

Unit I. Being

Chapter I. Being

In this unit we will see how being exists, how lesser beings exist through higher ones, and how the higher causes the lower to come to be.

1. Being

Metaphysics is the study of Being. Being is that which exists. Now, all things exist, or else you couldn't even discuss them; however, even though all these things are existing, they still exist in many different ways:

They can *be* or *exist* in themselves (as substances); they can exist in other things (as accidents); they can exist really, in reality (as Acts); they can exist potentially or possibly (as Potencies, although this isn't *full* existence); things can exist mentally (as concepts, when they are *known* by someone), and one particular being even exists necessarily (The first and highest being, Who IS God). For the moment, don't worry about all these terms; we will learn them later as we go along; but just be aware that they are there and watch out for them when you see them. Thus Being is a very multifaceted and vibrant concept; and in fact it is the most vibrant concept there is, because everything is 'being' in some way.

The word "being" is both a verb (an action) and a noun (a thing). This tells us that although "things be/exist" (a verb), yet once they do exist and continue to exist they become and can be thought of as "a being," a thing (a noun).

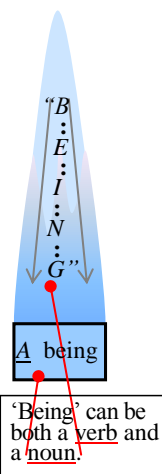


Diagram 1.1

Comment [A1]: As when we say "I'm a human being" (noun) or "He is being mean to me" (verb).

Comment [A2]: They become a thing because God does not just tell something to "be" one time, and then let it suddenly disappear into non-existence or nothingness, but continually tells it to "be" (this is known as Divine Conservation, which will be covered in vol. II on Theology), so that its existence continues and endures, at least for some length of time. Since a thing's act of existence is 'drawn out' and extended through time in this way, we can then think of an act-of-existing as being something permanent, and hence we can think of it as a concrete solid "being" (a noun). However God can always withdraw His act of Conservation and cause something to be suddenly annihilated. Of course, we know that because of God's Goodness and Wisdom, God would not do such a thing, or at least not without a very good reason.

Comment [A3]: This is not truth of speech (defined as correspondence of word to thought), but ontological truth (truth of being; Gk. *ontos* = "a being"), as when we speak of "a true connoisseur," or "true freedom," or "true love." Ontological truth is correspondence of thing to the plan of the one who created it or to the perfect ideal of that kind of thing.

Comment [A4]: Truth comes from Being and proceeds to Oneness (according to Diagram 1.2). Therefore Truth within a being comes from all the ways that that being can be known to be (green, to my left, frog, 3 years old, etc.), and proceeds to *one* concept that can be known: *Kermit*. Likewise in a syllogism, no matter how many premises you begin from, you only get one conclusion.

Comment [A5]: We will see in the Book on Theology that the reason God creates all beings in these four ways has to do with God's very nature. God is true as the Word (God the Son, the Eternal Word), He is Good as the Holy Spirit (whose name is "Love"), He is Being (existing) more perfectly and eternally than any other being is being, and He is One, or *undivided* in his nature.

Comment [A6]: You may notice also, that the four Transcendentals correspond to the 3 Persons + 1 Nature of the Blessed Trinity. See preceding comment.

2. Transcendentals

All human beings have an understanding of God (Rom. 1:18) because all creatures reflect God in four fundamental ways, known as The four Transcendentals. Every being is one, every being is a being (*existing*), every being is true (to the idea of God who created it, and within itself as an integrated being), and every being is good (at least at the time it is created), just like God Himself is One, Being, True, and Good, though in a much more perfect way than we are. These four transcendentals are then the four ways that God creates all beings to reflect Himself.

Not only other creatures, but humans also reflect God in these, ways, and in fact reflect Him more fully and completely than any other creature. This is because humans—more than anything else—are created in the image of God. We

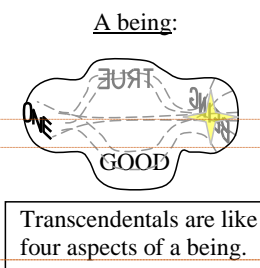


Diagram 1.2

will see in later chapters that each of the four transcendentials are poignantly expressed by a different part of human nature.

Transcendentals are *qualities* that transcend through all being. To *transcend* (from the Lat. *transcendere*) means “to climb or mount through [something].” So these qualities mount up through all Being as part of the beings’ very substance. How do they mount up? We shall see in the next section.

