

PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS DIVISION: R. A. KOCOUREK, *Chairman*

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The Nature of Christian Philosophy: A Panel Discussion

Dr. Kocourek: Instead of the usual procedure of presenting a paper and a commentary, the members of this panel will discuss the nature of Christian philosophy in the form of a dialogue. Fr. DuLac will present the problems and make objections, and Fr. Dillon will attempt to answer them. We do not think this procedure is the only possible way of treating this problem, but we think it might be an effective one. We hope that this method will result in a clearer understanding of the problems and in a more orderly presentation of the subject, as well as in a more interesting and stimulating panel. We invite participation by the audience, and we ask you only to put your problem in the form of a question or an objection. Fr. Dillon holds a doctorate in sacred theology and a license in philosophy from Laval University in Québec. Fr. DuLac holds a doctorate in philosophy and a license in sacred theology from the same university.

Fr. DuLac: Before we go into the problem we propose to discuss, I think we might well make an effort to justify bringing this matter up. To my knowledge, the problem of Christian philosophy has already been treated at considerable length. In fact, I believe the American Catholic Philosophical Association in its 1936 convention heard several papers on the subject. Is it not true that there has already been considerable discussion?

Fr. Dillon: Yes, this problem was discussed by Catholic philosophers especially during the 1930's. The occasion for the discussion at that time did not come from Catholic sources but from the French historian of philosophy, Emile Brehier. In his *Histoire de la Philosophie* and later (1931) in a lecture before the Société Française de philosophie he set forth the thesis that Christianity in its inception contributed no intellectual values functionally original or different from paganism, and that in its development it had little or no influence on the progress of philosophical thought. In a word, Christianity had never succeeded in establishing a Christian philosophy. The reason for the failure was not difficult to see. In the very elements to be united, Christianity ("the mysterious account of God's relations with man") and philosophy ("the clear and distinct knowledge of reason") there was, he said, an irreconcilable opposition. Accordingly, it is no more correct to speak of Christian philosophy than to speak of Christian mathematics or Christian chemistry.

It was inevitable that such a radical thesis written on a subject which Catholic philosophers were disposed to regard as their own should arouse an immediate and vigorous discussion. In the controversies which followed, M. Brehier was forgotten and Catholic philosophers directed their efforts to resolving the problem from principles of their own philosophy and defending their own positions. Besides the discussion by our own Association, the problem was taken up by the Société Thomiste in 1933, by

the Société Thomiste de l'Université d'Ottawa in 1933, and by the Second International Thomistic Congress in Rome in 1936.

However, the 1930's were not the first time that the problem of Christian philosophy was debated. Most of the theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries treated the problem, some of them at great length. This is true of the earlier ones such as Capreolus, Durandus, and Cajetan, as well as of Suarez, John of St. Thomas, the Salmanticenses, Toletus, Ripalda, Gregory of Valencia, and Sylvester. It is interesting to note that what they contributed to the clarification of this problem has not been cited in the recent discussions. Because, I think, they have something very positive to offer on this subject, they are worth considering. That, in my opinion, is sufficient reason for re-opening the discussion of Christian philosophy.

Fr. DuLac: You have just brought out the fact that whereas the problem recently has been considered by philosophers and historians, it was formerly treated by theologians. Did they consider it a theological problem, or did it just happen that theologians were also interested in Christian philosophy?

Fr. Dillon: They were not interested in an accidental way, but they considered it to be a problem belonging to theology. Their reasoning was this: the problem concerns the possibility of Christian faith's adding some new perfection or light to philosophy. Now, any consideration of the influence of revelation should be taken up in the science of revelation, i.e., in theology. Theology can treat of the matters of other sciences and examine them in its own superior light because it is wisdom. Since any argument about Christian philosophy must accept beforehand the fact that faith is a superior knowledge, the discussion about the problem will not be philosophical, but theological. In fact, those who would discuss the influence of divine faith on natural sciences cannot argue cogently or relevantly without themselves becoming theologians.

Fr. DuLac: If this problem is a theological one, in what part of theology is it found?

