

A History of Western Philosophy and Theology

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Philosophy and the Bible

Subdivisions of Philosophy

- Metaphysics: study of the general features of the universe
- Epistemology: theory of knowledge
 - Examples of epistemological theories:
 - Rationalism: Knowledge primarily comes through reason (e.g., Descartes)
 - Empiricism: Knowledge comes through experience/senses (e.d., Hume, Locke, etc.)
 - Skepticism: Doubts whether knowledge is truly possible
 - Foundationalism: Some beliefs are self-evident and form the foundation for others
 - Relibilism: Beliefs are justified if formed by reliable processes
- Value Theory (Axiology): Determines how crucial/valuable something is
 - Three general types of secular ethics:
 1. Deonlogism: make decisions based on duty – Kant
 2. Teleologism: make decision based on your ethical goal – Bentham
 3. Existentialism: do what your heart desires – Sophism, Sartre

Biblical Philosophy

- Creator and creature
 - Distinction between God (infinite) and creation (finite)
 - God is self-existent, independent, and eternal; creation is dependent and contingent
 - Guards against idolatry; creation is not divine
- Absolute tripersonality
 - God is one in essence, three in persons (Father, Son, Spirit)
 - Trinity is not a philosophical puzzle but the foundation of all reality and relationships
- Lordship
 - God rules over all things with authority, control, and presence
 - Nothing is outside His sovereign plan
 - Philosophy and theology must start with God's lordship, not human autonomy

The Triage of Lordship

- God's transcendence (has *control* and *authority*) and immanence (*presence*)

The Antithesis in Epistemology

- Control: God determines our knowledge (gaining, losing)
- Authority: God determines truth vs. falsity / right vs. wrong (normative)
- Presence: God reveals knowledge and/or himself

The Antithesis in Values

"Nothing impersonal has the authority to impose ethical norms. Only a person can do that (e.g. a mother, father, teacher, policeman), and only an absolute person can impose ultimate, universal norms" (p. 33)

- Comparing and contrasting ethical relativism and absolutism;
- Many non-Christians affirm absolute ethical norms without God, but their attempt inevitably fails. That failure is only remedied either by embracing the ethic of biblical theism or by denying that absolute norms are possible

The Three Perspectives of Christian Thought – Perspectives on Ethics

1. Situational: analyzes the world that God has made to know how best to apply God's norms to a given situation
2. Normative: applying the laws of God to nature
3. Existential: deals with the ethical agent to understand his role in making ethical decisions and how he takes the norms of God and applies them to his situation

Non-Christian philosophers often adopt one or two of these perspectives and deny the other(s). i.e. Kant the deontologist, embraces the moral law and claims that morality has nothing to do with our environment

Philosophers Discussed

- Reducing the universe to generalities: Plato, Aristotle, Hegel
- Dividing the universe into ultimate particulars: Democritus, Epicurus, Roscellinus, Uccam, The early Wittgenstein

Non-Christian philosophers are seeking alternatives to God, making the discipline of philosophy an exercise in idolatry. Christians consistent with their faith seek and aim to understand in a biblical worldview.

Concepts of Rationalism

1. Reason limited: our reason is limited because of God's transcendence
2. Reason competent: Despite man's limited reason, we are competent to know truth; God is immanent and revealed himself to the world
3. Irrationalism: No reason to think that we have access to the truth; our reason is enough and competent to know the world
4. Rationalism: Human wisdom is absolute; we are autonomous

Example,

Rationalism: Eve asserting her own right to make the final judgment in the situation where she was tempted by the serpent

Irrationalism: This claim presupposed that God did not exist as the ultimate determiner of truth and meaning, and that therefore there was no absolute truth

Greek Philosophy

The Greeks initially thought that the universe was made up of four elements: earth, air, fire, and water

- The Milesians
 - Thales (appr. 620-546 B.C.) – taught “all is water” and “all things are full of gods”
 - Anaximenes (d. 528 B.C.) – believed that “all is air”
 - Anaximander (610-546) – taught that “all is indefinite”
- Heraclitus (525-475)
 - Reality is in constant change (“You cannot step into the same river twice”)
 - The underlying order is the *Logos* – a rational principle governing change
 - Emphasized unity of opposites (tension in opposites brings harmony)
- Parmenides (c. 510-430)
 - Argued that change is an illusion – reality is one, unchanging, eternal
 - True knowledge comes through reason, not the senses
- The Atomists
 - All matter is composed of indivisible particles (atoms) moving in a void
 - Denied divine causation – a mechanical, materialist worldview
- Pythagoras (572-500)
 - Saw numbers and mathematical ratios as the fundamental reality of the universe
 - Believed in the immortality and transmigration of the soul
- The Sophists
 - Traveling teachers skilled in rhetoric and persuasion
 - Emphasized relative truth and success in public life over objective morality
 - Protagoras: “Man is the measure of all things”
- Socrates (470-399)
 - Focused on ethics and the examined life: “the unexamined life is not worth living”
 - Taught through the Socratic method – questioning to expose contradictions
 - Believed knowledge and virtue are linked
- Plato (427-347)
 - Student of Socrates; founded the academy in Athens
 - Taught the theory of forms – eternal, unchanging ideals are the truest reality

- The soul is immortal; the material world is a shadow of the true, spiritual reality
- Aristotle (384-322)
 - Student of Plato; emphasized empirical observation and logic
 - Rejected the Theory of Forms – believed form and matter exist together
 - Developed formal logic, ethics, politics, and natural sciences
 - Viewed God as the “unmoved mover”
- Stoicism
 - Taught living in accordance with nature and reason (*logos*)
 - Emphasized self-control, virtue, and accepting fate
 - Believed in a rational, ordered universe permeated by divine reason
- Plotinus (A.D. 205-70)
 - Founder of Neoplatonism reality flows from the One (the ultimate divine source) through a hierarchy of being
 - The soul’s goal is to return to union with the one
 - Strong influence on early Christian thinkers like Augustine

Other Notes:

Plato (c. 427–347 BC) – Most foundational for early Christian thought

- Augustine of Hippo, one of the most important Church Fathers, was heavily influenced by Platonism, particularly Neoplatonism (via Plotinus).
- Plato's emphasis on the immaterial realm of forms, the soul's immortality, and the idea of a transcendent reality resonated deeply with Christian ideas about God, heaven, and the soul.
- Christian theology adopted a dualistic worldview (spirit vs. flesh, eternal vs. temporal), which aligned with Platonic categories.

Aristotle (384–322 BC) – More influential in medieval Christianity

- Thomas Aquinas (13th century), a central figure in Scholasticism, integrated Aristotelian philosophy with Christian theology.
- Aquinas used Aristotle’s metaphysics, ethics, and logic to construct a rational, systematic theology (*i.e.*, arguments for God’s existence).
- This fusion of Aristotle and Christian doctrine became the backbone of Catholic theology and natural law theory.

Early Christian Philosophy

- The Apostolic Fathers
 - Disciples or close associates of the apostles (*i.e.*, Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna)

- Preserved and passed on apostolic teaching during the post-New Testament era; defended unity and moral integrity in the church
- The Apologists
 - Defended Christianity to Roman authorities and Greek philosophers (e.g., Quadratus, Aristides, Athenagoras)
 - Articulated Christianity as intellectually credible and morally superior to paganism
- Justin Martyr (100-165)
 - Early apologist; blended Greek philosophy with Christian theology to appeal to educated pagans
 - Defended the faith against charges of atheism and immorality, presenting Jesus as the fulfillment of philosophy's search for truth
- Irenaeus (130-200)
 - Wrote *Against Heresies*. Opposed Gnosticism's claim to secret spiritual knowledge
 - Emphasized the unity of Scripture, the authority of apostolic tradition, and the goodness of creation
- Tertullian (c. 160-220)
 - Latin theologian; coined the term "Trinity" (Trinitas)
 - Developed precise language for the Godhead, defended the faith against heresies, and had strong moral rigor
- Clement of Alexandria (155-220)
 - Head of the catechetical school in Alexandria. Sought to unite Greek philosophy and Christian truth
 - Valued philosophy as a "preparation" for the Gospel. Influenced Origen
- Origen (185-254)
 - Brilliant biblical scholar and theologian; produced extensive commentaries and the Hexapla (parallel Hebrew-Greek OT)
 - Defended Christianity against pagan critics and developed allegorical interpretation. Influential but, at times, speculative
- Athanasius (290-373)
 - Disciple of Alexander the bishop
 - Fought against Arianism, created by Arius, which claimed that there was a time when the Son did not exist with the Father and was a lesser being although a god. Overlapped with gnostics belief regarding aeons
 - Arius claimed that the Word and Spirit were creatures of God, rather than being fully God
 - Believed that God is not supertranscendent as in Gnosticism. He is present with us because the world is His creation and dwelling place
 - Believed in the doctrine of theosis or divination, prominent in Eastern Orthodox theology – "The Son of God became man so that we might become God" – we are transformed by grace, not in our nature or substance. We share in God's life, his holiness, immortality, love, not his essence

- The Council of Nicea 325 dealt with the Arius controversy and affirmed homoousios
- The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed – Revision and expansion the original Nicene Creed (from the council of Nicea in 325 AD) by the Council of Constantinopolitan in 381 AD

We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages,
Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made;
of the same essence as the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and was made human.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried.
The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again with glory
to judge the living and the dead.
His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life.
He proceeds from the Father.
With the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.
He spoke through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and to life in the world to come. Amen.

