

Scholasticism, Part 2

The Great Schoolmen

Introduction

- The 12th and 13th centuries saw a flowering of knowledge and education in Western Christendom, and it reached its apex in 13th century.
- This is due in part to two related movements: the university system and scholasticism.
- This lesson will take a closer look at certain scholastic thinkers
 - Peter Abelard
 - Peter Lombard
 - Robert Grosseteste
 - Alexander of Hales
 - Bonaventura
 - Albertus Magnus
 - Thomas Aquinas
 - Duns Scotus
 - William of Ockham



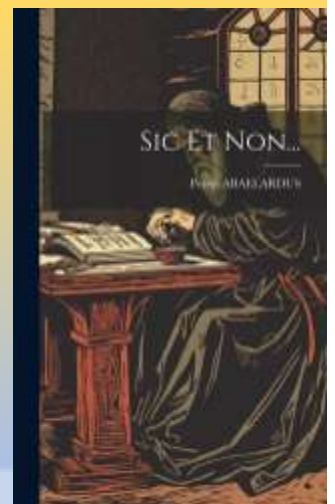
Peter Abelard

- Next, we will talk about Peter Abelard (1079-1142). He was the most brilliant Catholic thinker of the 12th century.
- His story is tragic due to his moral failure and its drastic consequences.
- He was born in France, and studied at the famous Cathedral school of Notre Dame.
 - At this time, it was developing into Paris University. Abelard was frustrated with the teaching of the school's head, and so he held rival lectures.
 - The students deserted the head of the school to listen to Abelard instead. This caused everyone to realize he was actually a genius.
 - He became the head of the Paris school, and students flocked from all over Europe to learn from him.
- But he blew it all with Heloise. She was the intelligent and beautiful 17 year old niece of one of the Cathedral officials.
 - Abelard fell in love with her (he was twice her age), and persuaded her uncle to let him live in their house so he could tutor her.
 - Well, their passion for each other became the most famous love affair of the Middle Ages. When the affair was discovered after she became pregnant, the uncle hired some ruffians to castrate him.
- Abelard then retired from the Paris school into the Benedictine monastery of Saint Denis. Heloise became nun.



Abelard's Famous *Sic et non*

- His most important writing came after his tragic downfall.
- In 1122, he wrote a book called *Sic et non* which means yes and no.
- He considered 158 theological questions. He also set alongside each other statements from the Bible, the early Church Fathers, and other authoritative statements of church teaching which appeared to contradict each other.
- He wanted to provoke people to think for themselves and use reason to harmonize conflicting statements.
- This was a method that law schools were already using to harmonize contradictions in Canon Law.
- Abelard was always in trouble with church authorities, especially the longtime hostility of Bernard of Clairvaux.
 - Regardless, his lectures and writing had a huge impact on the 12 century West.

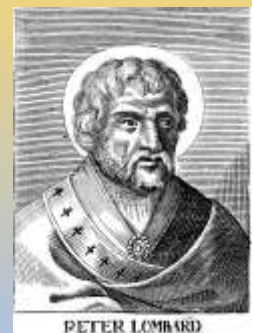


Peter Lombard

- Peter Lombard is the father of systematic theology.
 - He was born in Lombardy Italy, studied at both Bologna and Paris (under the tutelage of Abelard), and he eventually taught theology at Paris. He became bishop of Paris in 1159, but died shortly after.
- His magnum opus was *Four Books of Sentences*, which was written between 1147-1151.
- The word *sentences* in this context means opinions. The work was essentially a collection of quotations from the Bible, the early Church Fathers, the ecumenical Councils, and other authorities.
 - These quotations covered a wide range of subjects and topics. He divided them into four books: 1) The Trinity and Providence; 2) Creation, Sin, and Grace; 3) Incarnation, Salvation, and Moral Virtues; 4) Sacraments and Eschatology.
 - In this way, it was similar to Abelard's *Sic et non*. The big difference is Lombard attempted to offer solutions to all the difficulties and apparent contradictions. He used reason to judge between certain authorities.
- Methodologically, he would state the official position of the Church, prove it from the Bible, supplement it with the opinions of the early fathers, and then resolved any seeming contradictions by the use of logic.
 - This became the standard theological textbook of the Middle Ages.
- Most systematic theologies, even to this day, live in the house Lombard built.
 - This is true not only in its thematic arrangement, but in terms of theological method. It begins with exegesis of Scripture, then is traced in the early church and throughout history, and then is applied the present.

