

LESSON 4

THOMAS AQUINAS AND MEDIEVAL INFLUENCES

Introduction

Since before Augustine and after Boethius the Greek influence upon Christianity was formidable. Plato's idealism and Aristotle's objective reality seemed to be indispensable to the Christian mind, which was concerned with the "world to come" but becoming slowly more and more aware of the fascinating nature of the world in which it lived. Colin Brown says, "By and large, the great minds of the Middle Ages were not interested in the physical universe for its own sake: they were interested in the reality which they believed lay behind it . . . the relationship between the natural and the supernatural."¹

Many voices clamoured for a Latin world, and the Greek thought suffered the mutations of translation. If one sought to grasp the physical and the metaphysical aspects of his world, he needed help from the thought of both Plato and Aristotle, as well as perhaps from Plotinus. Christian thought, of course, must give priority to the Bible, as Augustine had so clearly pointed out, but the Greeks were a real help.²

In the history of this period, a factor of major importance was the rise and conquest of the Mohammedans in the Near East, North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. Charles Martel stopped the march of Islam in the Pyrenees in 732.

Bede the Venerable (672-735)

Bede the Venerable was an English historian who spent most of his life in a monastery at Jarrow. He wrote biblical commentaries in allegories and quoted the Latin Fathers frequently.

John of Damascus (ca. 700-754)

John of Damascus wrote a textbook on theology for the Eastern Church. He also wrote the *Fountain of Knowledge* which contained Aristotle's logic and theory of reality, refuted heresies, and gave a system for the Orthodox Faith—a powerful influence on the theology of the Greek Church.

Al-Kindi (800-870)

Al-Kindi was the first great Arabic philosopher, a follower of Aristotle, but seriously influenced by Neo-

¹Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (London: InterVarsity Press, 1973), p. 17.

²In this study references will be made to the indispensable contributions of the Greeks.

Two Greek philosophers who greatly influenced Christian thought were _____ and _____.

(Plato, Aristotle)

Bede the Venerable made frequent use of the _____.

(Latin Fathers)

John of Damascus had a powerful influence upon the _____.

(Greek Church)

Al-Kindi was influenced by _____

and _____.

(Aristotle, Neo-Platonism)

Platonism. He was an "encyclopaedist" and wrote *Theology of Aristotle*. He lived in Basra and Baghdad.³

John Scotus Erigena (810-877)

One of the more important thinkers was John Scotus Erigena, sometimes designated as the first great philosopher of the Christian Middle Ages. He wrote *On the Division of Nature*. He held that philosophy and religion are really the same. He claimed that what cannot be known does not exist. His whole system is pantheistic and was condemned in the thirteenth century. To John, God was more a "creative force" than a person.

Al-Farabi (870-950)

Al-Farabi was called "The Second Aristotle," although many traces of Neo-Platonism may be found in his works. He was an enthusiastic follower of Al-Kindi, the encyclopaedist. He believed in the "non-existential" character of essences.⁴ He argued for a necessary Creator and posited the idea of a World Soul. He helped to introduce Aristotle to the Arabs.

As can be seen above, Al-Farabi was among the majority of medieval thinkers who carried on debates about the nature of things. Colin Brown points out⁵ that mention of *goodness* or the colour *green* implies a *universal* which exists over and above particular things. Medieval thinkers differed in the answers to this problem. The *Realists* (John Scotus Erigena) followed Plato and affirmed that *universals* were real. The things that we see and touch are really imperfect copies of our eternal archetype, which is responsible for bringing them into being.

The *Nominalists* believed that *universals* were mere names, not things (William of Occam) and were abstract word, no more.

The *Conceptualists* (Peter Abelard and Thomas Aquinas) took the view of Aristotle that *universals* do belong to the realm of thought; but something like the thought is really there which unifies the diversity of our experience. They opted for common sense assessment of reality.

"Medieval thought was a curious mixture of Christian faith and pagan philosophy . . . Greek arguments were used to defend Christian ideas and *vice versa*. It is difficult to tell which was the more disastrous consequence: the distortion of Christian teaching . . . or the fact that, when such ideas were attacked by later critics, the critics believed that they had disposed of Christianity itself."⁶

Christian Philosophers

The following three Christian philosophers are treated

³Albert E. Avey, *Handbook in the History of Philosophy*, 2nd. ed. (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1961), pp. 78, 79.

