In Defence of Reason in Religion

In his article, «In Defense of Reason in Religion,» Jones reacts to current trends to minimize the role of reason in religion by attempting to show that if religionists desire their religious beliefs to correspond to knowledge, the noetic tool most likely to achieve this goal is reason. This he does by reviewing the leading epistemological approaches to metaphysical knowledge, and showing that each relies to some extent on reason. He further argues that all of them must utilize reason if they wish to attempt to critically verify their findings. Then he argues that religious knowledge is a type of metaphysical knowledge. He shows that the leading approaches to obtaining religious knowledge parallel the various approaches to metaphysical knowledge, and have similar reliance on reason. Even in the case of supernatural revelation, reason is used in identifying and interpreting the revelation. Therefore, Jones concludes, «reason is the primary mechanism for obtaining religious knowledge.»

Introduction

The religions of humanity are a multi-splendored thing. The diversity of human cul ture both in history and at this present time has produced a correspondingly diverse array of religious beliefs. Some beliefs are ubiquitous among the world's religions. Many beliefs supplied by one religion are complimentary to the beliefs of other religions, supplying theological information which may be missing or overlooked by the latter religions. At times even the beliefs of different religions which seem to contradict each other may be shown to be merely different perceptions of the same reality, brought about by differing cultural contexts.1

At other times theologians and philosophers of religion are unable to achieve reconciliation between conflicting truth claims of different religions. There are times when the acceptance of conflicting truth claims from two religious systems would constitute a violation

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of the principle of non-contradiction. In such cases only one of the competing claims can be true. Furthermore, many thinkers openly oppose the truth claims of all religion, positing various doctrines of irreligion as truth.

The dilemma of how one determines which truth claim is in fact true is the subject of this paper. Various mechanisms for obtaining religious knowledge have been suggested and applied during the long history of religion. The thesis of this paper is that reason is the primary mechanism for obtaining religious knowledge\theological truth. Furthermore, this paper will support the belief that reason is the most reliable mechanism for obtaining religious knowledge; that is, religious beliefs acquired using reason are the religious beliefs which are the most likely to be true.

Every thinker has epistemological assumptions, this writer included. These assumptions include some very important beliefs about the proper nature of a noetic structure. While this paper is not intended as an essay on epistemology, the subject at hand is very epistemological. The writer believes that the mechanism of acquiring knowledge which is recommended in this paper is compatible with a variety of noetic structures, including varieties of foundationalism and coherentism.

Discussion

I. The concept of knowledge distinguished from the concepts of belief and faith.

A. Belief

Antony Flew defines 'belief' as, "The epistemic attitude of holding a proposition 'p' to be true..." and makes the important observation that "...while knowing 'p' would generally be considered to entail, among other things, that 'p' is true, believing 'p' is consistent with the actual falsity of 'p'".2 A persons' beliefs may be held on a variety of psychological basis. One might believe a proposition without the slightest evidence for the truthfulness of that proposition.

B. Faith

Discussions of religious knowledge often assume the form of a contrast between 'faith' and 'reason'. Reason has been defined as "...the natural ability of the human mind to discover truth."3 This definition seems adequate. Crafting a definition of faith is more difficult. Voltaire used two definitions for faith, one for belief in things which he (Voltaire) personally believed and another for belief in things which he deemed incredible.4 This definitional dichotomy points toward the tension that underlies the faith/reason contrast. This tension arises from an important question regarding religious knowledge: is it possible to obtain knowledge of the metaphysical without utilizing reason?

The Reformation view of faith seems to adequately describe the necessary components of faith; understanding, assent, and trust.5 Thus faith is trust in something (or someone) which is believed (believed in).6 If, as Flew pointed out (above), beliefs can be held regardless of the truthfulness of the proposition believed,

there is a strong possibility that a person of faith may be trusting something which is not, in fact, true.

C. Knowledge

Knowledge may be defined as 'apprehension of truth'.7 When taken in this sense, knowledge is that set of beliefs in which the propositions which are believed are in fact true. A person may not be able to distinguish between those of his beliefs which constitute knowledge and those which are erroneous, but this distinction is of great theoretical importance. If a persons' faith is based upon knowledge it will not be the case that person is trusting something which is not, in fact, true.