Peter Lombard and the Seven Sacraments

- Lombard was the first Roman Catholic to argue the official number of sacraments was seven: baptism, communion, confirmation, penance, marriage, ordination, and extreme unction.
 - This list of seven was officially accepted as Catholic doctrine at the Council of Florence in 1439.
- His teaching on each of the seven, however, did not necessarily match what later became official Catholic doctrine.
 - As an example, when it comes to penance, he did not believe the priest cleansed the penitent believer's sins.
 - Instead, the Holy Spirit did it through the penance, and the priest merely declares what the Spirit has already affected. The priest had absolutely no effect on the forgiveness of sins.
 - Priests only had the power to reduce or remove the penalties for sin imposed by the Church.
 - Thomas Aquinas will at first argue as Lombard did in *Summa Theologiae*, but eventually he will change his mind.
- Catholic doctrine now actually claims the act of the priest itself confers the grace on the penitent.



Sacramental Theology

- The Church saw the seven rituals as imparting special sanctifying grace.
- The early church saw sacraments as just signs, but Lombard was among the first to teach they were more than signs of God's applied grace, but in fact were the cause of grace in believers when received.
- By the early 13th century, scholastic theologians coined the phrase *ex opere operato* (by virtue of the act itself).
 - Apart from the moral fitness of the priest performing them or the person receiving them, as long as the sacraments were correctly performed, sanctifying grace flowed through them as an objective reality.
 - The schoolmen simply said the person receiving should not set up a spiritual barrier to the grace e.g., hatred of God and neighbor). But they do not require faith or faithfulness, just no barriers presently erected.
- The Reformers also believed Christ's power was in the sacraments, and it did not depend on the worthiness of clergy nor the faith of the believer. Christ needs no help from us.
 - But they insisted that the believer must exercise positive faith if the blessings of the sacraments are to be received.
 - So the difference between the early Reformers and the Medieval schoolmen was actually one of emphasis.

Robert Grosseteste (1168-1263)

- He was bishop in eastern England, a pioneer scientist, and a passionate priest that ardently brought the word of God to the people.
 - He preached in English rather than Latin. He called on the English people to attend church regularly to hear the word.
 - He called out corruption in both the government and the papacy. As a result, he made enemies of both popes and kings, but his reputation was so stellar, that they could not harm him. His life was so passionately consistent for Christ, that he called Pope Innocent IV the Antichrist doomed to Hell and got away with it.
- He was one of the most educated Europeans of his time. He knew Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He also read Christian, Jewish, and Muslim works.
 - He was well-read on Aristotle too. Robert actually was able to absorb Aristotle's teachings on logic and physics while at the same time remaining Augustinian in this theological and philosophical outlook.
- His scientific treatises on light and motion are highly regarded by historians of science, and his influence on Roger Bacon (1214-1292) was significant.
- In terms of his Christian life, he is considered a forerunner of John Wyclif and English Protestantism.
 - The reason he didn't suffer the same persecution as the Protestants was in part due to his acceptance of RCC doctrine.



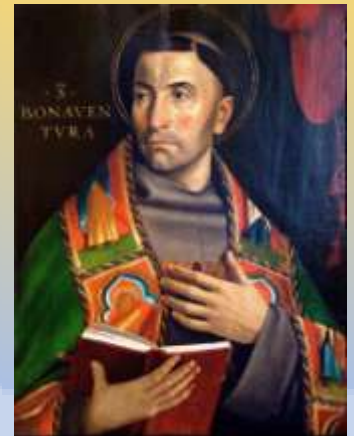
Alexander of Hales (1170-1245)