Fr. Dillon: It was discussed as an auxiliary question in the tract on faith, because the problem of Christian philosophy is related to the truths of revelation insofar as they are known by faith.

Fr. DuLac: Do you mean to say that these men—and I could not help noting considerable variety of opinion among the men you mentioned—were in complete agreement about Christian philosophy?

Fr. Dillon: With regard to the solution, no. All of them, however, were asking the same question. This fact, I think, gave them an advantage in the discussion. What is notable about the modern authors discussing Christian philosophy is not so much that they arrive at different answers (one expects as much in a debate), but that they begin with different "problems" of Christian philosophy.

Fr. DuLac: You apparently feel that the earlier theologians asked the right question. What is the problem of Christian philosophy?

Fr. Dillon: In a general way the problem concerns the relations between faith and philosophy. The seventeenth century theologians asked 1) is it

possible for the philosopher who is Christian to believe and to have scientific proof of the same truth? and 2) can the perfection and light of faith be in any way communicated to his philosophy so that his philosophical knowledge is perfected?

Fr. DuLac: Before inquiring into those problems, I should first like to ask if you think that the faith will have an influence on the whole of philosophy. How could the faith influence my acceptance of the rules for the opposition of propositions or, for that matter, anything else in logic? Or, to take another example, granted that the faith might have something to do with the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul, what would it teach about the vegetative soul?

Fr. Dillon: When I speak of Christian philosophy I do not mean all philosophical knowledge. Philosophy, first of all, is not one science, but several. If we speak of the influence of faith on philosophy, we do not mean on all the philosophical sciences, nor on all the truths of philosophy, nor even on all that is included under one philosophical science. We mean simply that if there are any philosophical truths influenced by faith—even if there were only one—then to that extent there would be Christian philosophy. I think this point is worth insisting on so that in trying to answer the problem we shall not be placed in the awkward and impossible position of attempting to show that philosophy, to be Christian, must be completely different. It is to be expected that there are certain disciplines that will not be influenced at all by revelation, such as mathematics, grammar, and logic. The reason is obvious. The purpose of revelation is not the manifestation of natural truths for the sake of knowing them, but only insofar as they are ordered in some way to divine truths and man's salvation. Hence, we should seek only for those truths which in some way are related to salvation as subject for Christian philosophy. The question of the influence of faith on philosophy might be expressed somewhat as follows: Can the Christian philosopher's faith influence at least some natural truths so that the Christian philosopher would be better as philosopher because of the influence of his faith?

Fr. DuLac: It seems to me it is time that we discussed in what the perfection of natural science consists, for only if we first see how it is more or less perfect, can we then see how it might be perfected by the influence of faith, if there is any such influence.

Aristotle in the *De Anima*¹ and St. Thomas after him² say that all science is good and honorable, but one science can excel another 1) by reason of its object, and in this way one science will be better than another if it is about better or more honorable things; 2) by reason of its quality or mode, and in this way one science will be better than another if it is more certain, e.g., as mathematics is more certain than ethics.

You would hardly say, would you, that faith perfects the philosophical sciences from the point of view of the object? Metaphysics, the science

¹ Bk. I, chap. 1, 402a1 f.

² *Comment. in De Anima*, Lib., I, lect. 1, nn. 3, 4; cf. *Summa Theologica*, Ia, q. 1, a. 5.

of immaterial being, is not more perfect in the Christian philosopher than in any one else, is it? I think that one of the points made by Msgr. Noel³ and Dr. Harry McNeill⁴ is precisely that faith cannot change the object of a philosophical science. If it did, the resulting science would be theology—not faith.

Fr. Dillon: I think you are quite right in what you have said about the influence of faith on the object of a natural science. The objects of the various philosophical sciences are something given; they are arrived at by a greater or lesser separation from matter. Any attempt to construct some kind of Christian philosophy by having faith influence the object of a science would simply destroy the order of specification of the sciences. And anyway, whatever be the specific objects of the various sciences they are all distinguished from faith in this: their objects are known by the sole light of natural reason; what is of faith is known by the light of revelation. To attempt to establish a Christian philosophy by unifying the objects of reason and faith is not to Christianize philosophy, but to destroy it.