⁴Ibid, pp. 80, 81.

⁵Colin Brown, pp. 18, 19.

⁶Ibid., pp. 19, 20.

The system of John Scotus Erigena was condemned because it was _____.

(pantheistic)

Al-Farabi was known as the _____.

(second Aristotle)

DEFINE the following: Realists, Nominalists, Conceptualists.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Greek arguments were used to defend Christian _____.

(ideas)

here because they either represent a larger number of philosophers, or because they had a more than ordinary influence upon Christian thought. They are Anselm, Thomas Aquinas and Meister Eckhart.

Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109)

Anselm was born at Aosta, Italy. He was educated by the Benedictines. He entered their order at twenty-seven years of age in 1060. He became the Abbey of the Benedictine Monastery at LeBec, Normandy, in France where he wrote most of his works. They include *Mono-logium*, *Proslogium De Veritate* and *Cur Deus Homo*.

In 1093 the Norman conquerers of England invited him to become the Archbishop of Canterbury. He occupied this position with distinction until his death in 1109. He is probably best known for what may be mistakenly called the "ontological argument for the existence of God." His excellent work on Christology can hardly be rated of lesser importance and quality (*Cur Deus Homo* 2). In his *Proslogium*, Anselm argues for the necessity of God's "being" which cannot be proved by observable facts (the Bible never proves God's Existence, but assumes it to be true in Genesis 1:1). He rather reasons about the implications of certain "self-evident" ideas.

Anselm first believed in God, and then sought to understand his faith. His *Credo ut intellegam* ("I believe so that I may understand") follows Augustine of Hippo's insistence that an ontological illumination is required to explain the metaphysical structure of things. Anselm also wrote that his search was really *Fides Quaerens Intellectum* (faith in search of understanding). The title "ontological argument" was given to this thought many years later by Kant who saw it as an argument for the existence of God. But when Karl Barth⁷ wrote his commentary on Anselm's work, he argued that Anselm's point was *not* to prove the existence of God by reason alone without any appeal to experience and Christian revelation. Anselm argued that one cannot rationally deny the living God when once he knows that God is the most perfect being.

The content of Anselm's thought can be described as follows:

—I have an idea of a Being, than which nothing greater can be conceived.

—This idea is that of the most perfect, complete, Infinite Being, the greatest conceivable.

—Now an idea which exists in reality (*in re*) is greater than one which exists only in conception (*in intellectu*).

—Therefore, if my idea is the greatest, it must exist in reality.

—Accordingly, God, the Perfect Idea, Being, exists.

⁷Ibid., p. 22.

List three Christian philosophers who influenced significantly Christian thought.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Anselm became the A_____ of
C_____. He is best known for his
_____ argument for the
_____ of God.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

"I believe in order to understand" was the motto of
_____.

(Anselm)

Give the content of Anselm's thought.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Anselm's argument rests upon the basis of the realistic metaphysics of Plato and Augustine's theory of reality.

Some great minds like those of Descartes and Leibniz have restated and defended the argument. Others like Thomas Aquinas and Kant have gone to great effort to refute it.

Paul Tillich says, "*God is the presupposition of the question of God*: This is the ontological solution of the problem of the philosophy of religion. God can never be reached if he is the *object* of a question and not its *basis*."⁸

"British philosophers are inclined . . . to discount the argument . . . to define a thing does not mean to say that it exists . . . existence has to be treated as a quality."⁹

Anselm was trying to confirm a conviction he had without appealing to Christian faith, so that believer and unbeliever alike could find a common ground for believing in God.

"God is known in experience through personal encounter. The aim of philosophy is to understand the nature of this experience in depth."¹⁰

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Thomas Aquinas was born at Roccasecca near Naples, Italy, in 1225. His family was a part of the nobility. Aquinas was at odds with them from very early in his life. From the ages of five to fourteen years he was an "oblate" in the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino. He became a student at the University of Naples when he was nineteen. When he decided to become a Dominican monk, the family locked him in the castle, a virtual prisoner, because they opposed his plans. But Aquinas did become a Dominican and was accepted at the University of Paris and studied with St. Albert the Great, 1245-1248. He went to Cologne with St. Albert until 1254, after which he returned to Paris and in 1256 received his *licenciatura en teologia* or *licentia docendi* and taught three years. From 1259 to 1268 he taught at the Papal Curia in Rome. In 1269 he returned to Paris to struggle against Averroism. In 1272 he returned to teach at the University of Naples. He died March 7, 1274, on the way to attend the Council of Lyons.