- He was another noteworthy Englishman. He worked his way up in the English church to archdeacon.
- From 1220 and onward, he lectured theology at the University of Paris as its most distinguished teacher.
 - His greatest student was Bonaventura.
- Alexander's work left three landmarks on church history.
- First, he was the first schoolman to join the new religious order of preaching monks—the Franciscans.
 - It was his sharp mind that brought the Franciscan movement into the world of scholasticism.
- Second, he was the first schoolman to use Peter Lombard's *Sentences* rather than the Bible as his textbook for lectures.
 - This is what helped elevate the work for centuries.
- Third, he defined the doctrine of the "treasury of merits" of the saints.
 - He also argued against Peter Lombard that in the sacrament of penance, it was in fact the priest's absolution that cleansed inward spiritual guilt.
 - The second and third landmarks made Hale a villain in the eyes the Protestant Reformers.



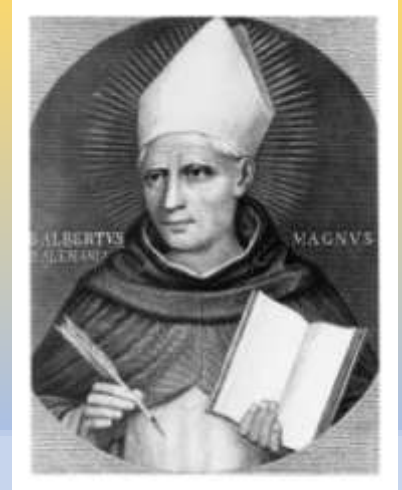
Bonaventura (1221-1274)

- He was born Giovanni di Fidanza and joined the Franciscans in 1243. This is when he took the name Bonaventura (good fortune).
- He studied in Paris under Alexander of Hales. Eventually, he became a teacher at the University of Paris from 1248-1255 and wrote commentaries on Lombard's *Sentences*.
- In 1257, he became the head of the Franciscan order, and wrote the official biography (*Legenda Maior*) of its founder Francis.
- Like Grosseteste, he made use of Aristotle, but subsumed it into an Augustinian/Platonic worldview.
- Bonaventura taught it was impossible to know God via reason, but instead we must know Him through spiritual experience in our soul.
 - He argued that people should detach themselves from material things, and look within the self to discover God in the depths of the spirit. Thus, he was mystical.



Albertus Magnus (1193-1280)

- The next major scholastic thinker was Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great).
- Albertus was a champion of Aristotle's philosophy and wrote commentaries on all of his works.
- He was a Dominican that taught at both Paris and Cologne.
 - He argued that science and religion were complimentary.
- His claim to fame is that he taught Thomas Aquinas, the greatest scholastic of all time.
 - In fact, he recognized Thomas's brilliance early on and invested much of his life in Thomas.
- He outlived his pupil by six years, and he spent those days promoting his student.

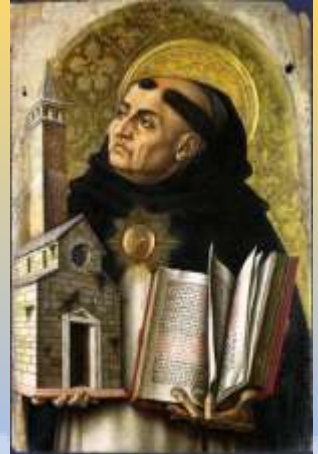


Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

- He was the greatest scholastic thinker of all time. He was born in Naples and was the son the Lombard noble.
 - Despite the wishes of his family, in 1244 he joined the newly founded order of preaching monks known as the Dominicans.
 - His family actually kidnapped and imprisoned him for over a year to try to get him to change his mind. Sadly, they even hired a young and beautiful, but sexually immoral woman to enter his prison cell and tempt him toward fornication. Aquinas resisted all the pressure and so his family gave up.
 - He was released and joined the Dominican order.
- He studied at the universities of Naples, Paris, and Cologne (northwestern Germany). It was at Cologne that he came under the tutelage of Albertus Magnus.
 - At the time, other students mocked Aquinas as a "dumb ox" because of his slowness of speech. Magnus rebuked them by saying, "This dumb ox will make such a roar in theology that he will be heard through all the earth."
- Starting in 1252, Aquinas taught theology at Paris, and from 1261 on he was part of a travelling papal college in various Italian cities.
 - He was a popular lecturer, but it was only after his death that the Church recognized his greatness as a scholastic theologian. He was easily the deepest thinker of all Catholic thinkers, and he lived a fairly blameless life.
- His masterpiece is *summa theologiae*, but he technically never finished it. At the end of his life, he abandoned writing altogether.
 - Some claim it was due to a nervous breakdown. Others say he had a spiritual experience so grand during communion that it made his writings seem as worthless attempts to describe God.

