

What Am I Doing in Arguing Theologically?

1. Given the two criteria (or the twofold criterion) of theological adequacy, I am evidently doing two things in arguing theologically: (1) seeking to establish the *appropriateness* of my claims; and (2) seeking to establish their *credibility*, i.e., their meaning and truth.

2. But insofar as I am concerned to do the second, I am trying so to connect my claims with what must be intuitively granted as true as to make the rejection of what is thus intuitively granted the price of rejecting my claims. Thus, for example, if the issue is the foundational issue of the existence of God, I am trying to show that, whether one begins with the concept of God itself (as in the ontological argument), or with any other concept comparably general (as in all of the other theistic arguments), the price of denying God's existence is the inability to employ such general concepts in a clear and consistent way. In other words, I am trying to show that *all* completely general concepts necessarily imply that the concept of God has to apply to something real.

3. What must be kept in mind, of course, is that *faith in God*, in the sense of trust in and loyalty to God alone as the ultimate meaning of my life, is one thing, while *belief in God*, in the sense of somehow affirming God's existence in affirming or denying anything whatever, something else. The most that any argument for the existence of God can possibly establish is that one must perforce believe in God, since the only alternative to such belief is either absurdity or indifference toward the clarity and consistency of one's beliefs. But no argument can culminate in faith in God, since faith in God and unfaith in God alike go beyond the conclusion of argument, as the concrete goes beyond the abstract.

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