Note: the western (latin) church adds the filioque clause – “who proceeds from the Father and the Son” – that was not in the original 381 version which eventually leads to the Great Schism between East and West in 1054.

- Augustine (354-430)
 - Manichaeism
 - Theology of Privation – theory of evil – a lack, absence, or corruption of something that ought to be there; evil is the absence or distortion of good
 - Moral privation: the sin of angels and man, the worst kind of evil and the origin of others
 - Privation theory creates confusion and tension between ethics and metaphysics
 - Epistemology
 - Emphasized the doctrine of *circumcessio* (perichoresis) – describes how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons yet fully share in each other’s life and being
 - “The Father is in the Son and in the Spirit, the Son is in the Father and in the Spirit, the Spirit is in the Father and in the Son.”
 - This guards against both tritheism (three gods) and modalism (one person wearing three masks).
 - Connected to the Nicene understanding that all three persons are co-equal, co-eternal, and consubstantial.
 - The Trinity
 - The doctrine of the Trinity is not directly accessible to human reason
 - Pelagianism
 - Pelagius taught there was no hindrance to moral success (thus denied our sinful nature from the fall of Adam) and can merit heaven if good enough
 - Augustine’s concept of free will. He transitioned from metaphysical freedom (*autexousion*, the ability to act without causation) to the realm of moral freedom (the ability to do good). The four stages of moral freedom:
 1. Adam had the freedom to sin or not to sin
 2. The fall results in spiritual deadness, lacking the freedom not to sin. Could not stop sinning
 3. Freedom to do what is right is regained through Christ
 4. Perfection, holiness, and righteousness are affirmed in heaven for believers
 - The City of God
 - There are only two paths and two destinations, the ungodly and godly, the unrighteous and righteous. Both can work toward a common cause, yet one will inherit eternity and the other eternal condemnation
 - The Confessions
 - Augustine’s autobiography to understand God’s role in his preconversion and eventual turning to Christ

Other notes:

- Gnostics and their hierarchy of aeons; the supreme being could not come into direct contact with matter. Creating the material universe could only be done by an aeon of lesser dignity (p. 105)
- *Homoousios*: to be of the same substance, the same nature (Arius denied this, rejecting the Trinity)
- The problem with Arianism for the Christian faith: proposes worship for a created being, meaning idolatry, and teaches that salvation depends on a creature rather than wholly on God

<i>View</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>View of the Fall</i>
<i>Libertarian Free Will</i> <i>(Closely related to Metaphysical Freedom)</i>	The ability to choose otherwise without external or internal necessity	Often assumes post-Fall humans still have moral freedom
<i>Compatibilist Free Will</i>	You are free if you act according to your desires—even if those desires are shaped by sin	Takes the Fall seriously: will is bound to sin until freed by grace

Parallel histories of reformation

<i>Synthesis</i>	<i>Heresy</i>	<i>Reformer</i>	<i>Consolidator</i>
Origen	Arius	Athanasius	Augustine
Thomas Aquinas	Tetzel	Luther	Calvin

Medieval Philosophy

- Boethius
 - Discussed the divine and human nature of Christ (two natures in one person), contributing to the making of the Trinity
 - Wrote the *Consolation of Philosophy* which was influential in bridging classical philosophy and Christian thought

- Pseudo-Dionysius (5th-6th c.)
 - Responsible for bringing mysticism into Christian theology
- John Scotus Erigena (800-877)
 - The flowing of things from God and back to him occurs in four “divisions”
 1. Nature that creates and is not created: God himself
 2. Nature that is created and creates: the Forms of all things (as in Plato), which Erigena equates with logos
 3. Nature that is created and does not create: the finite world of our experience
 4. Nature that neither creates nor is created: God again, as the final goal of all things
- Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) – sometimes called “the second Augustine” as they shared similar views
 - Faith and reason
 - Anselm doesn’t argue in order to believe, but rather believes in order to understand; once a person believes, reason helps them to grasp the depth of their understanding. Thus, theology is an attempt to understand the truth of God more fully
 - ..”it is important for faith to seek understanding.. it is the very nature of theology.. it is one thing to believe in God, it is another thing to understand how belief in God fits into a general Christian worldview” (p. 133)
 - Monologium
 - Presents arguments for the existence and nature of God
 - First area: causality (God is the first cause, the cause of all causes) and levels of reality
 - Second area: both levels or degrees of qualities (goodness, greatness) AND levels of being (plants, animals, people)
 - Develops arguments for the Trinitarian character of God, drawing on Augustine (p. 135)
 - Proslogium
 - Wrote *Proslogium* (Prologion), a rational argument for God’s existence. “God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived. Therefore, he must exist—not just in the mind but in reality—because existence in reality is greater than in thought alone”
 - Immanuel Kant calls this the *ontological argument*
 - *Necessary being*: a being that must exist rather than merely happening to exist
 - *Contingent being*: depends on something other than himself or itself
 - *Cur Deus Homo* (“Why God Became Man”) – Atonement Theory, explains why the incarnation was necessary for atonement – the “satisfactory theory” of atonement, laying the groundwork for penal substitution – “Why did God have to become man in order to save humanity?” Anselm’s argument:
 - Sin dishonors God

- Humanity owes a debt of honor to God that it cannot repay
- Only a man should pay the debt, but only God could pay it
- Therefore, the God-man (Christ) is necessary

“The reason why transgression of God’s law is so enormously wrong is that it dishonors God himself. Ultimately, we deal not with a law in the abstract, but with the absolute-personal God. Our problem is the breakdown of a relationship. It is for that reason that transgression of his law is such an evil and that the penalty for sin can be only death. And it is for that reason that the Son of God had to die in our place” (p. 140).

“But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”

Isaiah 53:5

- Toward Scholasticism

- According to Peter Leihart, a division of two groups arose in the later Middle Ages: those of monastic schools and to those of cathedral schools / monkish (monks) theologian and the school (masters) theologian, where the monks focused on scripture and practice and the masters focused on an academic approach in determining Christian truth
- Scholasticism is “school theology,” gathered all authorities of the past to analyze inconsistencies and analyze for the truth
- Avicenna (980-1037): creation is an eternal act of God, not an event at the beginning of time. As in Neoplatonism, Avicenna describes the world as a series of emanations into a hierarchy of beings
- Al Ghazali (1058-1111): rejects the Aristotelian concepts of causality. He believes that God is the only causal agent. The highest knowledge of God is by mystical union, not reason. He invokes the Sufi mystical tradition of Islam, but also the Neoplatonism that entered Christian theology
- Averroes (1126-98): Distinguished between three kinds of thinkers
 1. The common people, who are capable of understanding the liberal sense of the Qur’an and its moral exhortation
 2. Theologians, who use reason alone to systematize their theology, but are not able to formulate true demonstrations
 3. Philosophers, who are able to use reason alone to demonstrate metaphysical truth
- Moses Maimonides (1135-1204)
 - Wrestles with the idea and relationship between faith and philosophy
- Peter Abelard
 - Wrote *Sic et Non*, “Yes and No,” in which he poses 185 questions from the church fathers
 - Made *Introduction to Theology*, which was condemned at the Council of Sens in 1140 mainly due to its speculative discussion of the doctrine of the

Trinity. Also, he identifies the Father as Goodness, the Son as his ideas (logos), and the Spirit as the world soul

- Known for a doctrine of atonement different from Anselm of Canterbury, known as the *moral-influence of theory*, where he states that the death of Jesus is God's way of winning our affections by an example of reconciling love but rejected the idea that the death of Christ was a transactional payment to God, in other words, penal substitution
- Peter Lombard (1095-1161):
 - Wrote the four books of *Sentences*
- Thomas Aquinas (1224-74)
 - Faith and reason
 - Develops his doctrine of God out of natural reason
 - The Bible isn't just for obtaining everlasting life. Everything we do should be for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31)
 - Outline of the distinction between nature and grace:

Grace

revelation – faith – scripture – eternal life – salvation – the church

Nature

natural reason (philosophy) – Aristotle – form and matter – this world – the state

