

Faith
and
Reason

What is Faith?

Meanings from the *Oxford English Dictionary*

(1) a set of propositions that one believes

“The Jewish faith”

(2) a relationship to a belief

“I believe that God exists on faith alone”

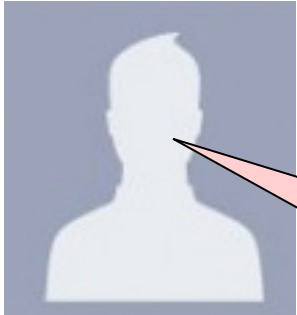
(3) a relationship to an individual

“I have faith in Ed” (that he will keep his word, etc.)

(4) an attitude towards life

To be willing to act in the face of uncertainty, hopeful that things will work out.

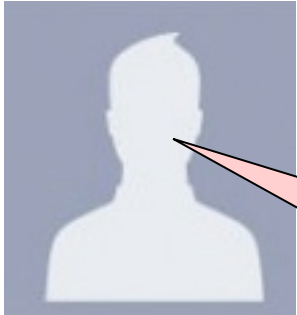
What is Faith?



Author of Hebrews
(1st c. CE)

Faith is being sure of
what we hope for and
certain of what we do
not see. (Hebrews 11:1)

What is Faith?

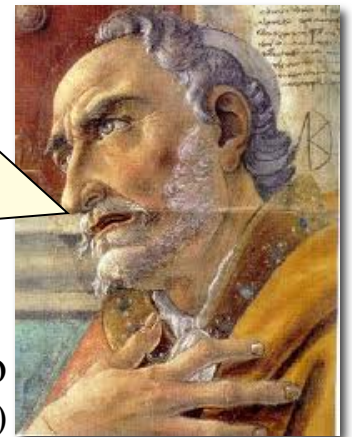


Author of Hebrews
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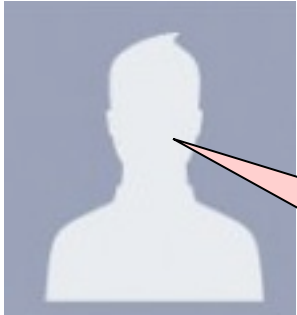
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but believe that you may
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Augustine of Hippo
(354-430)

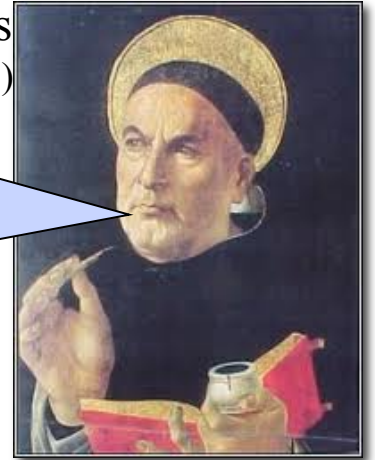


What is Faith?



Author of Hebrews
(1st c. CE)

Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)



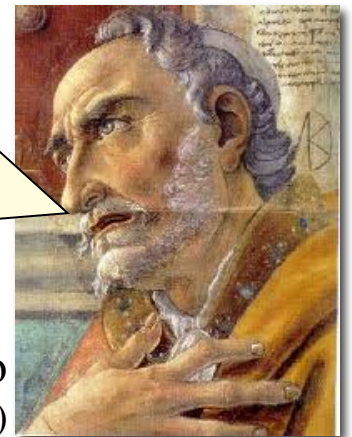
Believing something on faith means believing it to be true because God says it is true.

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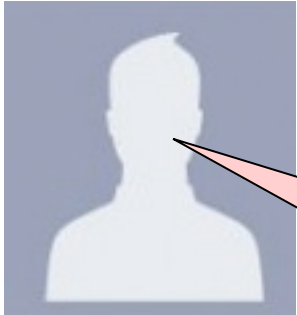
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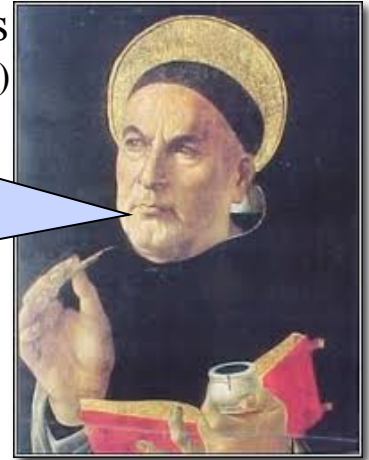


What is Faith?



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Believing something on faith means believing it to be true because God says it is true.

Faith begins precisely where thinking leaves off.

