

# AQUINAS VS. KANT



# PRINCIPLE ARGUMENTS FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

- **Ontological Argument:** formulated early on by Augustine...we'll look at this argument later. It as an argument for God from Being.
- **Cosmological Argument:** reasoned from the world/cosmos back to God...based on the Law of Causality.
- **Teleological Argument:** from the Greek word *telos*, meaning “end, or purpose, or goal.” This is an argument from Design....from purpose and order
- **Moral Argument:** which I'll come to later in the course.

# KANT: *A CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON*

- Because Kant saw that Christianity had degenerated too much into a dependency upon human reason and not enough on faith....**so he gave a critique for the arguments for the existence of God.**
- Now, at the heart of this critique, (he, himself, affirmed the existence of God)...but Kant said that you cannot know the existence of God from Natural Reason....
- Therefore, Kant's critique was an attack against Natural Theology!

# KANT'S TWO REALMS

- Kant said there were two realms:
  1. Noumenal Realm (metaphysical realm): here he placed 2 concepts:
    - God
    - Self
    - Essences
  2. Phenomenal Realm (the world/universe/physical)
- For Kant the question is Epistemological...that is the questions is: “can we KNOW anything about the existence of these realities or if in fact they exist at all thru Scientific inquiry??”

# KANT: A CRITIQUE OF PRACTICAL REASON

- Now, at the same time Kant said in his *Critique of Practical Reason* that for PRACTICAL purposes, we must live as though there is a God....we must believe there is a God in order for civilization to be possible ....
- Because the God Hypothesis, as we'll see later, is for meaningful Ethics.....and if we don't have a meaningful ethic, we can't have an enduring civilization, according to Kant...and all things otherwise would degenerate into anarchy.

# THE CRISIS THAT ENSUED...

- In any case, with this skepticism, Christianity reached a crisis...
- And many theologians and apologists after Kant's critique...turned away from the Classical synthesis of Aquinas and away from Natural Theology and turn toward that is called **Fideism**.
- Fideism, based on the word for 'faith', means that we take the idea of God on faith....thru some kind of 'Leap of Faith'...

# KANT VS. PAUL

- We've already looked at the Romans 1, where Paul declares that the invisible things of God, even His eternal power and deity, are known thru the things in that are made...in the Natural realm or Phenomenal realm.
- So what Paul is saying is that we CAN get to the Noumenal realm from the Phenomenal realm....
- So if there really is a barrier between this world and the world of God...if Kant is right...then the unbeliever has an excuse for not embracing the truth of God and His existence...the excuse of ignorance that he just didn't know.
- So...what we have here is an irreconcilable difference between the teaching of the Apostle Paul and Kant.
- So, I look at that as a Christian and say....'Well, if Paul is right then Kant is inherently wrong...and if Kant is right, then Paul is inherently wrong.'