- The existence of God
 - Aquinas' work of *Summa Theologica*: deals with the existence of God; concludes that God's existence is evident to one who knows the essence and existence of God, but not to us, since "we do not know the essence of God," thus rejecting Anselm's proof (p.147)
 - The existence of God can be proved in five ways:
 1. *The Argument from Motion*: there must have been a beginning, a first cause to everything
 2. *The argument from Efficient Cause*: this argument merely substitutes efficient cause for motion in argument 1
 3. *The argument from Possibility and Necessity*: there must be a necessary being for out of nothing comes nothing—that necessary being is what man refers to as God
 - *Necessary being*: a being that must exist rather than merely happening to exist
 - *Contingent being*: depends on something other than himself or itself; can either exist or not exist
 4. *Argument from Gradation*: "among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble, and the like. But more and less

are predicated of different things according as they resemble in their different ways something that is the maximum”

5. *Teleological Argument*: “things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end”

- The nature of God

- God’s Nature Known Through Three “Ways” – Aquinas follows medieval tradition in describing God’s nature through three philosophical approaches:

1. Way of Causality (via *causalitatis*): We understand God by reasoning from effects to cause. For example, from observing motion, we infer an unmoved mover. Aquinas’s Five Ways (proofs 1–3) use this approach to argue for God’s existence and attributes.
2. Way of Eminence (via *eminentiae*): Attributes we see as excellent (e.g. goodness, wisdom, power), we ascribe to God in the highest degree. God possesses all perfections maximally. This includes traits like being all-powerful, all-knowing, and supremely good.
3. Way of Negation / Remotion (via *negativa* or *remotionis*): We understand God by saying what He is not, rather than what He is. For example, God is not finite, not material, not changeable. This approach highlights God’s transcendence, removing any limited human concepts that might reduce God.

- Epistemology

- Language

- John Duns Scotus (1274-1308):

- Aquinas implies that the will is determined by knowledge, where the intellect directs the will as to which choices it should make
 - Duns Scotus strongly affirms libertarian free will, believing that human will even after the fall can choose to act according to moral law, though he also believes that the human will even after the fall is strengthened by God’s grace
 - Intellect is the person thinking. Will the person deciding. Every thought is a thought we have decided to have, and every decision is a decision we consider to be knowledgeable
 - Known for his voluntarism

- William of Occam (1280-1349)

- Known for his view of universals, often called nominalism or conceptualism
 - Believed human reason was limited to the realm of individual things

- Eckhart Von Hochheim (1260-1329)

- Sought to avoid any pantheistic reduction of the creator-creature distinction
 - Godhead is unknown; God needs the Trinity and the world in order to think. The idea of the world is an eternal creation, but the temporal world is created out of nothing, in God, but is not identical with God
 - Excommunicated in 1349

Early Modern Thought

- The Renaissance
 - No major philosophers during this time compared to Aquinas, Duns Scotus, etc.
 - Philosophical thinking that emerged – “Do we gain knowledge primarily from revisiting the past or from analyzing our present existence?” – the two renaissance themes:
 1. Antiquarianism: toward the past; could not resist the rationalism of the ancient philosophers
 2. Humanism: toward the present and future; could not make sense of irrational confusion of human subjectivity, leading for skepticism to develop
 - Political philosophy became prominent; ideas of the role of the church arose in relationship to the state (i.e. church should be subordinate to the state); figures compromised morality for power and influence (i.e. Niccolo Machiavelli, reviving the position of the sophists and anticipated Marx, Lenin, Hitler, Mao, etc.)
 - Polarities of the reformation and Renaissance
 - Biblical:
 - Reformation antiquarianism: biblical authority
 - Reformation humanism: individual salvation
 - Nonbiblical
 - Renaissance humanist irrationalism
 - Renaissance antiquarian rationalism
- The Reformation

16th-century movement aimed at reforming the Roman Catholic Church which led to the birth of Protestantism and lasting divisions in Western Christianity.

 - Martin Luther (1483-1546)
 - German monk, theologian, and professor.
 - Posted the 95 Theses in 1517, challenging indulgences and papal authority.
 - Taught *justification by faith alone* (sola fide).
 - Translated the Bible into German, making Scripture accessible to common people
 - John Calvin (1509-64)
 - French reformer based in Geneva.
 - Systematized Reformation theology in Institutes of the Christian Religion
 - Emphasized God's sovereignty, predestination, and the authority of Scripture
 - His reforms influenced governance, education, and church discipline across Europe
- Post-Reformation Protestantism
 - Protestant Scholasticism

- Protestant theology were made to be suitable for academic study; not inherently bad as the drive did not lead the protestant scholastic into any specific departure from the teachings of Martin Luther or John Calvin
 - Protestant Pietism
 - Spener's movement, *Pietism*
 - Spener's proposal to restoring the life of the church:
 1. Thorough study of the Bible
 2. Universal Christian priesthood
 3. Practicing knowledge of Christianity
 4. Sympathetic and kind treatment towards unbelievers
 5. Theological training within universities that promote devotional life
 6. Different preaching style, namely pleasing rhetoric
- Rebirth of Secular Philosophy
- Continental Rationalism
 - Rationalism and empiricism
 - Seventeenth century pressing towards autonomous thinking
 - Rene Descartes
 - Shifted the focus from external authorities (i.e. scripture, church traditions, etc.) to autonomous reason
 - Sought knowledge that is absolutely certain and rejected anything that could be doubted
 - Radical doubt: the fact that he doubts means he things, and therefore exists. "I think, therefore I am (cogito, ergo sum)"
 - Mind-body dualism, two distinct substances
 - Mind: immaterial, thinking substance
 - Body: extended, physical substance
 - Baruch (Benedict) Spinoza (1634-77)
 - Defines God as the only substance which exists in itself and is conceived through itself; he is self-caused, self-authenticating, and the foundation of both truth (metaphysics) and knowledge (epistemology)
 - Denies the creator-creation distinction
 - Holds a monist view, only one substance exists
 - No free will, no randomness, everything follows from the necessity of God's nature
 - Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716)
 - Formulates *the principle of sufficient reason*, which means that nothing ever exists or does anything without a reason
 - Believed in innate ideas, arguing that truth and knowledge are grounded in reason rather than sensory experience
 - All monads (fundamental units of reality) act according to internal principles
 - God created the "best of all possible worlds", where God chose the best logical combination of goods and evil

- Pointed out that we can not experience nor know of its existence goodness without the degrees of evil
- British Empiricism
 - Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)
 - Major authors of the *social-contract theory* and made the *Leviathan*
 - A materialist, believing that all reality consists of matter in motion. No reality—not the soul, nor even God—is incorporeal (p. 190)
 - *Phantasm*, an image within the mind that lingers and combines with other phantasms (imagination) which forms our belief; this theory of knowledge is empiricist in the sense that it is sensationalist: all knowledge beings in the sensory process and we reflect on the set of causes and effects back to their sensory source
 - John Locke (1632-1704)
 - An empiricist, emphasizing that knowledge arises from sensory experience rather than innate ideas; knowledge comes from experience:
 - Sensation: direct sensory experience of the world
 - Reflection: internal observation of the mind's operations (thinking, believing, doubting, etc.)
 - Rejects innate ideas, insisting that the mind is *tabula rasa* (blank slate) at birth
 - George Berkeley (1685-1753)
 - A nominalist. A second of the major empiricist, following Locke's project of seeking knowledge by an examination of our ideas
 - Emphasized on exploring what we know: our ideas and our minds; material substances are unnecessary; epistemologically, this leads to idealism, the belief that the world is nothing but mind
 - *Esse est percipi* ("to be is to be perceived"). There is no substance, only sense experience
 - David Hume (1711-76)
 - Created *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* which emphasizes that miracles are a violation to the laws of nature and we should be lenient towards natural explanations
 - Skeptical about our ability to know anything with absolute certainty beyond immediate experience.
 - Famous for the saying, "Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them"
 - We do not have impressions of causality, or God, or even ourselves. Nor do we have impressions of moral obligations or of freedom (p. 205)
 - Hume's critique of the teleological argument is how we can talk about analogies or disanalogies

Theology in the Enlightenment

- The Birth of Liberal Theology

Liberal theology: theology that does not submit to the infallible authority of Scripture

Context: many individuals were in denial of the mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and were critical of anything supernatural. Many thwarted the bible to fit philosophical ideas, especially from prominent figures like Hobbes and Spinoza