D. Significance

Much of the discussion concerning faith and reason has centered around the justifiability (or rationality) of beliefs. But, as George Mavrodes points out, "...claiming a belief to be rational...isn't really claiming much...." A belief can be rationally justifiable and the proposition believed still be false.8 What most people want to know is whether a proposition is true; whether their beliefs constitute knowledge; whether their faith is grounded in truth. This paper is not concerned with how people form the subjective opinions which are commonly called beliefs. This paper is concerned with what is the most reliable mechanism for acquiring knowledge. People utilize many methods of belief formation, often without intentionally patronizing one method or another.

But not all methods are created equal. Because knowledge acquisition involves belief formation, the intent of this paper is to defend a mechanism of belief formation which is designed to maximize objectivity and therefore increase the likelihood that one's beliefs will qualify as knowledge.

II. Reason is the principle mechanism for obtaining knowledge of the metaphysical.9

A. The Many Ways of Obtaining Knowledge

Many methods of acquiring knowledge have been suggested in the course of philosophical history. The most significant are discussed below, with the exception of scepticism, which is more a method of questioning beliefs. Each method emphasizes one mechanism of knowledge acquisition. Often, the competing methods have been portrayed by their advocates as mutually exclusive. More recently the trend has been toward combining approaches. The sixth method discussed, rational empiricism, is an example of this. The phenomenon of combining approaches is due to the fact that each method is uniquely suited to obtaining knowledge in a specific field.10

1. authoritarianism (faith)

Authoritarianism is, perhaps, responsible for more human beliefs than any other means of attaining knowledge. One tends to believe what one is told unless one has reason to do otherwise. This is especially true when the authority is one who has some special claim to

credibility, such as expertise in the field in question or a reputation for reliability. Authority is an important source of beliefs because the knowledge that each individual is able to attain through other methods is limited by the limitations on human experience, including the brevity of life. Authority is the primary source for knowledge about the past.

There are limitations to authoritarianism. As a method, it is limited to bringing new knowledge to individuals. It cannot bring new knowledge to humanity. It has no way of resolving conflicts between authorities without going outside the system. And the testimony of any authority must eventually be grounded in some more direct source of knowledge.11

2. mysticism (intuition)

Reality consists of more than just the physical world and the world of reason. If reality transcends either of these components, which the existence of the other component proves true, then reality might transcend both. But how can one gain knowledge of other aspects of reality, and of the synthetic whole? Mystics propose that humans have a capacity to intuitively know that which transcends the senses and reason.12 It is this intuition which gives one a sense for intangibles such as aesthetics.13

But knowledge claims derived from mysticism are so personal that they are impossible to test for accuracy. The increasing understanding of psychology has rendered it possible to explain some of the intuitive understandings of mysticism in terms of other more objective epistemologies.

3. pragmatism

According to pragmatism, ideas are instruments to help a person adjust to his environment. In a constantly changing environment there are no final solutions. Ideas must change as the problems they address change. As long as an idea works, it is considered true; if it ceases to work it will be considered false and discarded.14 "The workability of an idea both tests and ultimately constitutes its truth."15 Pragmatism is a very useful test of validity, especially in areas where universal or normative principles due not apply. Pragmatism factors heavily in the makeup of American mentality. But pragmatism has some very evident weaknesses. Pragmatism fosters a very narrow view of knowledge: only practical knowledge is considered true knowledge. And there are many examples of things which "work" which are not true.

4. empiricism (experience)

Empiricism is the thesis that all knowledge (of matters of fact, as distinguished from that of logical relations between concepts) is based on experience.16 Consciousness of something constitutes a direct awareness which is beyond ones own control and is not questionable or in need of justification in terms of anything else.17

Experience is the ultimate source for a great deal of information concerning things external to a person, especially knowledge of the physical world. Empiricism is not useful in acquiring knowledge in many metaphysical areas of inquiry, such as memory or emotion. In those areas where empiricism could be useful it must be kept

in mind that sensory data is always received through an interpretive framework which may unconsciously bias the way such data is perceived. Empiricism provides no way af resolving conflicts caused by conflicting experiences. Worst of all, ones senses are not always reliable, even when one thinks that they are.

5. classical rationalism (reason)

Rationalism is the belief that it is possible to obtain by reason alone a knowledge of what exists.18 Beliefs are deductively justified by beginning with one or more necessary (indubitable) premises which are then elaborated in a succession of clear, logical steps which lead to the desired conclusion.19 Reason is the source of knowledge concerning mathematics, logic, and universals.