Questions:

1. What is a Transcendental? List The four Transcendentals. **Ans: A transcendental is a quality that mounts up or passes through all/every being, as part of its very nature. They are: (1) Oneness, (2), Being (3) Truth and (4) Goodness.**
2. How do these transcendentials relate us to God?
Ans: They are reflections of God within us.
3. Pick two completely unrelated beings (e.g. a chair, and a far-away planet) and compare and contrast their transcendentials:
 - a. How are they each one?
 - b. How are they each being?
 - c. How are they each true?
 - d. How are they each good?
4. Which of the two transcendentials have comparative and superlative degrees? Do all four transcendentials then function in the same way? **Ans: True (truer, truest) and Good (better, best); no.**
5. Use a keyword or italicized word from this section to fill in the blank: “To be like God and avoid racism or discrimination, one must _____ color/gender/race/etc.” **Ans: Transcend.**
6. Connection to Theology: The four Gospels each show that Christ is one of the four transcendentials. Which do you think does which?
Ans: John – Shows that Christ was True (as God). Luke – Shows that Christ was a (human) being (like us). Mark – Shows that Christ was supernaturally good. Matthew – Shows that Christ was one (i.e. fulfilled ALL of the OT expectations of him).
7. Connection to Theology: Correlate the four Transcendentals to the three persons and one nature in God.
 - a. Who performs each of these roles in God? **Ans: God the Son, the Word, performs the role of Truth; God the Holy Spirit performs the role of Goodness; God the Father performs the role of Being, and they unite perfectly in one nature.**
 - b. Does this mean that God the Father isn’t “True?” **Ans: No. God is something in an infinite manner. So when God is ‘True’ His Truth is so perfect that it is Good as well. Similarly, inasmuch as God is a Being, God’s Being is so perfect, that it is True and Good and Unified, at the same time. Likewise, God’s common nature (Oneness) is so united, that it is True-to-itself (i.e. none of the persons of the Blessed Trinity ever disagree) and Good and a Being in its own right (which is why we call God “God” rather**

Comment [A7]: Oneness is found in the body; Truth is known by the Intellect; Goodness is willed, and Being is conferred by and centered in the soul.

Comment [A8]: Point to the diagram at right, and ask the students whether they can see what is transcending in the picture. [Ans: The gray dashed lines.] Tell them that normally qualities/accidents are tacked onto you externally, that is, you can get rid of them or lose them or, conversely, gain new ones from time to time. However the four Transcendentals are like *internal qualities*, qualities inside your own being, or inside the marrow of your own substance, and so you can never get rid of them. Having them is an intrinsic part of existing. Then ask them “according to these lines, where do each of the four Transcendentals come from?” Ans: From the first transcendental, *Being* [Note yellow flash of creation]. So Being can represent specifically either the far-right transcendental, or generally the whole picture [the 4-lobed outline], because the whole picture comes from that flash of existence on the right by which God creates you and holds you in existence. If the students want to know more about what this flash of light is, and how God creates you, tell them that it represents a *word* that God is speaking into you, keeping you in existence.

Comment [A9]: Take one of their chosen beings, and ask the following questions: By what is it ‘one’? Is it ‘one’ by a geographic location and border? Is it ‘one’ by some principle that belongs to each of its members and permeates throughout it? Is it one only loosely and incidentally by vaguely seeking some common goal (e.g. as the Democrat party is ‘one’ in its platform)? [Possible answers: They are ‘one’ by a substantial unity (e.g. a crystal) / by an accidental unity (e.g. a bag of green things) / by a loose moral unity (e.g. the Democrat party) / etc. Also, *how much* are they each *one thing*? Are they greatly or even substantially self-united, or are they loosely and only incidentally united? Is their border/edge hazy or undefined in places (e.g. like the Roman empire just before its fall)?

Comment [A10]: How are they each being /existing (right now)? Are they existing physically in front of us? Are they long gone and dead, and now existing only in mental being—in memory? Are they existing only in the mind of God as a future possibility, and have not yet been created? [Possible answers: They are existing in ‘real’ being / in ‘potential’ being / in ‘mental’ being / in ‘physical’ being / etc.]

Comment [A11]: One way to find out in what way a thing is true, is to ask yourself “What does its existence *tell* you?” It is a true what?

Comment [A12]: Are they Good in themselves? Are they also good *for* something? Which object is *better*? Who alone is *best* [Ans: God]? If a student picks a being which is bad, point out to them that even bad beings (e.g. the fallen angels), are still good / marvelous / wonderful, if not in their actions, at least in their being, as God created them.