- Deism
 - The first form of theological liberalism
 - Deism: God created the world but does not thereafter enter into nature or history. Autonomous reason is sufficient as an authority for theology. Scripture as no divine authority at all
 - Pantheism: God is the world and the world is God. often described as the polar opposite of deism
 - Neither pantheism or deism accepts biblical transcendence or biblical immanence
- Gotthold E. Lessing
 - Like Locke, he was an advocate for religious tolerance
 - Believed in miracles but does not believe that it justifies the deity of Christ or the Trinity; the deists were more extreme as they denied miracles altogether. He rejects any foundation of Christian faith based on historical events. Thus, he rejects the historicity of Christ, the resurrection, and the overall Gospel like. Similarly, the deists reject the Gospel
- Biblical Christianity in the Enlightenment
 - Blaise Pascal (1623-62)
 - The first christian philosopher to take seriously the implications of modern science, take into account sophisticated concepts of mathematical probability, and to take seriously the subjective or existential dimension of knowledge as a necessary basis
 - Experienced miracles of which his works referred to as *the first conversion, the second conversion, the third conversion*. He gave himself completely to the service of God
 - “Without the right heart-commitment, no knowledge is possible” (p.231)
 - Joseph Butler (1682-1752)
 - Known for his moral philosophy and as a Christian apologist. Rejected the rationalistic apologetics of Descartes and embraced probabilistic argumentation and its relation to moral obligation or moral certainty
 - Jonathan Edwards (1703-58)
 - Believes that the Word of God in Scripture is the highest authority and presented God as One who is absolute, personal, real, and active
 - The will is particularly a seat of passions and affections, the highest of which is love. The will is of course is also our capacity of choice, but our choices arise from affection

- “Understanding begins in sensation, yet the objects of sensation are not qualities of bodies, but impressions and ideas that given to us by God”
- Willam Paley (1743-1805)
 - In his Christian worldview, the relevant distinction is not between some things that are designed and others that are not. Rather, it is between things of human design and things of divine design. So there is a discrepancy between the things being compared. The watch is the product of human design (p. 240)
- Thomas Reid (1710-96)
 - Believes that our common-sense principles are in some sense given by God

Other notes:

- Socinianism. Rejected the nicene doctrine of the trinity but appealed to the final authority of Scripture
- Latitudinarian: edged toward liberalism. Had a tendency to avoid clearly defined positions

Kant and His Successors

- Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Developed a comprehensive rationale for autonomous reasoning and was the one that argued that we must reason autonomously and must never reason in any other way

 - Phenomena and Noumena
 - The Transcendental Method
 - Not following the impressions of the senses or the steps of a deduction, but asking what such activities presuppose
 - The Synthetic – A Priori
 - “If knowledge is possible at all, it must be possible for us to know synthetic a priori truths”
 - Insisted that if knowledge is possible, then it must be possible to gain genuine knowledge about the universe as a whole and part of obtaining it is *a priori*
 - The Mind Structures Experience
 - Proposed the *Copernican Revolution*. Kant argues that man, not nature, is the source of the synthetic *a priori* truths that constitute genuine knowledge
 - Kant’s Assembly Line
 - (1) The Transcendental Aesthetic – The First Station
 - adds to the raw data the ingredients that make it suitable for sense perception

- (2) The Transcendental Analytic – The Second Station
 - Enables us to develop a rational understanding of those spatiotemporal objects, listing twelve types of *judgements*, statements we may choose to make about things in our experience, grouped into four general types:
 1. Quantity (a. Universal, b. Particular, c. Singular)
 2. Quality (a. Affirmative, b. Negative, c. Infinite)
 3. Relation (a. Categorical, b. Hypothetical, c. Disjunctive)
 4. Modality (a. Problematic, b. Assertoric, c. Apodeictic)
 - This list corresponds to twelve *categories*, ways in which the mind comes to understand experience:
 1. Categories of quantity (a. Unity, b. Plurality, c. totality)
 2. Categories of quality (a. Reality, b. Negation, c. limitation)
 3. Categories of relation (a. Inherence and subsistence (substance and accident), b. causality and dependence (cause and effect), c. Community (reciprocity between agent and patient))
 4. Categories of modality (a. Possibility-impossibility, b. Existence-nonexistence, c. Necessity-contingency)
 - “..cause and effect is a structure that the mind *imposes* on its experiences. It is therefore a transcendental *presupposition* of knowledge. Without it, science is not possible. But science is possible.” (p. 260)

- (3) The Transcendental Unity of the Apperception – the Third Station
 - Kant’s argument: experience, even submitted to the operations of stations 1 and 2, is meaningless unless it is held together as a unified experience
 - Kant does not believe that he has discovered a metaphysical self or soul, nor does he think it is possible for anyone to discover it
 - The universe of apperception is transcendental, not empirical or metaphysical. It is a *condition* of experience, not an item we find in our experience

- (4) The Transcendental Dialectic
 - Dialectic – the fourth aspect of thinking, a source of error. The three general types of error:
 - (1) Paralogisms: a description of the unity of experience, not a proof of an immortal soul
 - Antinomies: it is possible to argue either one of two contradictory propositions with equal cogency, noting the following contingency:
 1. The universe is limited in space and time vs. the universe is unlimited (infinite) in space and time

2. The world is infinitely divisible vs. the world is composed of indivisible atoms
3. Everything has a cause vs. the human will is free from causation
4. There is a necessary being (God) vs. there is no necessary being

- Ideals

- Kant deals with the more conventional arguments for God's existence, which he reduces to three: the ontological, the cosmological, and the teleological
- Ontological: the whole universe requires a cause that can be nothing less than a being who has all perfections
- Cosmological: a being corresponding to our mental concept of perfection must exist
- Teleological (*physico-theological*): to demonstrate God's existence, it must be supplemented by the cosmological argument, which in turn reduces to the ontological—the designer must be the cause of everything and must possess all perfections
- Regarding morality, even if God does not exist, it is better to believe in him than not as a person who believes in divine law will be take such standards more seriously and strive to behave accordingly

- Kant's Ethics

- Kant is an emphatic deontologist, not an ethical relativist, despite his emphasis on the limitation of reason. He believes that there are absolute duties and that ethical rightness is to do one's duty for duty's sake
- Ethical judgements are *a priori* and are imposed on experience by the mind which determines our duty

- Kant's Theology

- Kant's religion is the first liberal systematic theology; the contents of his theology is profoundly opposed to that of traditional Christianity
- Ethics is a rational imposition of a synthetic *a priori* duties: a man imposing duties on himself; each person is responsible for his own evilness
- Believes in determinism through the natural world, not like in reformed theology where free will is determined and affected by the corruption of sin
- Does not affirm Jesus' miracles or deity, any supernatural claims; he accepts the possibility of divine revelation but insists it be subject to our autonomous rationality
- Turns the Gospel of grace into a message of works-righteousness. "True religion is to consist not in the knowing or considering of what God does

or has done for our salvation but in what we must do to become worthy of it”

- Conclusions on Kant
 - Tries to separate regulative and constitutive ideas. We are not to regard these as existing but behave as though they existed in our experience
 - His contribution is a radical application of human intellectual autonomy
 - Took on a pragmatic approach. *Pragmatism*—employed prudence as a philosophical principle
 - For Plato, the intelligibility comes from the Forms. For Kant, the intelligibility of the universe comes from the categories imposed on reality by the mind
 - A great skeptic who claims that autonomous reasoning can determine everything in our experience, including what God may or may not do
 - It is the human mind that creates the world out of nothing—essentially, man plays the role as God
 - In finality, Kant’s *Copernican Revolution* is man replacing God: in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and religion—it is the freedom of man that saves us, not the grace of God
- George W.F. Hegel (1770-1831)
 - An idealist. Idealism is the belief where all reality is the mind
 - How can a rationalist philosophy operate credibly? Hegel’s answer: dialectic
 - Refer to Kant’s dialectic, antinomies—arguments in which two opposite conclusions can be proved with equal cogency
 - Hegel proposes we look at the antinomies of life holistically and outside of its being as a controversy—to pursue the truth by way of negation and higher synthesis
 - The Three Stages of Hegel’s dialectical reasoning:
 - Thesis
 - Antithesis
 - Synthesis
 - *Nature*: the antithesis of ideas, an antithesis that led Descartes to posit his sharp mind-body distinction. The two, however, define each other which Descartes failed to realize. “Nature is an idea of ours, and our ideas not true if they are not ideas of something real, something objective, namely, nature” (p.274)
 - *Spirit*: a mind, either human or divine. Ideas are ideas of spirit and nature exists only for spirit. Objective spirit includes law (which governs individual spirits from outside themselves), morality (which governs spirit from within), and ethics (a synthesis between law and morality, governing three spheres, namely family, society, and state)
 - To attain knowledge, one must be omniscient; no one is omniscient. Thus, knowledge is impossible
 - Hegel’s rationalism devolves into irrationalism, like other forms of non-Christian philosophy
- Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860)