Aquinas and Aristotle

- Aquinas' main project was to reconcile Aristotle's philosophy with Catholic teaching.
 - He achieved this to a much greater degree than Bonaventura.
- Aquinas considered Aristotle's philosophy to be the supreme achievement of human reasoning.
- He argued reason could reveal true things about God, and Aristotle succeeded at that.
 - Divine revelation simply brings Aristotle's philosophy to perfection by revealing truths like the Trinity. Aristotle's reasoning laid the foundation of a rational knowledge of the universe and divine revelation then built a temple of Christian truth upon that foundation.
- Aquinas believed there are two realms of knowledge: nature and grace.

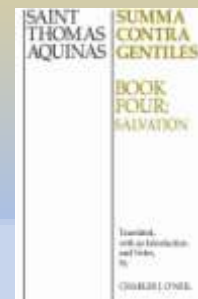
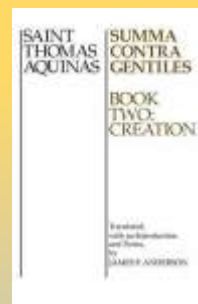
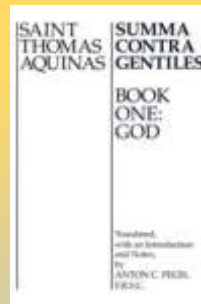


Aquinas's Anthropology

- Aquinas believed that God's creation of Adam still left Adam in position where body & soul and reason & emotion could be tension. This is nature.
 - So God had to deposit added grace within Adam—a supernatural empowerment—that enabled his body & soul and emotion & reason to be in perfect God-glorifying harmony.
- The Fall, according to Aquinas, only removed that special supernatural grace. Otherwise, Adam was still exactly as he was when first created.
 - The Fall left him only a natural man since he lost that spiritual boost. Thus, the reasoning ability of man was still capable of the same level of reasoning as Adam before the Fall.
 - The rest of humanity inherits Adam's Fall since he is the head and source of the human race. How does the Fall affect the rest of us? According to Aquinas, human beings have kept all their natural powers.
 - We simply lost the gift of original righteousness which has created disharmony between body and soul, and emotion and reason. Our capacity for virtue has been weakened.
- Even though Aquinas was Augustinian, he greatly watered down Augustine's doctrine of original sin. Augustine made no distinction between nature and grace, but instead he argued the Fall wrecked the entire nature of Adam. It didn't merely cost him some extra gift distinct from his nature.
- For Aquinas, his distinction between nature and grace allowed him to reconcile how a pagan like Aristotle could discover so much truth about the universe and God.
 - Clearly, Aquinas was impressed with the pagan's intellect and reasoning, but he was still willing to correct him. Where Aristotle erred, Aquinas corrected him with the Bible. So special revelation did trump natural revelation in authority for Aquinas.

Aquinas's Masterpieces

- His two masterpieces are *Summa contra Gentiles* (Handbook against Pagans) and *Summa Theologiae* (Summary of Theology).
- The former was designed to help Christians present Christianity to Jews and Muslims and refute their errors.
- There was four parts, and the first three used reason and philosophy to establish God's existence, and the doctrines of creation and providence.
- In the fourth part he explained the truths that only divine revelation could make known—specifically the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection.