Fr. DuLac: I think we can agree that faith cannot modify the specific objects of the sciences. However, I believe it is sometimes said that the influence of Christianity on the object of philosophy consisted in offering objects for consideration to the philosopher. It is certainly a matter of plain fact that philosophy developed in Christian times by reason of the fact that faith suggested certain truths for consideration. Among them one might mention the distinction between essence and existence, the distinction between person and nature, the notion of providence and many others. Even if these things are objects which could be known by reason alone, their development in philosophy arose out of the demands made by faith for the solution of problems about them.

Fr. Dillon: I shall not enter into a discussion of the particular truths you have mentioned, but I shall restrict my answer solely to the possibility of such influence. May I point out first that your former objection was based on the supposition that faith might influence the formal objects of the philosophical sciences. The present difficulty would place the influence of faith on the material objects of natural knowledge.

I do not think, however, that one can speak of a Christian philosophy in this way—at least not if Christian philosophy demands the intrinsic influence of faith. Suppose for the sake of argument that there was a truth revealed by faith which could have been known by natural reason but which *de facto* was not known or realized until the faith revealed it. Such a proposition could as well be the subject for speculation for the non-Christian philosopher as it can for the Christian philosopher. Simply because the philosopher is speculating about a truth offered by revelation, he is not for that reason Christian. What actually happened in the example proposed was that revelation was the occasion for the considera-

³ "La Notion de la philosophie chrétienne." *Revue néo-scholastique de philosophie*, Tome 37, 2e série no. 44 (novembre 1934) pp. 337-344.

⁴ *Proceedings of the Am. Cath. Phil. Asso.*, Vol. 12, 1936, pp. 37-45.

tion of a truth. To that extent revelation would not differ from other fields of knowledge which from time to time demand some philosophical explanation for things. This is not a reason for speaking of a new kind of philosophy. There is no intrinsic influence on the philosophical knowledge. Philosophy has simply advanced in a normal way by the cumulative efforts of many, each contributing a part to the advancement of truth. Whether the proposition is given by revelation or by any other discipline, the effect is the same: knowledge has advanced, but the object of the science has not been intrinsically affected.

If you would wish to call philosophy Christian because of such extrinsic reasons, there would, I suppose, be no objection to doing so. We commonly speak of Greek philosophy or German metaphysics, not to denote any intrinsic influences of these nationalities, but simply to set apart a certain period of philosophical thinking. But this, I think, is the disadvantage of the term. Usually, in speaking of *Christian* philosophy we intend more than a mere extrinsic influence. I think that the problem of Christian philosophy is meant to raise the possibility of some intrinsic influence on and perfecting of philosophical truth itself.

Fr. DuLac: You seem to be taking for granted that faith does perfect natural science. We have already agreed that it does not perfect the object of the natural science, but before we go on to Aristotle's second point—namely, perfection by reason of certitude—I should like to make clear a fundamental difference between the knowledge of faith and the knowledge of philosophy. Philosophy arrives at evident knowledge. To know for the philosopher means “to see” or to understand. If he has no evidence, he has no knowledge. Faith, on the other hand, is inevident knowledge. We accept, but we do not see the connection between the terms “God” and “triune.” You would not say, then, that faith, which is inevident, could perfect the evidence of philosophy?

Fr. Dillon: No, obviously faith does not have any influence on philosophy in that way. To the extent that philosophical knowledge is evident and faith is not, philosophy is more perfect as knowledge than faith. Admittedly, faith has this note of imperfection about it: the mind in its assent is not at rest. The mind by nature seeks to see the truth, that is, have evidence. Even in faith, which is not evident, we are constantly seeking for evidence, not in the articles themselves, but in what precedes faith, the evidence of credibility, and also in what follows, insofar as we give reasons for our faith.

