

1. There is always an immediate, albeit dim and all but unconscious, perception of God, in that there is always such a perception of the encompassing whole of reality of which we perceive ourselves and others to be parts.

2. There is also always a basic faith in God, in that there is always a basic faith in the order of the world; in the appropriateness and validity of ideals of truth, goodness, beauty, and so on; and in the ultimate meaning or significance of life lived in accordance with (or contrary to) these ideals.

3. But thus to perceive God or to have a basic faith in God is one thing, while to perceive God or to have a basic faith in God *as* God, is something else.

4. The function of all so-called proofs of, or arguments for, God's existence is to justify perceiving God or having a basic faith in God *as* God.

5. Such proofs or arguments can succeed, however, only insofar as a clear distinction is made between the transcendental and so strictly literal idea of God as the universal individual and the categorial and so merely symbolic idea of God as the supreme person—the proofs or arguments succeeding in establishing the existence of God as conceived by the second idea only in that they succeed in establishing the existence of God as conceived by the first.

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