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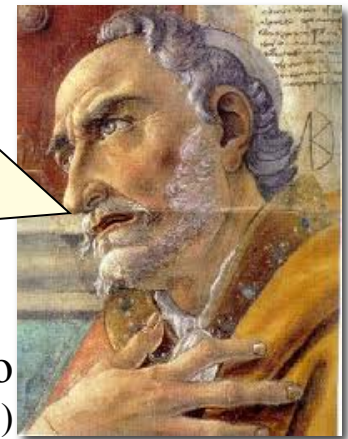
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Soren Kierkegaard
(1813-1855)

Augustine of Hippo
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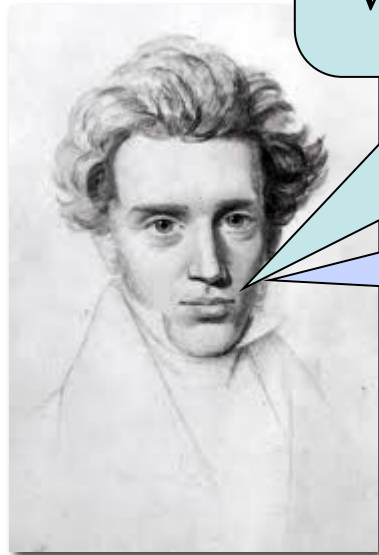


What is Faith?

We cannot know in these matters what is true or false; we must simply choose to believe and to make this belief our own. We must take a leap of faith.

Faith begins precisely where thinking leaves off.

Take the leap of faith!



Soren Kierkegaard
(1813-1855)

Fideism
is the belief that truth in religion is ultimately based on faith rather than on reasoning or evidence.

Small Group Discussion

Believing something on faith means believing it to be true because God says it is true.

Given this definition of faith, which of the following statements might one “believe on faith”?

- (1) Jesus is the Son of God.
- (2) The world was created in time.
- (3) The *Bible* is the word of God.
- (4) God exists.

Quinas
(1165-1274)



How are Faith and Reason Related?

(1) Does faith *correct* reason? (Augustine)

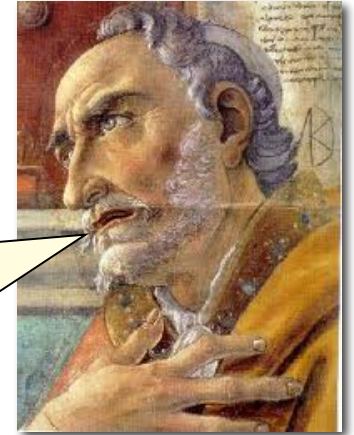
or

(2) Does faith *supplement* reason? (Aquinas)

How are Faith and Reason Related?



Reason helps us discover credible authority but, once found, reason must submit to this authority.

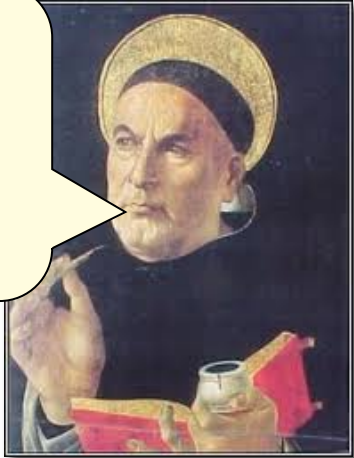


Augustine of Hippo
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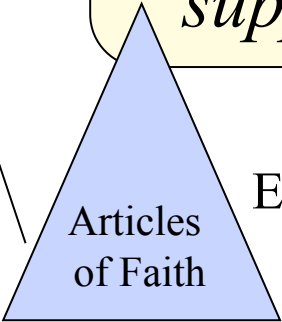
How are Faith and Reason Related?

There is a two-fold truth to religious claims. Faith *supplements* human reason.



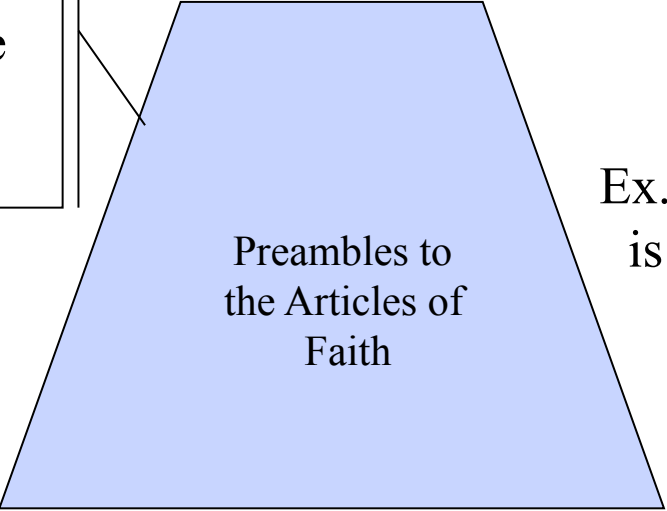
Thomas Aquinas
(1225-1274)

Knowable only by faith; reason can elucidate, but not prove.