Fr. DuLac: We have established that faith cannot perfect the object of a philosophical science. To get on to the second point on the perfection of a science, would you say that this would be a fair statement of the problem: Can the faith of a philosopher increase the certitude of a particular demonstration he has in philosophy?

Fr. Dillon: I think that states it well. Incidentally, that was the problem as the seventeenth century theologians saw it and discussed it. They asked: Could a philosopher who is Christian add to the certitude of his philosophical demonstration the certitude which his faith gave him about

the same truth. If this is possible, then his knowledge is positively perfected, because certitude is intrinsic to the act of scientific demonstration, and the philosopher who had such knowledge could truly be called a Christian philosopher.

Fr. DuLac: One of the terms of the problem is certitude. Before we actually go into a discussion of the possibility of the influence of faith on certitude, perhaps we ought to make sure we are clear on the notion of certitude.

Fr. Dillon: The certitude we are speaking of, is of course, formal certitude, the firm adherence of the intellect to one part of a contradiction. Beyond the definition, what ought to be noted is that certitude is not just some characteristic of knowledge, but is the very perfection of knowledge. When the intellect knows reality in the judgment, it may affirm its conformity with varying degrees of strength. The intellect might give assent with some hesitation, as in the case of doubt; or with a certain reservation that the opposite of what it affirms might be true, and this is called opinion. Sometimes, however, the mind gives a total assent, that is, it is moved to its object in a firm and determinate manner without fear that the opposite of what it affirms might be true. This is called certitude. Certitude always denotes firmness, determined and unwavering assent to the knowable object. Hence, the definition: the determined firm adherence of the intellect to its knowable object.

Fr. DuLac: You said that the intellect was "moved to adhere to its object." This raises the question of the motives of certitude. Would you discuss this a little further; I think it will be necessary in order to distinguish between the certitude of faith and the certitude of natural knowledge.

Fr. Dillon: There are two possible causes, or motives, of certitude, which move the intellect to assent:

1) the proper object of the intellect which by evidence moves the intellect to assent. To the extent that the object is evident, that is, that a predicate manifestly belongs to some subject, the intellect can make its assent to such a proposition firmly.

2) the will, which, because it moves all the powers of the soul to their respective acts, moves the intellect to assent.

In scientific knowledge the truth scientifically known is a conclusion arrived at inferentially by way of the discourse. The formal *ratio* or scientific light by which the conclusion is manifestly proved is the premises or the middle term according to a certain formal abstraction from matter. This abstraction or immateriality is the root of the intelligibility in a science. When the intelligibility of the conclusion is manifest to the one knowing it, the conclusion is said to be evident. In scientific knowledge this evident intelligibility moves the intellect to assent firmly to what it sees, i.e., with certitude.

In faith, however, the light under which the truths are known is divine testimony, "*veritas prima in testificando*." In the assent to a proposition of revelation the formal motive by which the mind is moved to assent (i.e., to believe) is the authority of divine testimony, not evidence. The

object in faith, lacking evidence, does not itself move the intellect sufficiently to produce the firm, necessary assent of science. St. Paul calls faith (Heb. 11:1) "the argument of things that appear not," and describes the act of faith in the words, (I Cor. 13:12) "we see now through a glass in a dark manner." The light of faith is not a purely intellectual light; rather, it illuminates the intellect *as moved* by the will. It is well to note that the role of the will is essential in the act of faith. In faith the will does not merely move the intellect to its act, but is involved in the very specification of the act of faith; the will supplies in faith what the object does completely in the act of scientific proof. Hence, the intellect in making an act of faith, assents to the truth not because the truth is evident, but because the object is presented as something congenial (*conveniens*) to the will. "*Credere non potest aliquis nisi volens*," observes St. Augustine. Because the truth of revelation is presented as a *bonum repositum* and the will commands the assent of the intellect, faith is called a voluntary and not a necessary assent.

This essential role of the will is brought out in the definition of faith by St. Augustine (used also by St. Thomas): "*cogitare cum assensu*." That is, in faith there is assent, a firm adherence to the truth proposed. At the same time, however, there remains the 'cogitation' of the intellect not quite at rest, not completely terminated in its act of knowledge because the truth is not evident and does not convince the intellect. The determined adherence and certitude that the intellect does have in faith is caused by the will moving the intellect to adhere firmly to the truth.