Scholarship of the middle of the twelfth century and thereafter was affected by the profound influence of a large number of Greek, Arabic and Jewish philosophical works that had been recently translated into Latin.¹¹ The strong voice of Thomas Aquinas did much to move the Christian world to accept the translated works of Aristotle as valuable aids to Christian philosophy in spite of Aristotle's affirmations about the eternity and the necessity of the world.

However, it is a mistake to suppose that Aquinas' philosophy was simply a Christianized Aris-

⁸Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 13.

⁹Colin Brown, p. 21.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 23.

¹¹George F. Thomas, *Religious Philosophies of the West* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965), p. 97.

Anselm's thought is based on both

_____ and _____.

(Plato, Aristotle)

To understand the nature of our experience with God is the aim of _____.

(philosophy)

Why was Thomas Aquinas once locked up by his family?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Thomas Aquinas was influenced by

(Aristotle)

totetianism . . . his "synthesis" contains elements drawn from Neo-Platonic, Arabic and Jewish philosophy.¹²

He himself was a profound intellect who tried to transform Aristotle by the teachings of Christ and the Apostles.

Aquinas is responsible for the belief that theology must include the truths that are known both by *reason* and by *revelation*. The disciplines which have been developed from this idea have come to be known as *rational theology* and *revealed theology* (or *dogmatic theology*). *Rational theology*, according to Aquinas, may be deduced from the evidence to be found in the natural order, while *revealed theology* must be accepted by faith in the writings of the prophets and the apostles inspired by God. Only *revealed theology* is competent to demonstrate *specifically* Christian truth, *i.e.*, the Incarnation, the Resurrection and the Ascension.

The *basic principle* of rational theology is stated in a quotation from the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:20:

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.

Aquinas affirms that when one knows the effect better than the cause, one can proceed to the knowledge of the cause beginning with the effect. It is not possible to know the *essence* of God in this way because man's sensations enter into such a process. However, using or inferring from sensible things a conclusion about the *existence* of God as the *cause* is quite possible. Therefore, the basic principle of rational theology is: that we can know God as infinite Cause from His finite effects as we experience them through the senses. "For a knowledge of His essence we must wait until the life to come when God will by His grace illuminate our intellect and enable us to attain that 'vision of God' . . . our highest Good."¹³

In what Paul Tillich¹⁴ calls the Thomistic Dissolution, he admits that Augustine's ontological approach as interpreted by Anselm and the "great Franciscans" like Bonaventure gave Aquinas ground for some criticism. Aquinas, Duns Scotus and William of Occam undermined the ontological approach to God; and according to Tillich, undermined immediate religious certainty, establishing a cosmological approach.

The cosmological approach may be explained by presenting Aquinas' "Five Ways."

1. The first "Way" starts from *motion*. This is based upon Aristotle's view of "motion" (a transition from potentiality to actuality).

Aquinas means "change" by "motion." The effect of

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., pp. 99, 100.

¹⁴Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, pp. 16ff.

DEFINE Rational Theology and Revealed Theology.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

"That we can know God as infinite Cause from His finite effects as we experience them through the senses" is the basic principle of _____ Theology.

(Rational)

The "Five Ways" of Aquinas help explain the _____ argument for God's existence.

(cosmological)

motion implies a "mover" which has been "moved" until one "arrives at the First Mover, moved by no other; and this everyone understands to be God."

2. The second "Way" starts from *efficient causes* in the world of sensible things.

A thing cannot be the "efficient cause" of itself—it would have to be prior to itself. It must, therefore, be caused by another. To follow this thought to conclusion one arrives at the necessity for "a first efficient cause," or a "transcendent" cause—God.

3. The third "Way" is an argument from the *contingency* of the world.

In nature we observe that things come into being and pass away. It is possible for things to be and to not-be. It is impossible for them always to exist. If we assume that everything is contingent or can not-be— at some time *there was nothing in existence*. But if this were true nothing would exist now because there would have been nothing to bring into existence those things which exist now. They do exist now. The above is absurd. Therefore, the assumption that everything is merely contingent and can not-be is false.¹⁵ *There must be something whose existence is necessary—a Necessary Being* who is not contingent upon another. This *Necessary Being* is God.