- Injected themes into the history of philosophy which influenced profoundly the thought of the later 19th and 20th centuries:
 - The will: the human being is not propelled through life by rational cognition alone. He must choose to behave rationally, and often chooses otherwise
 - The irrational: Schopenhauer's principles of ideas are an example of what Van Til described as the rationalist-irrationalist dialectic: the futile attempt to project rational categories over a meaningless existence. The irrationalist principle prevails
 - Romanticism: embraced the romantic spirit and allowed its intense emotionalism to influence his work
- Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-72)
 - Rejected idealism and embraced materialism
 - Stated the two serious errors of theology
 1. The idea of God is real, existing being, having an existence separate from man
 2. The concept of revelation in which God tells us what to believe and to do. States that authoritarianism injures our moral sense, which cannot function as it should without autonomous freedom
 3. Thinks that the Christian sacraments encourage superstition and immorality
 - Referring back to Anselm's theory: ideas of perfection in our mind entail the real existence of God
 - States that belief in God is based on a questionable psychological process and, therefore, should be rejected—in this case, Feuerbach is blinded to the existence of God due to his bias against Him for a fallible argument
- Karl Marx (1818-83)
 - A young left-wing Hegelian who admired Charles Darwin
 - A determinist like Hegel
 - There is no objective truth or morality. Holds a master-slave economic structure. There is only one right for the advancement of one's class. Thus, the ethics of one class will be opposite to the ethics of the rival class.
 - Regards religion as a barrier to revolution and therefore a barrier to truly radical social change
 - *Marxist Utopia* or *Marxist Eschatology*, dictatorship of the proletariat will cure for the profit motive and people will work in peace for the good of society rather than competition and degradation of each other
 - His philosophy caused for the suffering and death of many he did not intend to as he refused to evaluate his system in moral terms, insisting that he was only presenting an objective scientific account, placed no power limit on the power of the dictatorship of the proletariat, having an eye only for the dialectic, not the actual well-being of the people, and had no conception of the depth of human sin, where rulers are capable of abusing their powers

Nineteenth-Century Theology

- Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834)
 - The image of God in man is the religious feeling, our in alienable God-consciousness
 - Sin is not the violation of a particular command in history, calling the traditional doctrine of original sin “external” and “legalist.”
 - Defines sin as differently: it is “sensuous consciousness” – the feeling of absolute dependence: a preoccupation with the world rather than God and is part of the nature of man, thus it is unavoidable
 - Has been criticized of being a pantheist and hesitates to affirm God’s personality
 - We are saved only through an enhancement of religious feeling, something within us. Not external.
 - To him, Christ shows us that we are like him, and that we can become more like him
 - Does NOT affirm the atonement of sin through penal substitution. Redemption takes place in the present: in our inner subjectivity, our feelings
 - Contributions of themes and principles in the liberal theology:
 1. The principle of Rational Autonomy: speaks of autonomous feeling rather than of autonomous reasoning
 2. Nonpropositional Revelation: revelation is revealed in the broad course of history and in our private subjectivity
 3. Nonbiblical transcendence and Immanence: God cannot be reached. Christ is essentially the archetype of religious feeling
 4. Non-historical Redemption: redemption is a mere metaphor for the development of man’s religious sensibility and the grace of God becomes synonymous with man’s best efforts
 5. Conservative Drift: His in-depth theological understanding and reasoning. Emphasizes that our problem is not with sin, but rather our preoccupation with earthly matters
- Albert Ritschl (1822-89)
 - Theology is an example of conservative drift
 - Rejects traditional doctrines of Christ—his deity, the virgin birth, eternity—as well as Christ’s imputation of righteousness to us.
 - Christ is fully human, thus, we can imitate his righteousness. Therefore, we are capable of sharing Jesus’ divine nature
- Wilhelm Herrmann (1846-1922)
 - There is a contradiction between God’s omnipotence and his personality. God is paradoxical: “God remains hidden to us even when he is near us” (p. 305)
 - Our faith is not based on the study of history, but on our inner religious experience

- Ritschlian theology seeks to maintain a balance between a historical foundation and the personal value judgement (to Hermann, the present experience. But the latter tends to diminish the former)
- Elements of Hermann's view of revelation: history, normative revelation, experience
- Adolf Van Harnack (1851-1930)
 - Like Ritschl, he rejected the metaphysics of reality of the early church dogmas because he thought they were an imposition dogmas because he thought that they were an imposition of Greek philosophy on Christianity
 - Harnack summarizes Jesus' teaching under three heads:
 - Firstly, the kingdom of God and its coming
 - Secondly, God the father and the infinite value of the human
 - Thirdly, the higher righteousness and commandment of love
 - Jesus is not a supernatural being, but the first man to bring the Gospel to light
 - The ultimate goal in his theology is to be an admonition to be like Him, seeking social justice. Nothing more. A theology without gospel
- The Rise and fall of Ritschlianism
 - The Assembly (in 1910, 1916, and 1923) has listed 5 doctrines as the fundamentals of the Christian faith:
 1. The inerrancy of scripture
 2. The virgin birth and deity of Jesus
 3. The doctrine of substitutionary atonement
 4. The bodily resurrection of Christ
 5. The authenticity of Christ's miracles
 - The Auburn Affirmation of 1924 circulated at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, protesting that..
 - The Bible is not inerrant. The supreme guide of scripture interpretation is the Spirit of God to the individual believer and not ecclesiastical authority. Thus, "liberty of conscience" is elevated
 - The general assembly has no power to dictate doctrine to the presbyteries
 - The general assembly's condemnation of those asserting "doctrines contrary to the standards of the Presbyterian Church" circumvented the due process set forth in the Book of Discipline
 - None of the five essential doctrines should be used as a test of ordination. Alternate "theories" of these doctrines are permissible
 - Liberty of thought and teaching, within the bounds of evangelical Christianity is necessary
 - Division is deplored, unity and freedom are commended
 - Scholars such as Johannes Weiss (1863-1914) and Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) showed that it was not possible to present Jesus as the advocate of a liberal social gospel. On the contrary, Jesus was an apocalyptic visionary, and his message consistently eschatological
- Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55)

- Greatly influences twentieth-century neoorthodox theology and philosophical existentialism though is a member in neither of those movements. Stance is undefined and individual
- May be considered to be an extreme nominalist
- The question: how one can become a Christian in Christendom is the question of how one's will can be changed
- Three studies of lifestyle choices: the aesthetic (the person seeks immediate gratification. Leap is referred to the change in behavior), the ethical (we govern our lives by the rules of society), and the religious (we govern our lives based on the basis of an intimate individual relationship to God)
- God cannot be reached through science or philosophy but can be grasped only in passionate inwardness
- Speaks of truth in two senses. The first sense, Aristotelian, in which a true proposition is contrasted with a false one, the objective truth. The second sense is subjective truth, the first quality of the knower, rather than of the objective of knowledge

Nietzsche, Pragmatism, Phenomenology, and Existentialism

- Friedrich W. Nietzsche (1844-1900)
 - An extreme nominalist, like Kierkegaard
 - "The world is in flux, a chaos, upon which we impose our will, in order to achieve our purposes" (p. 330)
 - *Will to power*: the powerful motive in our behavior
 - *The Death of God*: we cannot find universal categories with experience. There is no objectivity and religion cannot have a claim. *Knowing* is an invention of the will. This is freedom.
 - Everything is rooted in hedonism, where we thwart our beliefs and enact behaviors for the sake of satisfying our desires
 - Christianity puts humans to a *slave morality*
 - Marx and Nietzsche both rejected Christianity in opposite ways. Marx saw it as a rich man's religion to keep the poor in their place enticing them with heavenly rewards, while Nietzsche believed that it taught the poor to resent and envy the rich man and his success
 - The *Übermensch* is Nietzsche's ideal human—someone who has overcome the conventional morality of society, especially Christian morality, and created new values for themselves. The *Übermensch* lives authentically, creatively, and with strength of will.
 - At his death, he had compassion on a horse being flogged by his owner in conflict between his own fundamental philosophy and nature: Nietzsche's fundamental philosophy (which champions strength, overcoming, and rejecting pity), and the

natural human response to suffering—empathy, compassion, and emotional vulnerability.