Fr. DuLac: From what you have said about the respective certitudes of faith and natural knowledge I am wondering if faith can be said to be more certain. This is important to establish, because, if faith is to perfect the Christian philosopher's knowledge, it should do so by way of giving a stronger certitude than he can find in his natural knowledge. It seems that the certitude of natural scientific knowledge is stronger. First, because certitude seems to imply both firmness of adherence and evidence of the truth to which the assent is given. From what you have said, natural scientific knowledge has both these characteristics, whereas faith has only the firmness of assent. I believe that St. Thomas in his treatment of certitude in the *De Veritate* observes that faith does produce a firmer adherence because of its stronger motive. But then he says that certitude also implies *evidence* of that to which the assent is given. To this extent faith does not have certitude, while scientific knowledge does. Therefore, it seems that we are forced to say that while faith may produce greater firmness of adherence than natural scientific knowledge, nevertheless, considering both the notes of certitude, namely adherence and evidence, it does not produce as great certitude as the natural demonstrative proof.

Fr. Dillon: That objection has a certain strength from the fact that ordinarily evidence does accompany certitude. However, faith compared to natural scientific knowledge is not only as certain, but actually far more certain. Let me put that in the form of an argument: Whatever moves the intellect to assent firmly and determinately to a proposition produces a greater certitude. This is simply the definition of certitude. Now, the

motive of faith, namely divine testimony, is the strongest motive there is. Therefore, it produces the greatest certitude.

What must be clearly understood about certitude is that it consists not in the amount of evidence, but in the firmness of assent. Certitude is not defined through evidence, but through firmness of adherence: "*certitudo est firmitas adhaesionis virtutis cognoscitivae ad suum cognoscibile*," as St. Thomas defines it. In natural knowledge there must be evidence if there is to be certitude. This is simply to say that the intellect is not informed by an object whose intelligibility is not manifested to it. Unless the intellect *sees* that the two extremes go together, it cannot make a determinate assent.

In faith, however, the will, not the intellect moves the intellect to its assent. Faith is more certain simply because its formal motive, God Himself, is the strongest possible motive, and therefore produces the greatest certitude. Because in faith the formal motive moves so surely, faith is more certain than any scientific proof, more certain even than the principle of contradiction or sense knowledge. All of these, though certain, are based on some natural and fallible cause, whereas faith is based on the infallible authority of God Himself. To answer your objection directly, the degree of certitude is not determined by the number of notes, but by the strength of the motive moving the intellect to assent. That is why faith is more certain.

Fr. DuLac: I think you ought also to take into account an admitted imperfection in the act of faith—doubt. The very nature of certitude demands that it determine the mind to a proposition in a firm, unwavering manner to such an extent that all hesitation about it, all fear of error and doubt are excluded. Now this, it seems, is not true in faith. Experience shows that men sometimes doubt about the truths of faith, even withdraw assent, that is, lose their faith. While this does not detract from the truth of what has been revealed, at least it seems to show that *we* are not entirely certain about these truths.

Fr. Dillon: The objection you make would be valid if it could be shown that such doubts as there are in faith had their source in the motive of the certitude. But such is not the case in faith. In human faith there is a real lack of strict certitude because the intellect is not firmly determined. But in divine faith, where the motive is infallible (the authority of God), the doubts do not come from the cause but from ourselves who naturally seek evidence. As I have said before, faith has an imperfection as knowledge in so far as it does not terminate the cogitation of the intellect completely. And this imperfection will not be remedied on this earth. However, if a man doubts about the truths of faith to the extent that he loses his faith, this is not because of the insufficiency of the motive, but because he has withdrawn his motive for assent from the divine testimony given and preferred to rest in his own judgment.