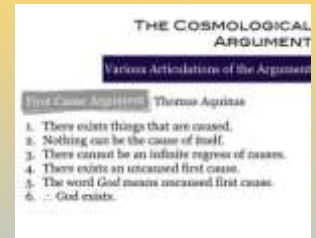
Aquinas's Masterpieces

- The *Summa Theologiae* was a systematic theology that far outshined the others that came before.
 - In fact, it was designed to replace Lombard's *Sentences* as the main textbook, though it centuries for that to actually happen.
- *Summa* was arranged as a disputation. It was divided into three parts: God and creation; human nature, sin, and virtue; Christ, Salvation, and the Sacraments.
- In total, he looked at 512 disputed questions, and divided each question into a number of articles or points of inquiry.
 - He would begin by presenting the arguments and evidence against his own view (it could be Bible quotes, philosophical arguments, and church father quotes).
 - Then he offered a reason for his position. He would then offer detailed arguments for his view. Finally, he gave responses to the arguments against his position.
- With this method, he tried to give a complete account of the question he was addressing.
- Aristotle was his favorite philosopher, and Augustine was his favorite theologian (he agreed with Augustine of predestination).
 - He tried to combine them.



Cosmological Argument

- Aquinas theology is regarded for three things.
- First, he believed God's existence could be shown by reason. Anselm said the same, but Aquinas rejected his ontological argument, since it is an intuitive argument.
- Aquinas agreed with Aristotle that all human knowledge comes from experience.
- Therefore, God's existence needed to be proven from the world rather than inner ideas of the mind.
 - Aquinas offered five proofs for God's existence (the Five Ways). All five are based on the idea that the world is an effect that needs a cause, and the cause is God.
 - He argued that everything in the physical universe is contingent rather than necessary. A contingent universe depends upon a necessary being. This being is God.
 - Aquinas believed anyone trained in philosophy could reason to the same conclusion. Those not trained in philosophy could just believe it because it is in divine revelation.



Knowing God Through Analogy

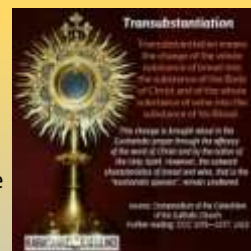
- Second, Aquinas taught that all our knowledge of God is through analogy.
 - Anything we say about God refers to created things. If we call God strong, our idea of strength comes from us seeing something strong in the world.
 - But God is not strong in the exact same way, thus when we say God is strong we are speaking by way of analogy—making a comparison to God through something we experience, but knowing that there is a big difference.
 - Thus, all our language about God is necessarily imperfect.
- Aquinas' belief in analogical language concerning God was consistent with his Aristotelian belief that all human knowledge is mediated to the soul through the senses.
- This position of analogy has remained controversial down to our day.
 - Critics claimed that once you acknowledge the differences between God's attribute and the analogical comparison and then remove the human elements, you have a valid definition that is not an analogy.
 - Aquinas countered that our finitude still makes that definition at best an analogy that cannot capture in our mind a complete understanding of the real thing.
 - Even if we understand intelligence and love, and acknowledge that in God it is infinite (a valid definition of God's knowledge and love), we still have no positive idea of what intelligence and love are like in an infinite being.
 - At best, we can only say what it is not like—it is not limited by time, space, change, fallibility, etc. But that is not the same as saying exactly what it is. This is the same apophatic emphasis of earlier church fathers.

Aquinas and Transubstantiation

- Third, Aquinas was the first Catholic theologian to offer a complete argument for the doctrine of transubstantiation.
 - The term was invented by Hildebert of Tours (died in 1134), and the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 officially sanctioned both the word and definition of the concept.
- Aquinas used Aristotle's philosophy of substance and accidents to give a theological explanation of what happens to the bread and wine during transubstantiation.
 - Every object supposedly has an inner substance that makes it what it is as opposed to something else. It is non-material, but it determines the material form of a thing.
 - The material object itself is called the accident. It is the physical properties that make an object appear a certain way to us.
 - Those physical properties are perceived by our bodily senses—we see, hear, taste, and touch them. But our immaterial mind perceives the substance, or the inner reality of something.
 - So notice, that for Aquinas, the word substance does not refer to something's molecular make-up. It refers to a non-material reality.
- For Aquinas, when the priest declares the words, "This is my body, this is my blood," the substance of the bread and wine is miraculously changed into the substance of Christ's flesh and blood. But the accidents of the bread and wine (the physical form, taste, and smell) remained the same.
 - So to the human senses, it was still bread and wine.