- My personal take: Nietzsche is simply a broken man due to the suffering afflicted to those he loved from of which the origin is sin. He is but another lost soul that longs to be restored to the perfect God and compassionate Father, even if unconsciously, but was withheld of coming to know the truth due to the prevalence of sin that comes through human autonomy as the same mistake of the man, Adam, and Eve
- Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914)
 - Goal was for philosophy to become more like science
 - Beliefs are objectively true or false. But acquiring them is a subjective, psychological process. Doubt is an uneasy state of mind; belief is a corresponding calm or satisfaction
 - *Inquiry*: The struggle to move from doubt to belief
 - Outlines a method referred to as *critical commonsensism*: inquiry guided by common-sense principles which are infallible and good to question them occasionally
 - Identifies the steps of scientific method as follows:
 1. Abduction or retrodution: formulating a relevant hypothesis
 2. Deduction: determining testable consequences that would follow if the hypothesis were true
 3. Induction: actually testing the hypothesis by its practical effects
 - Three categories are necessary to describe all the phenomena of experience (p. 337):
 1. Firstness (experience): qualities such as color and shape—no place for metaphysics, ethics, or God
 2. Secondness (the world): “brute facticity,” the objects that bear these qualities
 3. Thirdness (law): law of nature
- William James (1842-1910)
 - *Genuine option*: “when our intellect cannot solve a genuine option, emotionally we must decide”
 - Our beliefs are justified in many ways not limited to defined experiments and , at times, intense emotions are sufficient to deserve our commitment
 - Under three conditions it is legitimate to go beyond reason and believe in emotion alone
 1. The belief must be a live option
 2. The choice must be forced
 3. It must be momentous
 - According to James and Peirce, practical consequences is an important factor in determining the meaning of terms and the truth of propositions
 - Theories of truth: correspondence, coherence, pragmatic
- John Dewey (1859-1952)

- *Instrumentalism*: Universals and sense data (as in empiricism) are not objects of knowledge, but are *instruments* for solving problems in life
- There are no eternal, normative values. Values change with our situations, problems, and situations
- Believes in the importance of liberal social change and that public schools should turn children away from the traditional ideas of their families and toward views he considered better for society
- Edmund Husserl (1859-1938)
 - Science abstracts some subjective human experience (i.e. art, dreams, emotions, etc.) but it has no right to say that this quantifiable, physical world is “all there is,” as naturalists claims
 - Consciousness includes that everything that goes on in our minds: beliefs, thoughts, ideas, feelings, and the like
 - Few conceptions:
 - Locke thought the extramental material world contained substances, but he found the idea of a material substance very mysterious
 - Kant thought that phenomena were the appearances, or representatives, or realities in the noumenal world. But for him, the noumenal world, the world of things as they really are was unknown and unknowable
 - Husserl believes that the real world is not something behind the phenomena. Phenomena are intentional or referential
 - For the most part, we gain knowledge of our world precisely by taking account all the connections between things in our experience and by recognizing the role that each thing plays in human life
- Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)
 - Heidegger’s deepest concern was to understand Being itself, as the Greek philosophers had investigated the concept. To him, the deepest question is: “Why is there something rather than nothing?”
 - Care has three aspects:
 1. My thrownness into the world by chance, creating relations to many other things, which Heidegger calls facticity
 2. But I have freedom of choice, to determine how I will respond to this situation and its elements
 3. But I am tempted to simply accept thrownness as my fate, rather than acknowledging my freedom to transcend it. Heidegger refers to this as our fallness, and the corresponding life choices inauthentic existence
 - “In the end, we are all thrown into the world by pure chance, deprived of significance by the inevitability of death, so that in the end, nothing really matters.” That is his irrationalism. (p.350)
- Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-80)
 - Essence comes at the end of life, not the beginning. Existence precedes essence, not the reverse as in traditional philosophy and theology
 - Argues that existentialism is the best defender of responsibility

- First, we have no excuses on an existentialist basis. We are never forced to make a radical choice because of our freedom
 - Second, in every choice, I choose a certain image of man
- Regarding the ethical rule of life, Heidegger says we should live authentically. Sartre's argument for this principle is metaphysical, distinguishing human beings and inanimate reality
- What we seek is to be God: that goal is impossible
- We choose to be what we are. We have limits but those limits are chosen. For example, death is a limit insofar as I choose to value life
- Other Existentialists
 - Karl Jaspers (1883-1969):
 - Rejected the term existentialism
 - Self-knowledge reaches a higher level in *limiting situations* (i.e. recognizing our own finitude and our own death), though our finitude opens the possibility of the opposite of finitude
 - Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-61)
 - Puts a special emphasis on the human body, and perception through the body as the beginning of knowledge
 - Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973)
 - Often referred to as a religious existentialist, as he converted to Catholicism in his late thirties
 - Since people are free, we never know certainly what to expect of them. That uncertainty leads us to put our faith in a being of a higher order
 - Albert Camus (1913-60)
 - Emphasizes the absurdity of man, with his demand for rationality and justice, confronting a universe that is entirely indifferent to these demands
- Evaluation
 - "What the study [of existentialism] yields, in the end, is nothing more than Nietzsche's nihilism, whether or not one adopts Nietzsche's cheerful attitude toward it. We see in ourselves a dreadful kind of freedom in which anything can happen. We find in other people hellish challenges in our freedom (p. 357)

Twentieth-Century Liberal Theology, Part 1

- Karl Barth (1886-1968)
 - Theology is highly critical of *neo-Protestantism*, or *modernism* which includes Schleiermacher and the Ritschlian school.. It is, he says, subjectivistic, psychological. It confuses God's voice with man's theology with anthropology. It identifies christianity with culture and treats sin lightly
 - Some have held that Barth is far from orthodox, a substantial threat to traditional Christianity, concealing heretical beliefs beneath orthodox language

- Others saw him as too orthodox, while others viewed that he has yet escaped older liberalism
- The scriptures do not “become true in the church from time to time,” as Barth says. They are true for all times, and the church must attend to them
- Barth has often been accused of confusing... illumination with revelation. Scripture does, on at least two occasions (Matt 11:27; Eph 1:17) describe illumination as a kind of revelation. But this is not Scripture’s usual practice. And scripture never uses this reaching to deny the objectivity of revelation
- Discusses revelation in three categories: the Word as preached, the Word written, and the Word as Christ himself
- Barth saw Scripture as a witness revelation, not identical with it, the key difference from evangelical inerrancy

Where Barth departs from Orthodox Doctrine

Doctrine	Orthodox Christianity	Barth’s View
Scripture	Inspired, infallible, authoritative in all it affirms	Not inherently infallible; becomes God’s Word in the act of God speaking
Revelation	Propositional truth given by God, preserved in Scripture	Primarily a personal event in Christ; propositions are secondary
History & Miracles	Supernatural events in Scripture are real history	Often avoided strict historical claims; focus was theological meaning
Creation & Fall	Historical Adam, real entrance of sin into humanity	Treated Genesis as theological narrative, not necessarily historical record
Universalism	Salvation only for those who repent and believe in Christ	Hoped for universal reconciliation; refused to affirm eternal punishment decisively
Atonement	Penal substitution as central	Christ’s work as decisive reconciliation, but not always framed as wrath-bearing substitution

- Emil Brunner (1889-1966)
 - Often grouped with Karl Barth as part of Neo-Orthodoxy, but like Barth, he came out of a liberal theological background and kept certain elements of it, meaning he never fully aligned with historic evangelical orthodoxy. He is also more skeptical than Barth
 - For the most part, Brunner’s theology does not differ from Barth, but has a distinctive emphasis or perspective, which we may call *personalism*
 - Like Barth, he describes Scripture as a witness to revelation

- Claims that Orthodox or *fundamentalist* Christians are opposed to science, are motivated by fear, lack of any true fellowship or spiritual power
- Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976)
 - Never wrote a systematic theology but became the largest influence on liberal theology in all forms after the heyday of Barth
 - Three areas of greatest influence: Form criticism, Demythologization, Existential Analysis
- Paul Tillich (1886-1965)
 - Creates a method of correlation
 - Tillich's systematic theology:
 1. Reason and revelation
 2. Being and God
 3. Existence and the Christ
 4. Life and spirit
 5. History and the kingdom
 - Autonomy is reason affirming itself without recognizing its depth. Heteronomy is the imposition of an external authority in the name of the depth, such as myth or cult. Tillich thinks that supernaturalism does this. Theonomy resolves the conflict, somewhat in the manner of a Hegelian synthesis. Theonomy is autonomous reason united with its own depth
 - Tillich joins the scores of liberal theologians who have developed arguments against propositional revelation, or, in other words, arguments in favor of autonomous reason
 - Says that God is not a being or else he would be subordinate to being. Nor should we say that he "exists," for he is beyond essence and existence
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45)
 - Bonhoeffer said, "before God and with God we live without God."
 - However, his view of scripture and the miraculous dimensions of biblical events is not different from Barth. And so for Bonhoeffer, as for Barth, theological substance can arise only in a paradoxical way
- The New Hermeneutic
 - Has been used to designate various liberal movements in denominational controversies
 - In recent theology, the phrase generally refers to a movement of Bultmann disciples impressed with the writings of the later Heidegger
- New Quests
 - Bultmann claims that we knew Jesus existed but we don't know who he was
 - Other theologians were not satisfied with this so they did more research on Jesus
 - After a few years' lapse of interest in historical Jesus, another movement that N.T. Wright called *the third quest* arose. Nothing came out of it as expected since it is the authority and authenticity of scripture was not included
- Heilsgeschichte