Ex.: that the universe was created in time; that God is triune.

Knowable through reason.



Ex.: that God exists; that God is the cause of the universe.

Revelation!

Two Kinds of Revelation

General: available to all.



Special: available to some.



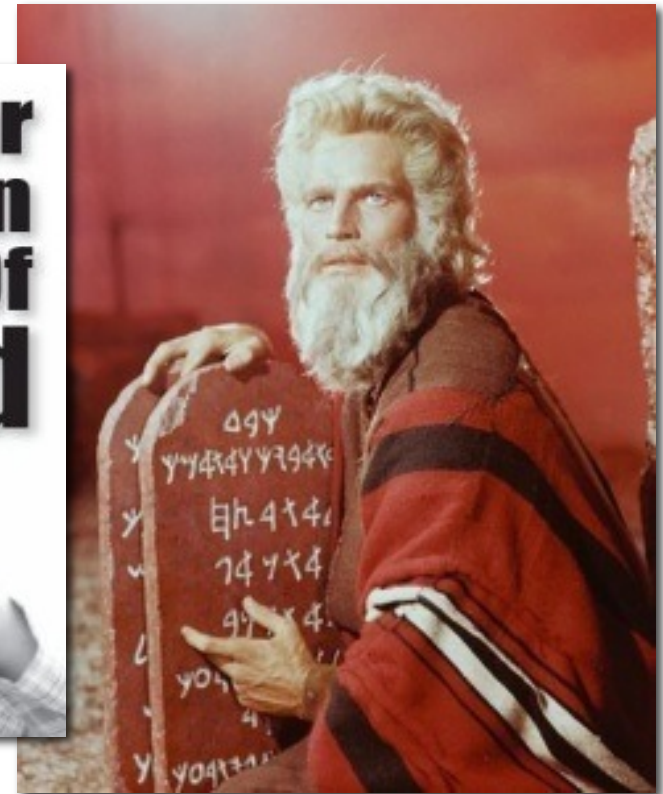
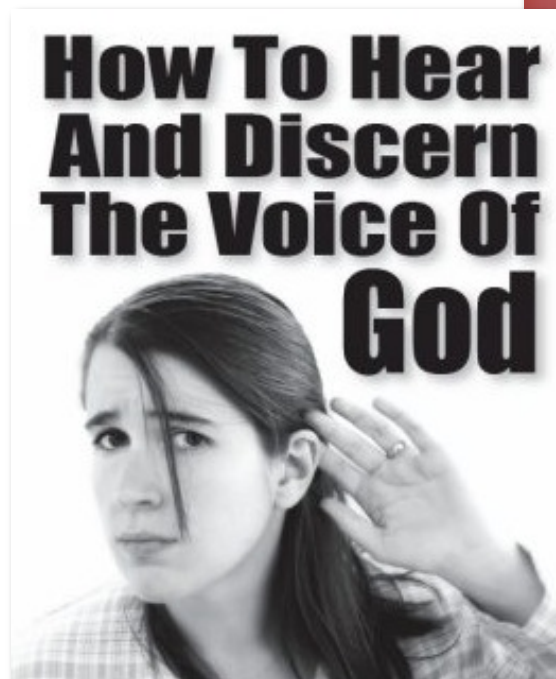
General Revelation

General Revelation: given directly to *all* people, typically through nature and with the help of reason.



Special Revelation

Special Revelation: given directly to one person or group, as found in scripture, prophecy, divine inspiration.



Special Revelation in Texas

Mother Who Killed Sons with Rock Found Not Guilty

Sun Apr 4, 8:45 AM ET (2004)

TYLER, Texas (Reuters) - A Texas woman who beat two of her sons to death with a rock and badly injured another because she believed God told her to do it was found not guilty by reason of insanity on Saturday.

A jury of eight men and four women deliberated for nearly seven hours before reaching their verdict.

Deanna Laney, 39, broke down in tears and shook when state judge Cynthia Kent read the jury's decision in the hushed courtroom in the eastern Texas city of Tyler.

She could have faced life in prison if convicted, but instead will go to a state mental institution until the judge decides she is well enough to be released. [...]

Religion, Revelation, and Morality

If God should really speak to man, man could still never know that it was God speaking.



Sacrifice of Isaac (1603)
Caravaggio (1571-1610)



Immanuel Kant
(1724-1804)

Religion, Revelation, and Morality

It is quite impossible for man to apprehend the infinite with his senses, distinguish it from sensible beings, and recognize it as such.

... speak to
... all never
... God

... ing.



Sacrifice of Isaac (1603)
Caravaggio (1571-1610)



Immanuel Kant
(1724-1804)

Religion, Revelation, and Morality

It is quite impossible for man to

But in some cases man can be sure that the voice he hears is not God's. If the voice commands him to do something contrary to the moral law, then no matter how majestic the apparition may be, and no matter how it may seem to surpass the whole of nature, he must consider it an **illusion**.