Fr. DuLac: Now that we have seen the problem in terms of certitude, I think you ought to answer it. Let me state the problem as I think you must meet it. Merely to say that faith has a greater certitude than natural science does not solve the problem of Christian philosophy. There

seem to me many possibilities. One man might have the certitude of faith about something and another might have scientific proof about the same. Or, in the same man there might be faith and science but about different objects. Or again, the same man might have faith and science about the same object, but successively. In none of these cases are the two brought together. The problem, it seems to me, must be stated somewhat like this: Can a Christian who is a philosopher *at once* believe and know scientifically the same truth? Can he have at the same time, for example, faith in and evidence of the immortality of the human soul?

Only by bringing faith and philosophical knowledge together in this way can you prove that the philosopher's faith really could influence his science. Further, this it seems, is precisely the most difficult point to establish. An act of faith and an act of scientific knowledge bearing on the same truth seem to be incompatible because of the conditions and effects which they imply in the knower who has them.

Let me explain what I mean. When the philosopher knows by scientific proof, his knowledge is resolved into self-evident principles. Consequently, he assents because he *sees*, or has evidence, of what he knows. But the articles of faith to which he assents are not evident; faith of its very nature is an obscure knowledge. Were a philosopher who is Christian to have faith and science about the same truth, his mind would at once be in movement towards its terms of complete knowledge and have already arrived and rest in that term. In short, how can a man both see and not see at the same time? There is a similar case with the theological virtue of hope. Hope cannot exist in the blessed in heaven because it implies a *motion towards* a good, while being in heaven implies the *possession* of what was hoped for. In like manner, faith implies a certain motion towards a term, that is, the motion of the intellect towards evident knowledge. If that evident knowledge is present as it is in scientific knowledge, then faith cannot be present. But both cannot be present in the same man about the same truth.

Fr. Dillon: I think that this is the essential point of the whole problem. If the philosopher is to be called Christian in any intrinsic sense of that term, it will have to be in so far as his faith can influence his science in the way you have indicated. The objections you raise are very strong; and, to be frank, are not easily answered.

Let me say first of all by way of answer, that it is true that in the same intellect there cannot coexist an *act* of faith and an *act* of scientific and evident proof about the same object. As long as a philosopher who is Christian has a demonstrative proof about some object, e.g., the immortality of the soul, he does not—in fact, he cannot—make an act of faith about this. St. Thomas several times in the tract on faith in the *Summa* as well as in the *De Veritate* clearly and convincingly shows that it is impossible for a man to make an act of faith and an act of evident scientific knowledge about the same truth. His whole argument for the fact that Christ did not have faith is based on this reason.

This, however, does not treat completely the possible relations of faith and science in the philosopher. Another alternative would be this: a

philosopher might make an act of evident demonstrative proof about a particular truth while at the same time having the *habit* of faith. That he can do this is evident since he would all the while be believing other truths about which he had no demonstration. St. Thomas is interested in this point principally because of its relation to the merit of faith. He says, for example: "When a man has the will to believe the things that are of faith on divine authority alone, although he may have a demonstrative reason for some one of them, for example that God is, the merit of faith is not for this reason removed or diminished."⁵ This passage is noteworthy because, although St. Thomas clearly denies the possibility of the same intellect having acts of faith and science about the same object, here he finds no incompatibility in the same intellect having a "demonstrative reason" while at the same time have "a will to believe." So, he concludes, as long as there is this ready obedience to assent, the merit of faith is not diminished.

The same can be said of the certitude of faith, because both merit and certitude spring from the same factor within the act of faith. We merit in faith not because of the number of things to which the mind adheres but because the will is prompt and ready to cling to God as the reason for believing. So, in certitude. The certitude does not come from the fact that the mind adheres to this or that truth; rather, it is caused because the will adheres firmly and unshakeably to God, its supreme good. The will in faith is the cause of the mind's adherence and the reason for its great certitude. Hence, while the Christian philosopher makes a specific act of natural science and has the certitude such an act engenders, he at the same time has his faith habitually and radically, extending to the same truth, though he does not make a specific act of faith about that truth.

Fr. DuLac: What do you mean by saying that the Christian philosopher still retains his faith "radically, extending to the same truth?"