4. The fourth "Way" is based upon the *degrees of perfection*.

Some things are more and some things are less good, noble or true. There are the best, truest, and the noblest—something which is "most being."

The highest Being in the hierarchy of being is the cause of the being of all lesser beings of that category (fire—heat—hot things).

Therefore, there must be a Causal Being for all other beings and this we call God. (Note: This is a very platonic argument with a minor Aristotelian application. Very interesting.)

5. The fifth "Way" is a "teleological way" which is not by accident or chance but by design. Things "act for an end—to obtain the best result."

The notion of act is fundamental in the metaphysics and epistemology of St. Thomas. For him, the name "being" takes its origin from the act "to be."¹⁶ It is therefore the act, not the essence, that is real.

The thing must attain its end not by chance but by design. But things are without knowledge of self-purpose; they must be directed by an intelligent being, as the arrow

¹⁵George F. Thomas, p. 102.

¹⁶Anton C. Pegis, *Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas* (New York: The Modern Library, 1948), p. xxv.

The teleological argument for the existence of God is the argument from d_____.

(design)

is directed by the archer. "Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end. This being is called God."¹⁷

These Five Ways "include what later came to be known as the Cosmological and Teleological arguments"¹⁸ for the existence of God. They look for an ultimate cause of the cosmos and an ultimate designer of the same. As the reader may have observed, it is hard to tell if these are five different arguments or five different aspects of the same argument. They may have inundated the "ontological approach to God" only to leave one every bit as poverty-stricken if he is looking for a personal, gracious, loving God who can and will lift man out of the tragic results of sin. However, "... certain gaps and flaws become visible."¹⁹

1. The case for the Unmoved Mover leans heavily upon an out-dated Aristotelian pre-scientific view of the world.
2. Kant charged that the Five Ways contain implicitly the "ontological argument."
3. It has not been proven that the prime mover or the great designer is the same as the Christian God. The maker and the designer may not be the same. Plotinus and Philo thought of "God" as the great designer who used a semi-mundane "maker" like Plato's "demiurge" to actually "make" the perceptible universe.

Once again, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures make *no effort* to prove the existence of God. His Being and gracious control of His creation are assumed and "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 14:1).

Aquinas arrived at the conclusion that God was absolutely (or almost absolutely) transcendent to such an extent that one could say nothing positive about God because finite man does not really know for sure anything about the infinite God. He based this projection on 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This has been called his "Negative Theology" because he said we can speak only about what the transcendent God is not like. Theologians like Karl Barth who stress the "wholly otherness" of God share this viewpoint of negative theology which is based somewhat on Aristotelian philosophy. The great danger of this negative approach to God is that it sometimes leads to a God who is unmoved and without interest in the world He has moved and has now abandoned. This is the "rational" God of Deism or scientism, *not* the God of biblical Christianity.

Negative theology came upon the problem presented by the names of God in revealed theology. The Hebrew word for "name" is *sheim*. It is a name given to a person or

¹⁷This is the argument in *Summa Theologica*. It is presented differently in *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

¹⁸Colin Brown, p. 26.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 27.

The "Five Ways" include what later came to be known as the C_____ and T_____ arguments for the existence of God.

(Cosmological, Teleological)

State three flaws of the "Five Ways" of Aquinas which the author gives.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Thomas Aquinas came to the conclusion that God was absolutely transcendent to such an extent that one could say nothing positive about God because finite man does not really know for sure anything about the infinite God. This emphasis has been called

N_____ T_____.

(Negative Theology)

Is the following statement true or false?

The great danger of this negative approach to God is that it sometimes leads to a God who is unmoved and without interest in the world He has moved and has now abandoned. _____

(true)

thing that describes its character or behaviour. Jacob, who was born clutching his twin brother's foot, was called "the heel," and when he stole his twin brother's birthright, the name Jacob, the "heel" or the "supplanter," came true. Or was he called Jacob after the fact? The material is so ancient it is hard to tell. What may be taken to be certain is that a person's *sheim* was descriptive of the person. The Greek word *onoma*, which translates *sheim* in the New Testament and the LXX, is sometimes "used Hebraistically to mean 'power,' or 'character.'"²⁰ Moses' preoccupation with the "name of God" in Exodus is a desire to know more about God.