It is the faculty by which one determines the validity of information proposed by the other methods of knowledge acquisition.20 But the number of indubitable first premises is immensely insufficient to justify the number of beliefs which have become the stock of human intellectual trade. Furthermore, logical deductions which seem valid to one person are not always clear to others. 6. rational empiricism (reason and experience)

Rational empiricism suggests that knowledge is obtained by ascertaining empirical data which is then manipulated using inductive principles, yielding probable facts about that which is beyond ones experience.21

Rational empiricism is useful for knowing a much broader range of subjects than either pure rationalism or empiricism. But it does not overcome the second and fourth criticisms leveled at empiricism, that all sensory experience is perceived through a preexisting interpretive framework, and that ones senses may not be as reliable as one is prone to thinking they are. Furthermore, rational empiricism suffers the shortcoming if induction, that the argument rests on the strength of the analogy between the original empirical data and the ultimate conclusion, the strength of which is difficult to asses.22

B. The Primacy of Reason

1. the ubiquity of reason

It seems that all knowledge is in some way related to reason. All of the methods of obtaining knowledge which are mentioned in II,A, utilize reason at some point. Authoritar-ianism utilizes reason to identify, choose between, interpret, synthesize, and apply authorities. Mysticism looks to reason to recognize intuitions, to objectify the knowledge supplied by intuition, and to reconcile or judge between conflicting intuitions. Pragmatism relies on reason to evaluate the ever-changing environment, to formulate ideas, and to assess the relative success or failure of ideas. Empiricism resorts to reason to systemize and interpret sense data, to reconcile conflicting data, and to continually evaluate the functionality of the sensory apparatus. Reason is openly the mechanism of rationalism.

Ironically, most philosophers who have disparaged reason have used reason in their arguments. Similarly, the alternative mechanisms of knowledge acquisition reviewed above utilize reason to argue their position.

2. the necessity of reason

Any of the various mechanisms of knowledge acquisition can provide truth. But all rely on reason to verify their conclusion. Only reason is self-critical. Utilizing reason one can check the results of the reasoning process. The degree of certainty that one's beliefs constitute knowledge can only be measure by the reasons one has for holding that belief. Beliefs must be justified according to reason. Reason has a preeminent epistemological status based on its potential for objectivity and testability.

Reason plays an important negative role in belief justification. Some types of beliefs are subject to verification but not falsification (for example, beliefs about existence). Others are potentially falsifiable rather than verifiable (such as universal claims).23 Beliefs which are falsifiable are not justified and do not constitute knowledge, since they are not true. One must exercise reason in order to "...bring it about that there is no proposition which he believes for which he has adequate reason to refrain."24

The use of reason is a necessity for any thinking person to have lasting conviction about a belief. Less contraspective persons and obscurantists may be able to steadfastly maintain belief (whether true or misguided) without a firm foundation of reason. But a thinker will eventually find reasons to deviate on his own, or succumb to another's suggestion. "An ungrounded belief is easily swayed and abandoned, even though it might be correct. Only when we have provided warrant for our beliefs can we avoid changing our minds irrationally or believing irresponsibly."25

Reason is necessary because of the previously described distinction between knowledge and belief. Belief is nothing more than opinion. Knowledge is true; it is belief which accurately apprehends reality. Beliefs are formed a multitude of ways. Some mechanisms of belief formation yield more false (inaccurate) beliefs than true (accurate). If one desires his beliefs to constitute knowledge one must patronize the mechanisms of belief formation which are most likely to yield true beliefs.

III. Religious knowledge must be obtained using the methods and mechanisms utilized to obtain knowledge of the metaphysical.

A. Religion as Metaphysics

'Religion' is difficult to succinctly define. Religion has so many forms throughout the world that any brief definition will exclude aspects essential to some of the world's religions.26 In general, religion may be described as an integrated system of expressing belief in and reverence for a supernatural power or powers.27 It is often asserted that the object of religious belief is supernatural; it exists outside the natural world. It could also be observed that it is metaphysical; the object of religious belief transcends (but does not necessarily exclude) physical experience. Therefore, religious knowledge must be obtained using methods for obtaining knowledge of the metaphysical.28

As section II has shown, reason is the prime mechanism utilized in obtaining knowledge of the metaphysical. Religious knowledge, being a type of

metaphysical knowledge, must also be obtained by using reason.