Sacrifice of Isaac (1603)
Caravaggio (1571-1610)



Immanuel Kant
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Natural and Revealed Religion

Natural religion is the set of religious beliefs that can be known **through reason alone** as it reflects on the phenomena of nature.

Revealed religion is the set of religious beliefs that can be known **only through God's special revelation**, either scripture or mystical insight.

Natural and Revealed Religion

Deism: the believe that natural religion is adequate for one's salvation; special revelation is unnecessary or even deceptive and harmful.

Some Famous Deists:

(in America) Ben Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine

(in France) Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau

(in Germany) Leibniz, Lessing, Kant

Three Words that Sound almost the Same

Fideism

is the belief that truth in religion is ultimately based on faith rather than on reasoning or evidence.

Deism

is the belief that natural religion is adequate for salvation; rejects special revelation.

Theism

is the belief that God exists.

Latin: *fides* (faith), *deus* (God). Greek: *theos* (God)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

(1712-1778)

“Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts” (1750)

“Discourse on Inequality” (1755)

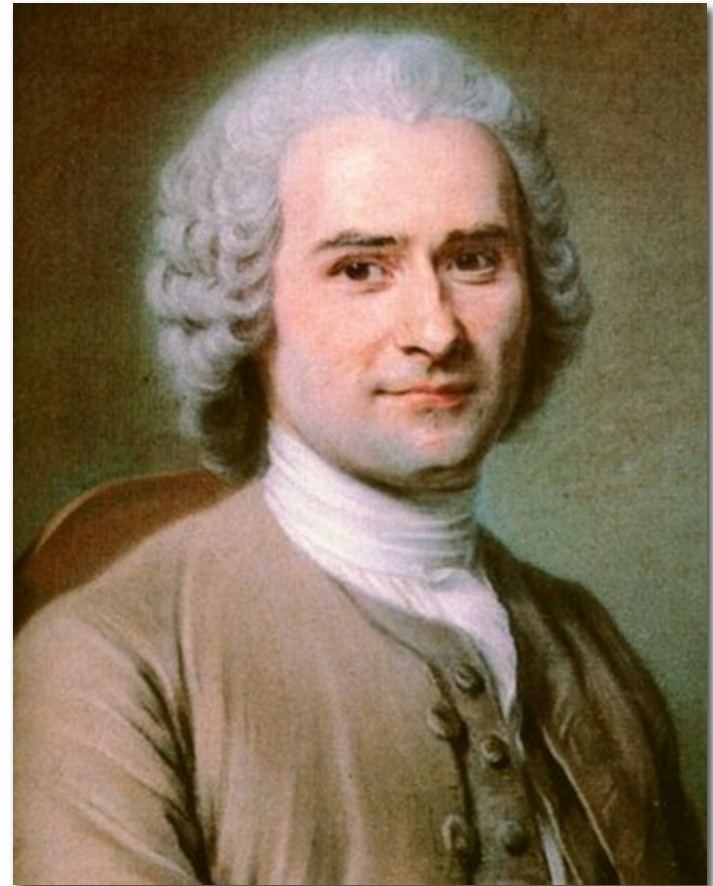
“Discourse on Political Economy” (1755)

***The New Heloise* (1761)**

***The Social Contract* (1762)**

***Émile* (1762)**

***Confessions* (1783)**



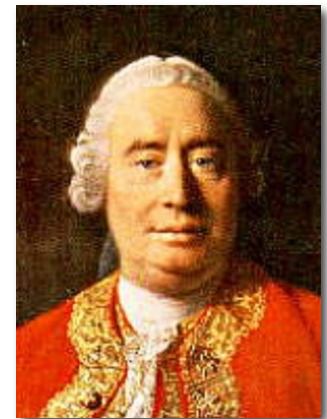
“Man is born free, and everywhere is in chains.”

David Hume on Miracles

“No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish.”

Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (1748),
§10 (“Of Miracles”).

David Hume
1711-1776



Proving God's Existence

Three Propositional Attitudes

Theism

Belief in P

P = "God exists."

Atheism

Disbelief in P

Agnosticism

Withholding judgment about P

Three Philosophical Attitudes

Philosophical Theism

The view that P can be proven

Philosophical Atheism

The view that P can be disproven

Philosophical Agnosticism

The view that P can be neither proven nor disproven

Proving God's Existence

A priori proofs [ontological]

All of the premises can be known prior to experience.

A posteriori proofs [cosmological, teleological/design]

At least one premise is based on experience.

Proofs of God's Existence

Ontological

The meaning of the word 'God' includes existence.

Cosmological

The existence of the world requires a creator.

Teleological/Design

The purpose/design of the world requires a designer.