

The Perfect God: Introduction, Definition, and Arguments

What is the significance of belief in God? Who is God? What are the rational arguments for God's existence?

- I. Introduction
 - A. The meaning of theism: A belief in a god or gods
 - B. Two types of theism
 - C. The importance of doctrine
 1. This is the greatest subject that can engage the mind of mortals.
 2. Our well-being and eternal destiny depend on knowing truth about God.
- II. The definition and existence of God
 - A. The definition of God
 1. The possibility of defining God
 - a) A complete definition is impossible
 - b) A limited definition is possible
 2. A statement of definition: "God is spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth" (Westminster Shorter Catechism).
 - B. Proof for the existence of God
 1. It is assumed by Scripture.
 2. It is based on intuition.
 3. It is attempted through rationalistic arguments.
 - a) Enumeration and explanation
 - (1) Cosmological argument
 - (a) The key thought: cause and effect
 - (b) Derivation of the term: Taken from the Greek words for "world" and "word"
 - (c) Statement of the argument
 - (d) Weaknesses of the argument
 - (2) Teleological argument (really an extension of the cosmological)
 - (a) The key thought: design

- (b) Derivation of the term: Taken from the Greek words for “end” and “word”
 - (c) Statement of the argument
 - (d) Weaknesses of the argument: It does not demand that God be single or personal.
- (3) Ontological argument
 - (a) The key thought: idea
 - (b) Derivation of the term: Taken from the Greek words for “being” and “word”
 - (c) Statement of the argument
 - (d) Weaknesses of the argument
- (4) Moral argument
 - (a) The key thought: conscience
 - (b) Statement of the argument
 - (c) Weaknesses of the argument
- b) Value of the arguments
 - (1) They provide corroborating or supporting evidence for believers.
 - (a) The arguments help interpret God’s general revelation.
 - (b) The arguments help re-establish the reasonableness of theism in times of doubt.
 - (2) They may prove helpful in convincing unbelievers of the existence of God.
 - (a) Arguments do not prove the existence of God.
 - (b) Their combined effect increases the probability of them being right.