B. Reason an Essential Element of Natural Theology

Natural theology is the attempt to demonstrate the existence of God (or other religious doctrine) from premises provided by observation of the ordinary course of nature.29 Classical attempts, such as Aquinas' argument from design and Anshelm's ontological argument, have recognized that reason is essential to gain knowledge of metaphysical religious truths. They would agree with Lock's analysis, "Faith is nothing but a species of reason...a chain of arguments...was... employed in discovering the principles of theology, natural or revealed."30

Some philosophers and theologians have suggested that the finite human intellect is not up to the task of searching out a potentially infinite religious truth.

They have attempted to find ways of obtaining religious knowledge which are not dependant on reason. Following are the major approaches to natural theology. They correspond, roughly, to the ways of obtaining knowledge discussed in II,A. Here, as in II,A, it will be seen that none successfully divorces itself from dependency upon reason.

1. fideism (authority)

Fideism can be defined a variety of ways. Basicality, discussed below, may be considered another form of fideism. Here fideism signifies acceptance of a belief based on trust in an authority (sacred writings, a religious organization, etc.) where the reliability of the authority is not proven but assumed. Fideists assert that "essential religious doctrines cannot be established by rational means, but only accepted...by ...faith".31 Faith is regarded as the first axiom of one's religious system. As in authoritarianism, fideism provides no means of resolving conflicts between authorities without going outside the system, which usually involves a resort to reason. As in authoritarianism, fideism must utilize reason to choose between, interpret, synthesize, and apply authorities. And the testimony of any authority must eventually be grounded in some more direct source of knowledge.32 As Pannenberg pointed out, "...logically knowledge is the presupposed basis or ground of trust"33, and "...as trust requires knowledge as its basis, although it goes beyond knowledge, so faith requires reason as its basis, although it goes beyond reason."34

If faith is a first axiom, how can one determine whether one's faith is in the correct object? How can one who holds the wrong first axiom determine that is so, and proceed to change first axioms?

2. basicality (intuition)

Many philosophers have noted that at the base of a persons noetic structure lies certain beliefs which are neither verifiable nor falsifiable, but are known 'intuitively'. These beliefs have usually been limited to self-evident propositions and incorrigible observations. Recently this list has been expanded to include certain memory propositions, certain propositions about other minds, and certain ethical/moral propositions.35 To this list of basic or foundational beliefs some philosophers add belief in God.36

With this approach it is believed that theistic belief is placed beyond the reach of doubt. But this is not entirely so; a person can come to disagree with a basic belief and it can subsequently be modified (albeit with considerable difficulty). Furthermore, a beliefs being basic does not guarantee that it will be held strongly.37 More seriously, as in mysticism, the high degree of subjectivity involved in basicality provides no means of testing beliefs for accuracy.38 Basic beliefs can be erroneous.

Basicality does not entirely escape dependance on reason. As with mysticism, basicality looks to reason to recognize intuitions, to objectify the knowledge supplied by intuition, and to reconcile or judge between conflicting intuitions. Advocates of basicality utilize reason in formulating their theory and to defend it.

3. presuppositionalism (pragmatism)

The term 'presuppositionalism' is used to signify a variety of approaches to theistic knowledge or theistic belief. Here it is used to signify that method of knowledge acquisition which posits theistic belief as a heuristic principle and then tests the resulting noetic structure for internal consistency.

Presuppositionalists propose that only by positing the existence of a supreme being can a consistent system of beliefs account for all reality. "...only if the basic truths that we learn immediately by being open to God's

Word are added to our basic beliefs will we find adequate explanation to confirm such basic beliefs as our belief in the relationships of subject and object."39

Thus a belief constitutes knowledge only if it works in a given system, and only if the system works as a whole. Using this test of internal consistency (non-contradiction), competing beliefs and systems can be evaluated.Although internal consistency is certainly desirable, it seems insufficient as a test of truth. The problems with presuppositionalism are similar to the problems of pragmatism. A belief can be knowledge without fitting consistently into a persons overall belief system, in the case where there are other problems with that belief system. And it seems possible to have a system of beliefs which is thoroughly consistent but based on erroneous premises and therefore containing false beliefs. Furthermore, the task of achieving a perfectly consistent system, while perhaps a worthy goal, is certainly very daunting, a task that is probably beyond present human ability.

Besides the ever present need of reason to formulate and defend any system of belief, presuppositionalism relies on reason in several other key areas. Presuppositionalism relies on reason to understand noetic systems, to formulate systems, and to assess the relative success or failure of a system when tested with non-contradiction.