So Thomas Aquinas, after he had developed as much as he could through his "negative theology," introduced an indispensable "affirmative theology" dealing with the names of God among other things. Aquinas confessed that the names as well as the "affirmative theology" can only be inadequate at best. The real problem resides in the effort to describe an infinite God by means of a finite language. This was the problem of English philosophers and others in the recent past who struggled with the language of philosophy.²¹ To them, religious language was really nonsense because they could not verify its meaning logically and scientifically.

Because Aquinas was fully aware of this difficulty, he offered a solution in what he called "analogy." He affirmed that "when we make statements about God, we are using language in rather a special way."²² Our words have neither a *universal* nor an *equivocal* sense. When Christians talk about the "Lamb of God," or "Worthy is the Lamb," they do not speak about an animal with four legs, but about Jesus Christ who is God's choice and only sacrifice for expiating the sins of human beings.

The concept of "God the Father" not only means that He is the Father of Jesus Christ but that His spiritual relationship to those who pray to Him is like that of a good earthly father, although He is never conceived of as a human being. This language about God and spiritual things in general is not equivocal either.²³ Their words *do* mean something on a human level, but they have a definitely different meaning on the religious level which is understood clearly by those who speak the language of faith.

After a long while Wittgenstein partially admitted analytical language. He said it was something like the use of a Chess Board. One can play Chess on it and only the rules of Chess obtain. But if the game is Checkers, it is the same board, but the squares are used differently, and only the rules of Checkers obtain.

If we use mundane language about God, we try to reduce Him to the earthly level of being in time and space. Such talk really is nonsense. Aquinas points out that valid

Aquinas was fully aware of the difficulty of attempting to describe the infinite God with inadequate human language. He, therefore, offered a solution to this problem which he called "_____."

(analogy)

²⁰Alexander Souter, *Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1943), p. 143.

²¹The Logical Positivists and Wittgenstein and other agnostics.

²²Colin Brown, p. 30.

²³Equivocal—something not determined, of uncertain significance; of doubtful nature or character; with different meanings equally possible; ambiguous; susceptible to double interpretations.

statements about God are *analogical*. The idea of "God the Father" does not mean He is exactly like or wholly unlike the best of human fathers, but there are some genuine points of similarity.²⁴

When the "holy similes" are used, they describe what God has revealed to the believer by faith through personal experience in worship and communion with Him. In view of their personal encounter with God, a psychological-spiritual experience, such expressions as the "Good Shepherd" or the "Light of the World" are entirely appropriate. This is the language which Aquinas calls analogy; but the truth of this language must be proved by the experimental (existential) verification in real life. It is a small wonder that contemporary Neo-Thomists like Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson as well as E. L. Mascall affirm heartily the affinity that St. Thomas Aquinas has with the existentialist philosophers of the early twentieth century.

Because of his strict use of the scientific Greek philosophy to describe Christian theology, Aquinas leaves much to be desired in his doctrines on the grace and the love of God. Since God is ultimately transcendent for Aquinas, intimate personal relationship with God is very unlikely and may be impossible except through a significant chain of intercessors. Then, at best, the relationship must be analogical.

It seems almost unfair to give such a small space to the "angelic doctor" who still rules the minds of Roman Catholics the world around.

Meister Eckhart (1260-1327)

The influence of medieval philosophy upon modern religious thought and practice would be poorly described without an adequate treatment of the categories of Meister Eckhart's thought.

Meister Eckhart was born in Hochheim (Gotha). He may have studied with Albert the Great at Cologne. He received the doctorate at Paris in 1302. He was an important member of the Dominican Order. Eckhart became the Provincial for Saxony and the Vicar General for Bohemia. In his *Opus Tripartitum*²⁵ he modified the Aristotelianism of St. Thomas Aquinas with the mysticism of Pseudo-Dionysius. He taught that Divine Essence and Existence are one and that all things exist in identity with God. He insisted that Divine Existence is especially manifest in the human soul whose goal or end is to achieve union with God.

Eckhart preached in the vernacular (German) and founded the philosophical language of the Germans.

Johannes (Meister Eckhart) was tried for his pantheistic mysticism and theological errors in 1326. He abjured publicly any possible religious errors which he may have made. A portion of his views were condemned.

His thought was drawn mystically from Aristotelianism, Augustinianism, Neo-Platonism, and Avicennism.

²⁴Colin Brown, p. 31.

²⁵Albert E. Avey, p. 104.

Aquinas leaves much to be desired in his doctrines of the _____ and the _____ of God.