- Protestant scholastics and pietists, as well as Roman Catholic thinkers, maintained traditions that acknowledged the supernatural and the authority of the Bible
- Read as such a history, the Bible can be called a Heilsgeschichte, “salvation-history” or redemptive history. Some theologians, often called biblical theologians, have used this story as the docs of their theology
- Heilsgeschichte is one of the more conservative academic theological movements of the twentieth century. Christian atheism is the most radical—so much that it is often called simply radical theology
- Christian Atheism
 - The most radical theology, so much so that it is often referred to as radical theology
 - These theologians, whatever their intentions, banished God from both Geschichte and Historie, from the whole world.. Christian atheism is the inevitable fruit of the once-promising movement of existential theology
 - Kant’s noumenal was the Geschichte of the theologians, an area devoid of any propositional truth. Kant’s phenomenal was the theologians’ Historie, an area where not God but human reason was autonomous
- Secular Theology
 - Important figure to note is Harvey Cox
- The Hartford Declaration
 - The declaration lists thirteen “false themes”
 1. Modern thoughts is superior to all past forms of understanding reality, and is therefore normative for Christian faith and life
 2. Religious statements are totally independent of reasonable discourse
 3. Religious language refers to human experience and nothing else, God being humanity’s no bless creation
 4. Jesus can only be understood in terms of contemporary models of humanity
 5. All religions are equally value; the voice among them is not a matter of conviction about truth but only personal preference or lifestyle
 6. To realize one’s potential and to be true to oneself is the whole meaning of salvation
 7. Since what is human is good, evil can adequate be understood as failure to reach human potential
 8. The sole purpose of worship is to promote individual self realization and human community
 9. Institutions and historical traditions are oppressive and inimical to our being truly human; liberation from them is required for authentic existence and authentic religion
 10. The world must set the agenda for the church, social, political, and economic programs to improve the quality of life are ultimately normative for the church mission in the world
 11. An emphasis on God’s transcendence is at least a hindrance to, and perhaps incompatible with, Christian social concern and action

12. The struggle for a better humanity will bring about the kingdom of God
13. The question of hope beyond death is irrelevant or at best marginal to the Christian understanding of human fulfillment

Twentieth-Century Liberal Theology, Part 2

Those described in this chapter (except for the process theologians, a breed apart) are more greatly influenced by Hegel and Marx

- Jorgen Moltmann (1926-)
 - Became acquainted with Ernest Bloch, a Marxist philosopher. Bloch..
 - The author of *The Principle of Hope*
 - Rejected the traditional Marxist eschatology (the dictatorship of the proletariat and the classless society)
 - Agrees with Marx that matter ultimately determines the course of history but rejects the notion that the direction of this process is predetermined
 - “Rejects the God of creation in favor of the god of the future” (p. 417) – sin enables us to be like god, and promotes human autonomy, thus we should engage in it. Uses Genesis to support his view
 - Eschatology means the doctrine of the Christian hope, which ought to be the central category of theology, not merely one topic within it
 - The future is open. Hope is not knowing the future, but accepting it as a gift, being open to whatever happens. Hope is optimistic, not fearful
 - Today we experience an anticipation of God, but not “God himself” as with Brunner
 - As in existentialism, man has no fixed definition in Moltmann’s theology. He is becoming rather than being, and thus he can be understood only from the end of time
 - There is no transcendent sphere of reality in the present in which God may be found. But God is transcendent over us as the future is over the present. He is also immanent in that he is the future of human history. The story of God is the story of human history
 - Renounces absolute ethical norms and embraces a form of ethical utilitarianism (the end justifies the means)
- The Theology of Liberation
 - Liberation theology has become a general name for several different movements: Latin American, African American, feminist
 - Emphasizes that we must be involved in sociopolitical action if we are to rightly understand the scriptures
 - Its ultimate goal is that of Marx: not to understand the world, but to change it
 - Borrows many concepts and much rhetoric from the theology of secularization

- Liberation theologians question why Jesus himself did not engage in political action during his earthly ministry
- The liberationists demand that commitment to Marxist revolution is the presupposition of the theological task, so it requires no “theological permissions”
- Wolfhart Pannenberg (1928-2014)
 - Known for his protestant systematic theology
 - Claims that faith is a commitment that depends on the truth of its object. It is not “theology cognizance, but it does involve believing certain things to be true”
 - Believes that the kingdom did appear in the lifetime of Jesus and his disciples, in the resurrection. For Pannenberg, the resurrection, then, is the key to NT Christology
 - Knitpicks what he believes to be true or false in scripture as with many liberal theologians
 - Believed that Paul’s concept of resurrection comes from the Jewish tradition of a general resurrection at the end of the age, In effect,, Paul believed that in the end of the age had already come in advance–proleptically– in Jesus
- Process Thought
 - Developed in England and America out of a secular metaphysics, and then gradually developed into an approach to theology. It is not built on biblical theology or traditional Christian doctrine
 - Claims that God himself is changing, in process. He responds, therefore, to the changes in the world and adjusts to them. So although he is an absolute necessary being, he is dependent on the world for his concrete nature
 - God and the world affect and change each other..God does not control everything that takes place in the world. Many things happen simply by the free will of actual occasions
 - Process theology is riddled with naturalistic fallacies because it is unclear on the source (or reality) of ethical norms
- Open Theism
 - Similar to process theology in some ways, but emerges from a different background... its arguments are not primarily philosophical, but biblical
 - Leans towards Arminian theological tradition which teaches that
 - Man has libertarian freedom, so God does not control all things
 - God foreknows everything that comes to pass–this, point 2, is important in the doctrine of salvation. Denies Calvinistic theology on God’s choosing of the elect
 - From the author: “If God foreknows everything that happened, he thereby renders every event certain. If God knew in 1931 that I would publish this book in 2015, then it would certainly happen. I would not be free to avoid writing and publishing it”
 - If God foreknows everything, everything that happens must occur and libertarian free will is false. Two solutions: (1) deny libertarian free will (as in Calvinism) or (2) deny exhaustive divine foreknowledge. Open theists choose the second

- This results in the idea that God is dependent on the world in some ways
- Post Liberal Theology
 - George Lindbeck
 - Metatheology: a study of theological method, structure, purpose
 - The third alternative to citrine approach: language; thus, he is able to reject propositional revelation and theology (following the liberal tradition), but also to reject certain theological formulations as “out of order,” which he affirmed by signing the Hartford Declaration
 - Lindbeck’s Perspectives for Theological Speech: Propositional statements, rules for speech and conduct
 - From the author: “doctrine is all three things: propositional truth claims, expressions of the inner experiences of regeneration and sanctification, and rules for the speech and conduct of God’s people”
 - Hans W. Frei
 - Argued that the theologians of the enlightenment had distorted Scripture by trying to adjust it to models that it did not fit: either a textbook of eternal truths or a set of data for critical historians
 - The Bible is a narrative, a story of the dramatic events from creation to consummation
 - Contributed to *Yale Theology*
 - Brevard Childs (1923-2007)
 - Childs’ approach became known as canon criticism, in parallel with source criticism, form criticism, and redaction criticism. But it merges very easily to the concerns of narrative theology, and fills in some “rules” of Lindbeck’s metatheology

Twentieth-Century Language Philosophy

A substance is something that can be denoted by a noun and placed in the subject slot of a sentence. An attribute or property fits into the predicate slot

New emphasis on language has at least two motivations:

1. “To what extent have philosophers simply failed to understand one another?” – it’s a means to clarify philosophical thoughts, statements, and arguments for philosophers to efficiently communicate their ideas for precise comprehension
2. Language is a tantalizing new gateway to the knowledge that philosophy seeks. For example, we better discover “what is” by asking “what can be said?”