Fr. Dillon: I mean that a habit (in this case, faith) is the root of the particular acts which proceed from it. A habit has a certain universality with regard to particular acts, actual or potential, which fall under that habit. A prudent driver will drive carefully in whatever situation may come up. The habit of faith in a man extends to all that has been revealed. If there should be some truth not known or assented to directly and actually, he nevertheless believes habitually and radically.

Fr. DuLac: Could you cite some examples where the act of faith is not made but where the merit and certitude of faith is present?

Fr. Dillon: Yes, several cases of this sort might be cited. The Blessed Virgin and the Apostles, for example, witnessed, and therefore had evidence, of many things about which we now make acts of faith. However, merely because our faith now has greater extension by reason of more specific acts, it does not follow that we have greater merit and greater certitude about these truths. Or again, the uninstructed Christian does not make as many explicit acts of faith as does the theologian. However, if there is that firm attachment of his will to the *bonum repromissum*, his merit is not diminished, nor is his certitude. He has the certitude of faith habitually and radically about whatever is revealed by faith. If the theologian

⁵ *Summa Theologica*, IIa-IIae, q. 2, a. 10 ad 1.

would point out to him that a certain doctrine belonged to faith, then he would make an act about that truth and his certitude would be actual and directly concerned with that truth. In like manner, the Christian philosopher has faith habitually and radically, and therefore the merit and certitude of faith because of his *affectum credendi*. As long as he has a demonstration about a particular truth, he does not and cannot make an act of faith about this. But he does have the habit of faith which gives him a greater certitude "*in promptitudine animi*" because he is ready to believe the truth of which he has a demonstration. Furthermore, because of his demonstration he has a knowledge which simply speaking is more perfect because he has evidence. The greater perfection of the Christian philosopher consists in this: the demonstration of the Christian philosopher, by reason of the fact that his science is joined with his faith, has not only the certitude proper to the scientific act but also participates in the greater certitude communicated by faith.

Fr. DuLac: I can see from your examples *that* such an added certitude seems reasonable. I wonder, however, if you would explain exactly *how* the Christian philosopher participates in a certitude communicated by faith. I do not see, for example, how his faith can communicate certitude about a particular truth unless he elicits some act or assent. Certitude, as you yourself observed is the determination of the intellect to one part of a contradiction. This implies an act of the intellect. I do not see how there can be certitude without some assent of the intellect.

Fr. Dillon: Let it be repeated that faith does not communicate certitude through an act of belief about the particular truth known through demonstration. But it is possible, however, for the mind to make a judgment in which the certitude of faith will be contained and at the same time this perfection will be communicated to the natural demonstration. The Christian philosopher makes two judgments: 1) an absolute judgment. Here he judges that a certain truth, e.g., the soul is immortal, is contained in the deposit of faith. 2) The second is a comparative judgment in which he judges that he must not cling to sensible things and his natural reason to such an extent that because of these he would judge divine things to be false. This judgment is made in virtue of that effect of faith known as the purification of the heart. This judgment follows naturally upon that tending to things that are above, i.e., to God (faith is the beginning of that tending towards God) and an exclusion of any inordinate attachment to worldly things. Let me return to that first judgment where we can see how certitude is communicated to the natural demonstration. What does the Christian philosopher know about the immortality of the soul? By his natural demonstration he *sees*, i.e., he demonstrates that the soul is immortal. He does not see, i.e., he has no demonstration that the immortality of the soul is revealed by God. This he must believe. In believing he is not making an act of faith in the proposition: the soul is immortal; but he must always believe that God has revealed this truth. The certitude he has about this truth is a natural certitude, produced by the demonstration. But further, he participates in the certitude of faith, since he knows by firm faith that this truth has been revealed by God.