Aquinas and Transubstantiation

- Aquinas's definition actually avoids many of the problems the Protestants will later have with transubstantiation.
 - After all, in his argument, the bread and wine do not become the flesh and blood of Christ in a physical way.
 - The change of substance is a reality that is only perceived by the mind, not the senses. It is accepted as an act of faith.
 - And because the substance is not physical, Aquinas also argued it is not local, meaning it is not contained in space. Therefore, he ruled out the idea of a belief in the local presence of Christ in the space occupied by the bread and wine.
 - But since he believed substance was realer than accidents, the most real part of the Eucharist was Christ's body and blood.
- Also, it must be noted that he thought both the flesh and blood were present in BOTH the bread and the wine.
 - So if the laypersons only got the bread, but never the wine, they still partook of both the body and the blood (football analogy—air vs. helium).
- Even though Aquinas's articulation is much better than later Roman Catholic dogma, it still lacks a biblical foundation. It is dependent on Aristotle.
- Catholics started withholding wine from the laypersons because if they accidentally spilled it, they thought Christ's blood was dishonored.
 - The church also switched to wafers out of concern that bread crumbs falling the ground would dishonor the body. Not long after, laity partook in neither except on holidays.



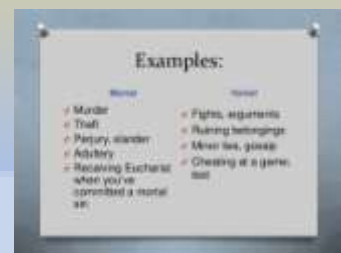
Aquinas and Miscellaneous Doctrines

- Aquinas also how the Mass is both a sacrament and sacrifice.
 - It is a only a sacrament to the laity that eats it, but it is a sacrifice of the clergy that offers it.
 - But since the laity rarely ate the wafer, Aquinas had to add the sacrificial concept to it in order to make the Mass meaningful since it was not being received on most weeks as a sacrament.
 - When it is not a sacrament, it is still a sacrifice. But the sacrifice was not a re-sacrificing of Christ. It presumed that He was sacrificed only once and for all time. So this Mass sacrifice is a tapping into the once-for-all sacrifice, bringing the past sacrifice into the present.
- As such, the Mass washed away the sins of those for whom it was offered, which was the whole congregation.
 - Even if they all don't take the sacrament, the offering is on behalf of them. So attendance of the Mass was thought to forgive their sins.
- This also enabled the priest to offer it on behalf of the living and the dead, for those here and those in purgatory.
 - Rich people would pay priests to say Masses for their departed souls in order to knock time off of purgatory.



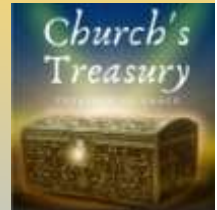
Aquinas and Miscellaneous Doctrines

- Aquinas worked out in detail the difference between mortal sins and venial sins.
- The church always believed there was a difference between more serious and less serious sins (1 John 5:16-17).
 - Debate raged since the patristic times if murder, adultery, and idolatry could be forgiven if committed after baptism. Would penance cover them?
- Aquinas offered a definitive answer. He said mortal sin is sin that kills the soul. Venial sin (venial means pardonable) is for less serious sins. These wounded the soul, but they did not turn the soul away from God.
 - When it came to mortal sins, there is nothing the soul could do to restore itself. Only divine grace could do that.
- God bestowed this grace through the sacrament of penance. So through penance, one could be forgiven.
 - Grace was no longer seen as unmerited favor, but spiritual medicine infused into a person through the sacraments.
 - When you commit a mortal sin, you kill it and are no longer in a state of grace. But if you do penance offered by a priest, then you can reenter the state of grace.



