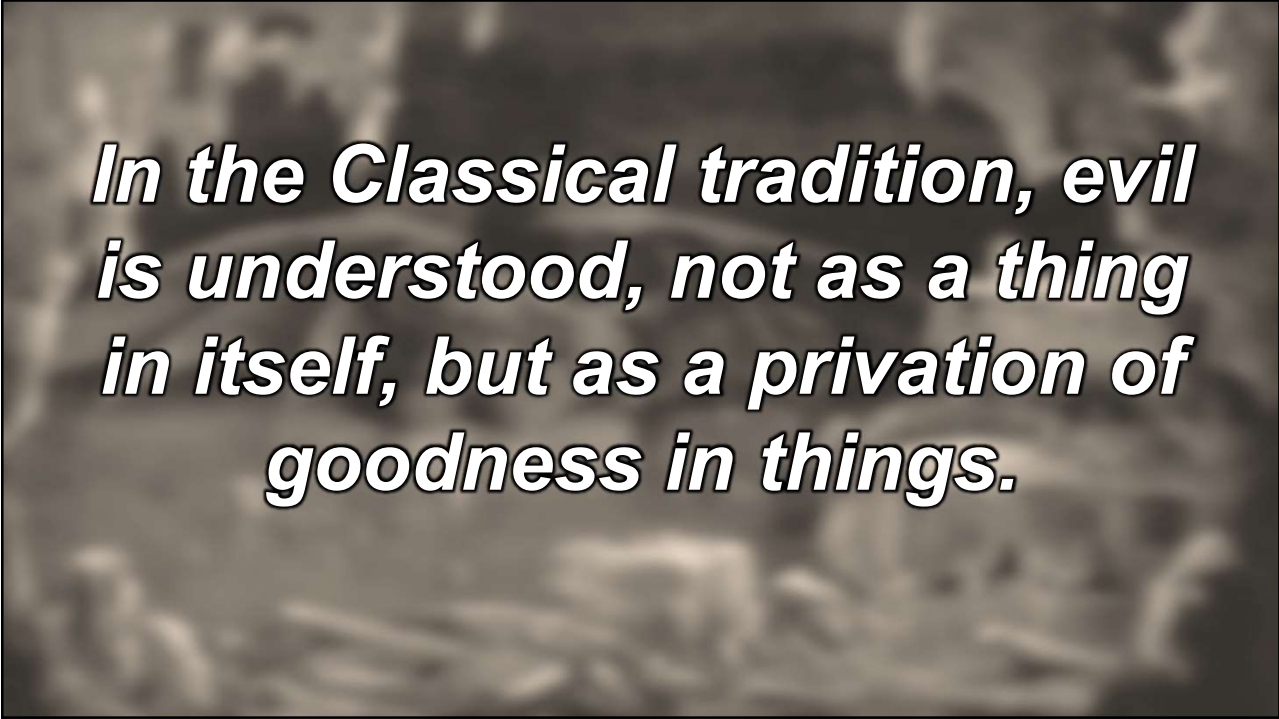
- ***It can be demonstrated that God exists and that He is both good and omnipotent.***
- ***We know God is all good and all powerful even when we cannot demonstrate the connection between specific evils in the world and the specific goods that God might produce from them.***



There is a difference between natural and moral evil as well as a difference between good and moral good.



Solutions to the problem of evil seek to address both.



In the Classical tradition, evil is understood, not as a thing in itself, but as a privation of goodness in things.

***Some solutions to the
problem of evil are
incompatible with
Evangelical Christianity.***

***There are solutions to the
problem of evil that are
compatible with biblical
Christianity and Classical
Theism.***

