

Introduction to Philosophy - 1000

Author: **Jonathan P Peto**

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Weekly Post 9

Why does Aquinas believe that Christianity requires both faith and reason? Do you think that faith and reason can exist side-by-side? Is it contradictory to claim that an article of faith can have a rational basis, or does the fact that it has reasonable grounding mean that the belief is not an article of faith?

Author: **Steve R Matson**

Posted on: **10-29-10**

RE: Weekly Post 9

Aquinas believes that our ability to understand is not possible without faith. Faith provides us the ability to understand fully and is a necessary condition for productive philosophical inquiry. Faith and reason can and must exist side-by-side. Reason not tempered by faith can result in sterile logic devoid of human feeling and compassion. Faith does not negate reason but enhances reason. I find the constant battle between science and religion, (reason and faith) archaic and irrational. There must be a more balanced approach as we search for fundamental answers.

How can one call themselves a philosopher that is unfettered by bias allowing inquiry and logic to take its own course, only to begin the journey seeing the world through "there is no god" or "there is a God" spectacles. Isn't ones destination predetermined, or at best, skewed if one holds to either premise before the journey even begins?

If I believe there is no God, I will not see God in anything.

or

If I believe in God, I will see God in everything.

Shouldn't a true philosopher say "I will withhold my opinion on this matter because there is not enough evidence to definitively prove or disprove the existence of God"? "Let my pursuit of truth and knowledge take its course and let the evidence speak for itself."

No, it is not contradictory to say that an article of faith can have a rational basis. A seeker of knowledge does not depend solely upon faith to believe in God, but confirms their faith not only through biblical or scriptural text, but through extra-biblical historical records, archaeological evidence, and geographical evidence. Likewise, a person grounded in reason alone must also consider that there are things unexplained by the rational mind. Though the expanse of human knowledge continues to grow, we quickly find our species standing at the precipice of the unknown, looking into the black void of what we do not know or understand.

I personally believe faith, in a more general sense, is the catalyst for seeking truth and knowledge. Faith stirs the soul, heart, and mind of man to pursue truth and reason allows us to properly evaluate our findings.

Author: **Jonathan P Peto**

Posted on: **10-30-10**

RE: Weekly Post 9

Excellent post! You make a good point that one should start without a biased view. The tricky part is how to proceed from there. Do you only appeal to reason and evidence? Specifically, when does faith come in and does/should it play more than the role of stirring things up?