

I find Hartshorne's discussion of "the role of faith" in connection with the ontological argument (*AD*: 53 f.) confusing, if not also confused.

At one point, he speaks of "an element of faith" perhaps (*sic!*) being needed to dispel doubt whether the idea of God is genuinely conceivable, or whether "God" has a cognitive meaning. At another point in the next paragraph, however, he says that the moment the theist is faced with the same issue of whether God is genuinely conceivable, the theist must either lapse into silence or enlarge his procedure by giving "some reason other than his faith" for supposing that divinity is conceivable. Maybe there is some way in which these two statements can be interpreted so as to be consistent. But, *prima facie*, they seem to be saying that an element of faith may be needed to do something that something other than faith is needed to do.

No less confusing to me is his further statement that, in resolving the issue of whether the grammar that theology properly provides is correct, "an element of intuition, faith, insight, what you will beyond mere formal reasoning, is inescapable." Here, again, he seems to argue that an element of faith is necessary to resolve the issue. But unless this means, simply, that I'm not likely to find a grammatical analysis of meaning convincing that doesn't, in some way, confirm, even as it is confirmed by, my own experience (cf. what he says on this point later on 59), this seems to assign faith a role that it can hardly play. That my faith commits me to believe that what I believe by faith at least makes sense isn't the least reason to infer that it, in reality, does make sense—whence Hartshorne's other (and, to my mind, entirely correct) comment that the theist has nothing to say in response to the challenge of the meaningfulness of her or his belief unless she or he can give "some reason other than [her or] his faith."

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