Aquinas and Miscellaneous Doctrines

- Aquinas also gave detailed doctrinal form to the idea of the treasury of merits.
 - Simply put, all sin requires temporal punishment. Christ atones for mortal sin which guarantees salvation and escape from eternal punishment, but the sinner still has to bear temporal punishment for all sins.
- You can pay off that penalty with penance or an indulgence (monetary payment).
 - If you died without paying off your temporal punishment, then you would go to purgatory and suffer by fire until you burn off that penalty.
 - The pope, however, could grant immediate release of a soul from purgatory because it was believed God gave him control of the treasury of merits.
- Some saints lived such godly lives that not only had they paid off all temporal penalties, but they went above and beyond and died with a surplus of good. That surplus was kept in a treasury of merits.
 - All of the extra merit of Christ, the Apostles, and all saints is contained in this. The Pope could take some of that extra surplus and give it to someone, thereby canceling their temporal debt.
 - For the living, that would allow them to skip purgatory. For the dead, they could be immediately released from purgatory.
- For what it is worth, the EO always rejected this idea. This is specifically a RCC idea.



Aquinas's Significance

- Significance of Aquinas.
- Along with Augustine and Calvin, he is one the three most influential theologians of the Western Church.
- His intellectual depth and historic impact on the doctrine and practice of the Church is certainly in a class with these other two figures.
- Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries still leaned heavily on parts of *Summa Theologiae*.
- Aquinas's theology and impact is so comprehensive that it receives it's own name, Thomism.



John Duns Scotus (1265-1308)

- He was born in Scotland, joined the Franciscans, studied at Oxford and Paris, and taught theology at Cambridge, Paris, and Cologne.
- He wrote two commentaries on Lombard's *Sentences*.
- Scotus is best known for focusing his theology on a refutation of Thomas Aquinas. As a realist, he had little room for Aristotelian nominalism.
- He argued that philosophy must be separated from theology, since philosophy could only establish an infinite being, but not the Christian God.
 - Only through special divine revelation could the human mind know the character and attributes of the one God.
 - Additionally, he argued the immortality of soul could not be proven by reason, and therefore we need revelation.
 - Thomas may have married theology to philosophy, but Scotus provided Europe with the foundations for their eventual divorce.



Scotus vs. Aquinas

- Additionally, Scotus argued that God's supreme attribute was not His understanding, but His will.
 - The universe is not ordered as it is because reason demands it, but it is the way it is for no other reason that God willed it. The same is true of the atonement. It satisfies God simply because He wills that it does.
- Therefore, human reason cannot show that Christian doctrines are reasonable because what God has done was not required of Him by reason (as if reason is above Him), but instead God does what He does because He freely chooses to.
 - We can only accept what God has done by faith, not reason about what God must have done.
- Scotus's emphasis on the supremacy of God's revelation laid the groundwork for a theology that was more biblical and less philosophical.
- Scotus and Aquinas also disagreed on the immaculate conception, as Aquinas was convinced Mary would have original sin and needed saving.
 - Scotus thought God's free will is better expressed by preventing original sin in Mary than having to cleanse her of sin. He also thought a second Eve is fitting to birth a second Adam.
 - Scotus's Franciscans sided with him, and Aquinas's Dominicans sided with him. Even different orders of nuns argued about it.
 - The RCC did not formally adopt it until 1854. The EO and Protestantism both reject the idea.

Scotus's Significance

- Scotus's theology also received a name, Scotism.
- His thought was very intricate and complex, and so some nicknamed him the subtle teacher.
- Christian humanists of the Renaissance were far more savage.
- They believed complex articulation covers for a weak intellect.
- So they called overly complicated people *Duns*, from which we get the insult Dunce.
- Even though in his time Scotus won the day with regard to the immaculate conception, he has few followers today, whereas Thomism is as popular as ever.