4. the anthropological approach (experience)

The anthropological approach to vindicating religious belief proposes that the universal occurrence of religious belief among diverse cultures the world over supports belief in the divine. In this it is similar to empiricism in basing belief on subjective human experience. Consciousness of the Divine constitutes a direct

awareness which is beyond one's own control and is not questionable or in need of justif-ication in terms of anything else. The anthropological approach suffers the same weaknesses as does empiricism.

Experiences are always perceived through an interpretive framework which may unconsciously bias the way they are interpreted. One's senses are not always reliable, even when one thinks that they are. And the anthropological approach provides no way of resolving conflicts caused by conflicting experiences. The anthropological approach relies on reason to formulate and defend religious experience as a method of validating religious belief. It also uses reason to systemize and interpret religious experiences, to reconcile conflicting data, and to continually evaluate the functionality and objectivity of the experiential apparatus.

5. evidentialism (reason)

In contrast to the preceding methods of natural theology, evidentialism emphasizes the need for external evidence to validate all religious knowledge claims. "...theology, as is the case with any science, must admit that if its statements are uncheckable, they are meaningless."40 This evidence may be a deductive argument attempting to decisively prove the existence of the Divine (such as the ontological argument). Or it may be inductive, leading to a probable conclusion concerning divine existence (such as arguments from history). It may attempt to make its case using pure reason beginning from a basic first premise, or it may utilize a form of rational empiricism in building its case upon widely accepted non-basic beliefs. An advantage to the evidentialist approach is that it does not try to mask its use of reason, as the other approaches sometimes try to do. But the pure reason approach suffers the same limitations as does classical rationalism as an epistemological method. The limited number of indubitable first premises limits the number of arguments possible. But if deductively proving the existence of Divinity is one's goal, only one successful argument is necessary. Some believe that they have obtained this goal, but unfortunately logical deductions which seem valid to one person are not always clear to others. Further, it has been pointed out that basing one's belief in God upon rational arguments leaves one open to apostasy when one's arguments are overthrown.41

If one opts for some version of the rational-empiricist approach, one must be wary that one is not working from false first premises. Furthermore, many have objected that probable belief is not sufficient for religious faith.42 Others have responded that probability is the basis of most human belief and is adequate in the case of religion.43 George Mavrodes makes the significant observation that there seems to be a natural human disposition to hold "life-orienting" beliefs strongly, whether they are based on evidence or basic.44 And, as Pannenberg points out, "...trust can exist in the expectation that knowledge will be disclosed."45

C. Reason Essential to Identify and Understand Supernatural Revelation

Revealed theology is religious belief based upon Divine revelation. Such revelation would provide sure

premises from which theological knowledge may be derived. But with the many contradictory authorities claiming to be Divine revelation one is forced to utilize reason in an attempt to determine which is authentic. As Locke stated, "Though faith be founded on the testimony of God (who cannot lie) revealing any proposition to us, yet we cannot have an assurance of the truth of it's being a divine revelation greater than our own (rationally acquired) knowledge; since the whole strength of the certainty depends upon our knowledge that God revealed it."46

The only alternative is fideism, the problems of which are discussed in III,B,1. After one has selected a revelation (through whatever means) one is necessarily faced with the task of interpreting it before one can understand it. Even the most simple communication is subject to a variety of interpretations. Choosing the correct or best interpretation again requires the exercise of reason.

Conclusion

Unquestionably, one can hold religious beliefs without exercising reason, consciously or unconsciously. "...psychologically one can believe...without having established by reason the truth of the matter...in fact, many persons have neither the time nor the competence to establish by reason the truth of the matter."47 But as was pointed out earlier in distinguishing between belief and knowledge, most people want to know whether a proposition is true; whether their beliefs constitute knowledge; whether their faith is grounded in truth.

This paper has sought to demonstrate that reason is the primary mechanism for obtaining religious knowledge. It has done this by first defining knowledge as "apprehension of truth," in distinction from belief and faith. Then it discussed the primary methods of obtaining metaphysical knowledge, indicating how each was dependant upon reason to some degree and suggesting that reason is the mechanism responsible for the objectivity and reliability of each method. Next it was seen that religious knowledge, being metaphysical, must be obtained using these same methods and mechanisms. A review of the major approaches to natural theology indicated that each approach was analogous to one of the previously discussed methods of obtaining metaphysical knowledge, and was dependant on reason in the same manner. Finally, it was seen that even when truth is revealed supernaturally, reason is required for human's to apprehend it.