These thinkers held that the most important thing in philosophy was clarity about the meaning of expressions. This philosophizing was called *language analysis*, *language philosophy*, or *analytic philosophy*, to distinguish it from the traditional system-building

- G.E. Moore (1873-1958)

- Known as a “philosopher of common sense”
 - Believed that the purpose of philosophy was to remove confusion
- Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)
 - Developed an atomistic philosophy, logical atomism, a reaction against monism of British Hegelianism, the idea that you cannot understand one thing unless you understand the whole of reality
 - Whitehead’s atoms were atomic events. Russell’s were atomic facts
 - Listing the component properties of things would still result in incompleteness , since description of its properties must also be included which may be endless to to the unknown
 - The picture theory language, Russell’s goal to develop a perfect language, one that reflects the nature of the world
- Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)
 - Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus was a work he created. It attempts to establish rigorous limits to meaningful language, consisting of propositions (assertion of facts)
 - As with Hume’s argument that claims, you cannot derive ought from is—you cannot derive ethical obligations from statements of facts. Wittgenstein says, “it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics”
 - The Mystical of Wittgenstein is similar to the noumenal world of Kant...both find it necessary to define the limits of reason so as to exclude metaphysical or religious discussions of morality , God, the soul, and the world as a whole
 - The vienna circle, philosophers and scientists that met in the university of Vienna for Wittgenstein's work on Tractatus
- Logical Positivism
 - Auguste Comte (1798-1857)
 - Considered to be the founder of sociology
 - Divided history into
 1. The theological stage
 2. The metaphysical stage
 3. The positive stage—science prevails over theology and metaphysics
 - Positivism, also referred to as scientism, is the belief that scientific method is the only reliable means of establishing truth. Anything else is nonsense—including metaphysics and mysticism. The only legitimate work of philosophy is to analyze and clarify the language of science
 - Divided language into four categories:
 1. Tautologies, such as “these bachelors are unmarried.” In tautologies, the predicate is included in the meaning of the subject. They are all necessarily true, and we know that they are true by knowing the meanings of the words. So that they are known a priori, and they are analytic rather than synthetic
 2. Contradictions, such as “these bachelors are married.” These are all necessarily false, and we know that they are false by knowing the meaning of the words. Their falsehood, therefore, is known a priori.

3. Empirical propositions, such as “the back fence is white.” This may be either true or false. We cannot determine their truth or falsity merely by the meanings of the terms. Rather, we must have empirical knowledge of the fact in question. So these propositions are synthetic and posteriori. Those in this category believe that this conveys factual information, referring to themselves as logical empiricist
 4. Emotive language, a catch-all category for every kind of language not covered by categories 1-3, including commands, questions, and poetic expression. The term is a misnomer, for language in this category does not necessarily communicate emotion, and that is not necessarily its purpose
 - The verification principle: the only propositions of class are “cognitively meaningful” or “empirically meaningful,” and therefore, capable of stating truth or falsity—more radical than the atheists of Nietzsche, Russell, and Sartre
- Other Philosophies of Science
 - Henry Poincare (1854-1912)
 - Pierre Duhem (1861-1916)
 - John Dewey (Chapter 9)
 - Percy Bridgman (1882-1961)
 - Arthur Eddington
 - Gordon H. Clark (1902-85)
 - Michael Polanyi (1889-1976)
 - Thomas Kuhn (1922-96)
 - Ordinary-Language Philosophy
 - Other Analytic Philosophers
 - Gilbert Ryle (1900-1976): wrote the concept of mind
 - Peter Strawson (1919-2006): wrote individuals: an essay in Description
 - J. L. Austin (1911-60): developed the theory of speech acts
 - John Searle (1932-): Carried on Austin’s program with his Speech Acts: An Essay in the in the Philosophy of Language
 - Willard Van Orman Quine (1908-2000): emerged from the logical positivism
 - Structuralism
 - Began with Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), also known to be the father of linguistics
 - Claude Levi-Strauss (1908-2009): extended Saussure’s structural linguistics to the field of anthropology
 - Poststructuralism, Deconstruction, Postmodernism
 - Noam Chomsky (1928-): the inventor of generative grammar, wrote Cartesian Linguistics, which distinguishes the surface structure of language from the deep structure, associated with body and mind
 - Jacques Derrida (1930-2004): pointed out that for Saussure, the meaning of every sign involves every other. So no meaning is every fully available to us
 - Michel Foucault (1926-84): emphasized, knowledge is power and everyone uses his speech to dominate others

- Poststructuralism and deconstruction (the gradual reduction of Saussure's linguistics into a form of skepticism) join forces with post-modernism, a broad cultural trend

Recent Christian Philosophy

- Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920)
 - Commonly called "Father Abraham" and "Abraham the Mighty"
 - Ecclesiastical issues concerned Kuyper much during the 1880 and '90s. The reformed church suspended him and others from the ministry in 1886 for insisting on confessional
 - Believes that every faith community should have rights, including the right to have their own schools, newspapers, hospitals, etc.
 - Nor is any other human endeavor or discipline religiously neutral. That includes science. In his three-volume Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology, Kuyper expounds at length his view that science must take into account "the fact of sin"
- Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977)
 - Developed a *Philosophy of the Creation Idea*
 - God's Word also transcends the temporal order. It is not identical with either God or the cosmos, so it forms a kind of third reality, intermediate between the two
 - The Christian heart is governed by the ground motive of creation, fall, and redemption which summarizes the story of Scripture. But fallen thinkers embrace other alternatives
 - Insists that our reading of Scripture must be directed by his philosophical system, which the author, Frame, regards it as a philosophical imperialism
- Gordon H. Clark (1902-85)
 - One of the first thinkers to be called a presuppositionalist
 - Epistemology is holistic based on apprehension of a whole system of truth
 - Believes he can show that there are no logical contradictions at all in the Christian faith. Some Christians have said that there are "apparent" contradictions or "paradoxes" in Christian theology. But Clark's is contemptuous of those alternatives
 - Clark assumes that God's perfect logic is identical with some system of human logic. This assumption, however, is unreasonable. Human beings make mistakes in logic in many other things
 - Believes that all truth is propositional: we can have knowledge of propositions—that is, of facts—but not of things. So his view of revelation is opposite to those of the liberal theologians
- Cornelius Van Til (1895-1987)
 - Van Til believed with Warfield that objective truth about God was available to all through revelation. So he believed that objective truth about God was available to all through revelation. So he believed that a cogent case could be made for the truth of Christianity

- Urged the creator-creature distinction as fundamental not only to Christian metaphysics, but to epistemology as well. For him, all facts are preinterpreted by God
 - Puts an emphasis on presuppositions in human knowledge
 - “We should insist that God’s revelation is the only source of meaning and rationality in the world. To deny his revelation leads to chaos and irrationality” (p. 535)
- Alvin Plantinga (1928-)
 - Basic beliefs do not establish standards of rationality. Rather, they share with all other human beliefs the quality of defeasibility: they can be overcome by competing beliefs, evidence, and argument.
 - Perspectives of Plantinga’s Epistemology: environment, design plan, production of beliefs within my mind
 - Writes as if revelation were irrelevant to philosophical discourse
 - Urged Christian philosophers to take their faith into account in their philosophical work: their choice of mentor, models, methods, and so on
- Other Christian Language-Analysis Philosophers in North America
 - Nicholas Wolterstorff (1928-)
 - William P. Alston (1921-2009)
 - George Mavrodes (1926-)
 - Kevin J. Vanhoozer (1957-)
 - Younger philosophers and apologists: James Anderson, John Barber, Bruce Baugus, William Edgar, William Davis, Paul Manata, K. Scott Olin, James K. A. Smith and Greg Welty
- British Christian Philosophers
 - C.S. Lewis (1898-1963):
 - A popular writer but has also worked with philosophers
 - Alasdair MacIntyre (1929-):
 - Known for his work: *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*
 - Richard Swinburne (1934)
 - Advocates an open-theist view of God’s eternity and omnipresence
 - Paul Helm
 - developed the best recent arguments for God’s existing outside time, Eternal God, and for Calvinist understanding of divine providence, *The Providence of God*
- Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy (1888-1973)
 - Emphasized the importance of language
- Radical Orthodoxy (RO)
 - RO seeks to rethink not only theology, but all of life from a Christian perspective
 - Started with the book *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reasons* by John Milbank (1952-), inspired by the work *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*
 - RO’s opponent is secularism, the movement called modernism by the postmodern writers. The RO writers draw on post-modernism critique of the

modernist mentality, but their standpoint is the Christian Orthodoxy of the ecumenical creeds

- Anglo-Catholicism, Reno says, for all its love of tradition, finds itself in presently liberal denominations in which the formulation of an authentic Christian tradition requires some creativity
- Esther Lightcap Meek (1953)
 - A Christian philosopher who wrote many books, such as *Longing to Know* and *The Philosophy of Knowledge for Ordinary People*
- Vern S. Poythress (1946-)
 - A friend of the author noted a correspondence between the Tagmemic linguistic system of Kenneth Pike and the multiperspectival analysis; Pike's linguistics made use of word meanings—the *particle view* identifies the characteristics of each word that distinguish it from others. The *wave view* describes the changes that a word can undergo while remaining the same word. The *field view* describes the contexts in which a word normally functions
 - Developed the vision of Kuyper and Van Til: that when human study begins with God and seeks to see everything in the light of God's revelation, that study leads us to the greatest level of understanding and the most satisfying resolutions of problems
- Epilogue

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