Let me approach this in another way. This truth, "God has revealed that the soul is immortal" is not contained as such in revelation. Nevertheless, it is an object of faith in so far as all truths contained in revelation are believed to be revealed by God. There is a difference in saying "I believe that the soul is immortal," and: "I believe that God has revealed that the soul is immortal." In the first instance the judgment bears on the *quod creditur*, a material object of faith. In this sense too we may say that we believe in God as one of the articles of faith. Now it is precisely about this proposition, namely the soul is immortal that the Christian philosopher does not make an act of faith since he has a demonstrative proof of it. In the second instance, the judgment bears on the *id quo aliquid creditur*, the formal motive of faith itself. In this sense we say, "I believe God." Let it be noted that the *prima veritas* (the formal object in faith) is not only that in the light of which all else is believed, but is also the first thing the mind clings to in faith. And precisely from this the certitude of faith springs. There is no further resolution in faith than to believe God, or to believe God revealing.

To return to the example. In the judgment "the soul is immortal" the intellect of the Christian philosopher is determined to assent to it by the object itself in so far as the evidence of his demonstration moves his intellect to assent. Accordingly, he has the natural certitude which accompanies his demonstration. Over and above this he has also a certitude springing from his faith. While he does not make an act of faith about this particular truth, he knows that God has revealed it and hence has a certitude about it superior to and added to the certitude of his natural demonstration.

Summary of the Discussion.

1. The problem of Christian philosophy is a theological problem. Because the problem is concerned with the influence of faith on natural knowledge, it is considered under the theological virtue of faith.

2. If philosophy is to be called Christian in any real sense of the term, revelation must have an intrinsic influence on philosophical demonstration.

3. Revelation might influence a philosophical demonstration in two possible ways: 1) the object; or, 2) the mode of the science.

4. Faith cannot influence the object of a demonstration intrinsically but only in an extrinsic way. An intrinsic influence on the formal object would change and hence destroy the science. Christian revelation has had an extrinsic influence on the material objects of the philosophical sciences. This may be spoken of as Christian philosophy in the same sense as we speak of Greek philosophy or Eighteenth Century philosophy.

5. It is possible for faith to influence the mode of the act, that is, the certitude of the demonstration. It is possible to speak of faith perfecting this, because faith has a greater certitude than any natural demonstration.

6. There can be no influence of faith on the natural demonstration if that involves an act of faith and an act of demonstration about the same truth. Two such acts by the same knower are impossible.

7. Faith can influence a natural demonstration in so far as the habit of faith extends to the same truth that is being demonstrated. The Christian who is also philosopher, knowing by faith that such a natural truth is also guaranteed by divine authority, has in addition to the certitude of his demonstration a certitude communicated by faith.

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RADIO ADDRESSES DURING THE ANNUAL MEETING

Panel Discussion: *Philosophy as a Way of Life*

Prof. Fitzgerald: The Department of Speech of the University of Notre Dame is happy to present the program which raises the significant issues of our day, Topics of Importance. Each week at this time on this station, members of the Notre Dame Debate Team and their guests discuss an issue which challenges all thinking Americans. Today a special panel is on hand. The American Catholic Philosophical Association has been meeting on the Notre Dame campus for the past three days and several members of the Association have taken time out from a busy schedule to appear on "Topics of Importance." To introduce them, here is Dr. Vincent Smith of the Notre Dame Philosophy Department, Editor of *The New Scholasticism* and author of the *Footnotes on the Atom*.

Dr. Smith: Here with me today are the Rev. Dr. Charles A. Hart, National Secretary of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, the Rev. Dr. David Dillon, of St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., and the Rev. Dr. Henry DuLac of the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn. One of the topics at our meeting is the notion of Christian philosophy, and I am going to begin our panel discussion by asking for a definition, first of all, of philosophy itself. Dr. Hart, would you care to comment on that question? What is philosophy?

Dr. Hart: I think, Dr. Smith, that we could do no better than to go back to the original meaning of the term—philosophy. It comes from two Greek roots meaning "love of wisdom." To the Greeks, wisdom meant knowledge of ultimate causes, and the unified view of reality which would arise by that search for ultimate causes.

Dr. Smith: Does philosophy have anything to do with life or is it merely a kind of abstract, impractical discipline? You know philosophy has a bad reputation among many people. What does philosophy have to do with life?