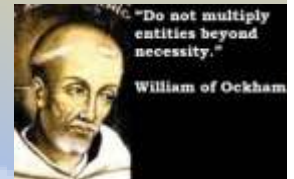
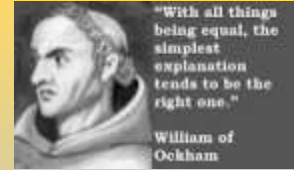
William of Ockham (1285-1349)

- The final scholastic thinker we will cover is William of Ockham. He was born in Ockham in southern England.
- He studied at Oxford where he joined the Franciscans.
- He became a professor at Oxford where he lectured on Lombard's *Sentences*.
 - While there he was summoned by the Pope to Avignon for charges of heresy. He supported the spiritual Franciscans that agreed with their founder Francis that they should vow absolute poverty.
- He was condemned by the Pope, and thus fled to Germany where he was protected by the Holy Roman Emperor, Louis the Bavarian (1314-1347).
- Louis was an opponent of the Pope. The Pope excommunicated William, and so in exile he wrote much against the Pope, arguing that popes are fallible and that councils have more authority than the pope.



Ockham—Theology vs. Philosophy

- Ockham was a highly influential thinker. He separated theology from philosophy even further than Scotus.
- He said reason could not prove God's existence, but at best could show it to be probable.
- He argued that our human knowledge is strictly limited to our experience of individual things (like Aristotle).
 - The mind can only know the things we experience through the senses. Therefore, unaided reason could not have knowledge of God since He is not an individual thing in the physical world.
 - Ockham was a nominalist to such a point that he denied the existence of universals.
- Reason shows us a spiritually dark and Godless world, and only divine revelation of Scripture shows God to us.
- Ockham argued that the religious task of reason is not to prove the reasonable nature of Christian doctrine. Instead, it is meant to examine Scripture.
 - This was a repudiation of scholasticism itself.



Ockham and Pelagianism

- Ockham is also known for reviving Semi-Pelagianism. All the scholastics were Augustinian prior to Ockham.
- Ockham taught that the unbeliever could merit God's grace by doing his best.
 - This would enable them to achieve eternal salvation. When critics accused him of arguing for meritorious salvation, he denied it.
 - He said that God does not owe them salvation for trying their best, but in His free will He has chosen to give it to that kind of person.
- However, since he placed salvation in the power of the natural human will, he denied that original sin placed the will in bondage to sin, and he insisted that predestination must be based on God's foreknowledge of those that would do their best.
- Ockham's brand of Semi-Pelagianism placed much greater emphasis on the ability of the human will than earlier Semi-Pelagians.
 - None of them said a sinner could merit grace by doing his natural best. Instead, they argued that unbelievers could freely accept the unmerited grace of God. Ockham was actually closer to Pelagianism.

Ockham—Theology vs. Philosophy

- This neo-Pelagian trend came to its peak in the German theologian Gabriel Biel (1420-1495). He is considered the last of the schoolmen.
 - Other schoolmen of the time wrote against Pelagianism and rightly accused Ockham and Biel of it.
 - The theology of Ockham and Biel became known as *via moderna* which means the modern way, whereas the theology of previous schoolmen was dubbed *via antiqua*, or the old way.
- The *via moderna* dominated scholastic theology right up to the dawn of the Reformation.
 - This explains why the early Reformers seemed entirely opposed to Scholasticism.
- They were condemning the neo-Pelagian theology of Ockham, Biel, and the *via moderna*.
- This theology made salvation the fruit of the natural human free-will and merit rather than the work of God's sovereign grace.



Conclusion

- The rise of the university facilitated the rise of a new kind of thinker—the scholastic professor.
 - This moved theological expertise away from the monastery and the practical theology of the clergy, and pushed into the academy, which was technically separate from the church.
 - Even so, in this time, theology was the queen of the sciences—the one ring to rule them all.
- Thinking became more precise using Aristotle's way of knowing.
- Theology was now communicated through a methodology.
 - Prior to this, theology was either polemical or occasional.
 - Now it was systematic.
- This did create a slight divide between divine revelation and human reason—something the later Enlightenment era will twist.
- Sacramental theology took its current form during the Scholastic period.
- Scholasticism gave to the church many schoolmen that were intellectual giants.