Notes

1 John Hick, Philosophy of Religion, 4th ed., (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990), 117.

2 Antony Flew, A Dictionary of Philosophy, 2nd ed., (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 41.

3 Norman L. Geisler and Paul D. Feinberg, Introduction to Philosophy: A Christian Perspective, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 225.

4 Voltaire, Philosophical Dictionary, (New York, NY: E.R. DuMont, 1901), "Faith consists in believing not what seems true, but what seems false to our understanding." (326); "The faith which they have for things which they do not understand is founded upon that which they do understand; they have grounds of credibility."(328).

5 Holwerda's analysis of the theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg in, D. Holwerda, "Faith, Reason, and the Resurrection",in Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God, Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, eds., (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 293; Plantinga attributes a similar view to Aquinas, Alvin Plantinga, "Reason and Belief in God", in Faith and Rationality, Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, eds., (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 45ff.

6 Holwerda in Plantinga, 286; several of Angeles' definitions of faith seem to be variations of the same definition based upon differing psychological basis of belief, Peter A. Angeles, A Dictionary of Philosophy (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1981), 94.

7 This definition tries to avoid the difficulties of the standard definition of knowledge as 'justified true belief."

8 George I.Mavrodes,"Jerusalem and Athens Revisited," in Faith and Rationality, Plantinga and Wolterstorff, eds., (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 208; Nicholas Wolterstorff, in Faith and Rationality, Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, eds., (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 11-14; Hick states that it is rational to believe things which cannot be absolutely proved, Hick, Philosophy of Religion, 71-75; "the fact that a belief is rational is not a reason in favor of it", Mavrodes, 197.

9 Metaphysical is used to mean "the realm of the suprasensible, beyond the world of experience" Flew, 229.

10 Geisler and Feinberg, 117.

11 William Pepperell Montague, The Ways of Knowing (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1925), chapter 1.

12 Montague, 54-55.

13 Geisler and Feinberg, 117.

14 Geisler and Feinberg, 116.

15 Stuart Cornelius Hackett, The Resurrection of Theism (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), 82.

16 Flew, 104.

17 David L. Wolfe, Epistemology: The Justification of Belief (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1982), 22.

18 Flew, 298.

19 Wolfe, 19-20.

20 Geisler and Feinberg, 118.

21 Wolfe, 25-26.

22 A stronger form, hypothetical induction, in which a hypothetical interpretation of experience is proposed, and is then tested according to some criteria to determine the adequacy (or inadequacy) of the hypothesis, is more resistant to these criticisms. Wolfe, 32.

23 Flew, 368; Hick, 100ff.

24 Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Can Belief in God Be Rational If It Has No Foundation," in Faith and Rationality, Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, eds., (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 181.

25 Wolfe, 15.

26 Flew, 304.

27 The American Heritage Dictionary, 2d College Edition, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1982), 1044.

28 see footnote 9

29 Flew, 240.

30 Locke, in David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion and the Posthumous Essays (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 1980), 10.

31 Flew, 120.

32 see footnote 11

33 Holwerda on Pannenberg, Holwerda, 293.

34 Ibid, 287.

35 Plantinga, 89.

36 Ibid, 90.

37 Mavrodes, 214.

38 Louis P. Pojman, Religious Belief and the Will (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), mentions this and other problems, 136-7.

39 George Marsden, "The Collapse of American Evangelical Academia," in Faith and Rationality, Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, eds., (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 241.

40 Holwerda on Pannenberg, Holwerda, 281.

41 Plantinga, 73.

42 Mavrodes, 229. This objection is sometimes called Lessing's Ditch, Holwerda, 267.

43 "Probability is the very guide to life." Joseph Butler in Marsden, 229.

44 Mavrodes, 214.

45 Holwerda on Pannenberg, Holwerda, 293.

46 Locke, in John Hick, Faith and Knowledge: A Modern Introduction to the Problem of Religious Knowledge (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1957),xiv.

47 Holwerda, 307."...if it were necessary to use strict demonstration as the only way to reach a knowledge of the things we must know about God, very few could ever construct such a demonstration and even these could do it only after a long time. From this it is evident that the way of faith, which gives all easy access to salvation at any time, is beneficial to man." Aquinas in Plantinga,