(Grace, Love)

In 1326 Meister Eckhart was tried for his _____ mysticism and _____ errors.

(pantheistic, theological)

He is considered here because he represents a mysticism shared by many of his time and since his time.

Eckhart's God was conceived to be the Unmoved Mover—not affected by His creation but affecting palpably His creation. "All things are created by God, and they tend to return to him . . . man cannot find himself apart from God."²⁶

The Kingdom of Heaven is within man, "for God creates Christ in two ways: first, as a part of the Trinity and, second, in the soul of man."²⁷

To achieve the knowledge of God, Eckhart taught that it is necessary to be pure in spirit, abandon personal property and give up all other personal interests. "Thus the more things we keep for ourselves, the less we have his love; the less we own things, the more we shall own him and his."²⁸

The most important virtue is the *abandonment of self* as ABGESCHIEDENHEIT. When this is achieved, one is ready to receive God. God gives Himself to the disinterested heart. Like Plotinus, Eckhart preached that a disinterested person is sensitive to nothing but God.

But Eckhart advocated active service beyond the life of contemplation. "Relax and let God operate you and do what he will with you."²⁹ You belong to Him. "The self, by being destroyed, experiences a glorious rebirth."³⁰

Eckhart's experiments in mysticism and emphasis of the individual over the system in relation to God may have led to some of the main ideas of the Reformation.

²⁶Frederick Mayer, *A History of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 500.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid., p. 501.

²⁹Ibid., p. 503.

³⁰Ibid., p. 504.

Is the following statement true or false?

Eckhart preached that a disinterested person is sensitive to nothing but God. _____
(true)

Eckhart also advocated active service beyond the life of _____.

(contemplation)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (*Levels 1, 2, and 3*). Read the study guide and answer the following questions:

1. Name two ancient Greek philosophers who greatly influenced Christian thinking.

2. Identify the following: Bede the Venerable, John of Damascus, Al-Kindi, John Scotus Erigena, Al-Farabi. (Use additional paper if necessary.)

3. Identify the following: Realists, Nominalists, and Conceptualists.

- _____
- _____
- _____
4. Name three Christian philosophers who influenced significantly Christian thought.
- _____
- _____
5. According to the author, for what is Anselm best known?
- _____
6. State the content of Anselm's thought.
- _____
- _____
7. Upon what basis does Anselm's argument rest?
- _____
8. According to Anselm, what is the aim of philosophy?
- _____
9. What Greek philosopher greatly influenced the thinking of Thomas Aquinas?
- _____
10. What is Rational Theology? Revealed Theology?
- _____
- _____
11. State the five ways of the cosmological argument as presented in the study guide.
- _____
- _____
12. What is meant by the teleological argument?
- _____
13. Give three flaws of the Five Ways of Thomas Aquinas.
- _____
- _____

14. What is meant by the Negative Theology as stated by Aquinas?

15. According to the author, what is the danger in Negative Theology?

16. What did Aquinas mean by his use of "analogy"?

17. According to the author, what is lacking in the theology of Thomas Aquinas?

18. Why was Meister Eckhart placed on trial?

19. What did Meister Eckhart mean by the "disinterested person"?

Supplementary activity (*Levels 2 and 3*). Read pages 20-36 in Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* and answer the following:

1. What was the theme of *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God Became Man)?
2. Explain the "ontological argument" which tries to demonstrate the existence of God. What relationship does Descartes' philosophy have to the ontological argument?
3. What are the *Summa contra Gentiles* and the *Summa Theologiae*? Describe them.
4. Explain the "doctrine of analogy." Why are valid statements about God analogical? How is the doctrine vindicated?

Advanced activity (*Level 3*).

1. Why does modern man have problems with Anselm? Explain his concept of knowledge and causality.
2. What is Anselm's position about the relation of faith and knowledge? (See Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*, p. 47.) Explain carefully.
3. What is the importance of philosophy in the understanding of the Roman Catholic theology of St. Thomas Aquinas? What philosopher or philosophers influenced him most? Name two.
4. What was the purpose behind Aquinas' "Five Ways"? What basic presuppositions distinguish the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas and that of St. Augustine?

Seminar Discussion

1. What importance does the concept of *universals* have for medieval thought?
2. Discuss two approaches to truth in religion.
3. Discuss the nature of religious language compared to the language of science. How can language become meaningful? less meaningful?