

Lesson 7: Medieval Theologians – Anselm and Aquinas

Scholastic Theology – Two Italian Monks

Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109)

Monk at Bec in Normandy, then Archbishop of Canterbury – both under Norman control

*An **archbishop** is a bishop over bishops (under the pope), just as a bishop is priest over priests.*

Canterbury – where Augustine the missionary brought Roman Catholicism to England (6th century)

King William Rufus – king of England, son of William the Conqueror, fights Anselm over lay investiture

Scholasticism – the systematizing of the faith by applying logic to sentences of theology (e.g. Peter Lombard)

Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) – the “Dumb Ox”

Benedictine education – Dominican monk (detained by family) – taught often at the University of Paris

*The idea of a university is that **all knowledge** fits together under **theology**, the queen of the sciences.*

Since the late 1800s, Thomism has been the officially studied theology of Roman Catholicism.

Four Views of Faith and Reason – Etienne Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*

Tertullian – Faith Only (“What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem?”)

Augustine – Faith Seeking Understanding (Isaiah 7:9 LXX, “Unless you believe, you shall not understand”)

Anselm too based his logical method on Augustine: *credo ut intelligam* (“I believe in order to understand”).

Aquinas – Reason unto Faith (Aristotle’s philosophical categories)

Averroës – Reason Only (Islamic philosopher – not a Christian position at all)

Faith and Reason

Must I be given the answers (by faith)? Or is there something I can learn about God on my own (by reason)?

Anselm	The Scriptures	Aquinas
<p>The Painting Like matching colors, God’s ways are appropriate, like a beautiful painting. But are we painting on a canvas or on a cloud?</p> <p>Logical Demonstration Logic proves the necessity of things being the way they are. By reducing all questions to A or not-A, we can prove things must exist.</p> <p>Faith Seeking Understanding We assume the faith and then show its logical consistency to skeptics.</p>	<p>The Altar to the Unknown God Athens knew about God, but they did not know God. Why not?</p> <p>Suppressed Truth Natural man suppresses the truth about God due to pride and sin. Therefore, his knowledge of God is twisted and not trustworthy.</p> <p>The Fear of the Lord “You are God. I am not.” “You know. I do not know.” <i>Here’s the beginning of knowledge!</i> God is personal and must be known personally in conversation.</p>	<p>The Ladder Although wounded, natural reason can know some things about God by inference. Once these things are known, revelation is needed to know more. Therefore, faith builds upon reason (natural theology).</p> <p>Natural Knowledge Pagan philosophers had some knowledge about God.</p> <p>Two Disciplines Philosophy and theology are not separated, but they are distinct. <i>Towards the fact-value split...</i></p>
<p>The Ontological Proof “God is that than which nothing higher can be conceived.”</p> <p><i>Like a geometry proof:</i> Because existence is higher than non-existence, God must exist.</p>	<p>The Direct Experience of God “He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.” —Acts 14:17</p>	<p>The Five Ways <i>Like scientific inference:</i> Prime Mover First Cause Necessary Being Perfect Being Designer</p>

The Incarnation: Why did God become man?

Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*

Ans. For life (against corruption) and knowledge (against idolatry and to restore the image of God).

Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*

Ans. To satisfy divine justice—not just the *retribution* due to sin, but the *restitution* due to God’s honor.