Comment [A13]: We will see later how these two transcendentials are different.

than “three Gods”). In conclusion then, any one of them is indirectly also the other three of the Transcendentals, as well. However if we want to know which one is God the Father *primarily*, we must say that God the Father just *IS* (as Being). Conversely, the word “True” doesn’t apply primarily to God the Father, but applies primarily to God the Son (who is the *True image* or reflection of God the Father). God the Father is also ‘True,’ but the most poignant instance of Truth in the Holy Trinity is God the Son because he is ‘True’ to God the Father, whom He images. We see then that they differ by which one is most primarily and properly that way.

Comment [A14]: This is His most poignant instance of Truth. We will see later that truth is the *correspondence* of the lower to the Higher. God the Son is True because everything in Him corresponds correctly to something in God the Father.

Comment [A15]: “Properly” here means possessing that characteristic ‘as his *property*.’

8. Connection to Physics: Do a little research on the qualities of electromagnetic radiation (light). Draw parallels and note any striking similarities between the four Transcendentals and the characteristics or properties of light. **Ans: Being and Oneness are like Light’s wave-particle duality. Truth and goodness are like the electro- and magnetic- components of a light-wave.**

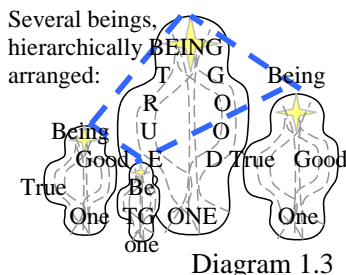
3. Order

Transcendentals are special because they transcend or pass through all things, regardless of their worth, size, position, relation to other things, etc. But what about ordinary objects? How do they exist? As we look at the world, we come to realize that besides transcendentals, there is order in it (Wis 11:20). In all orders, certain things are prior and other things are subsequent or later than others. Certain things are better than others; certain things are higher; certain

Order: Kinds of Before-and-After or Togetherness:

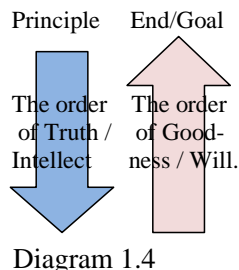
- * In time: Two things are ‘together’ in time when they occur simultaneously. Two events are ‘before-and-after’ in time when the light coming from one of them arrives before the light coming from the other.
- * In causality: If one thing causes another, then it is ‘prior in causality.’ They are ‘together in causality’ when they both cause a third event.
- * Logically: Two things are before-and-after logically if one *implies* the other. Things are logically ‘together’ if one restates the other.
- * In goodness: Two things are before and after in Goodness if one thing is better than the other, either better in itself or more useful for accomplishing some further goal. Two things are together in goodness if they are equally good or useful.

(There could be many other kinds of before-and-after, but these are just the main ones.)



things are sublimer, while others are less good, lower, and more ordinary. We see then that beings can be arranged in a hierarchy from lower to higher.

Two of the transcendentals in particular help us to



ascend and descend through this hierarchy of Being. These are Truth and Goodness. By means of Truth, we are able to descend through the hierarchy of Being, knowing certain things as parts of others. By means of Will we are able to ascend in a different way through the hierarchy of Being, seeing the higher purposes and uses for which each thing was made.

Why does this order occur? This order is God's way of communicating to us about Himself through His very creation. When we see an order, we are led to follow the pattern and infer what lies at the beginning (or end) of the pattern. If we see an order of things arranged from less good to better-and-better, we are led to conclude that there must be a *best*; if we see an order of things beginning from the complex and mixed up, to more and more homogenous, then we are led to conclude that there must be a *purest*; and if we see an order of things arranged from small to large, then we are led to conclude that there must be a *largest*.

However this rule doesn't always hold true, at least in the case of mixed perfections. For instance, just because one thing is tasty and another thing is tastier doesn't mean that there is a tastiest. Why not? Because tastiness is a mixed perfection involving several distinct calculations all at once (saltiness, sweetness, etc.). In the same way, one person may be more Celtic than another, but there is no such thing as an apex or maximum of Celtic-ness. Why not? Because Celticness itself is a hodgepodge or 'grabbag' of diverse characteristics and traditions and since they are diverse, there can be no comparison between them (e.g. if you're the best at Celtic dancing, but I'm the best at bagpipe playing, does that make either one of us more Celtic than the other? No, because between things of different genus, there can be no comparison). Thus we cannot conclude that there is a greatest in mixed perfections.

We can only conclude that there is a 'greatest' in absolutely simple perfections. Absolutely simple perfections are perfections which have a direct connection to God and thus go to a maximum of infinite perfection. For example, mercy, justice, immensity, truth, etc. all are found in God, and so there is a most merciful, most just, truest, etc. Indeed God is infinitely merciful, infinitely just, etc.

The above is the essential proof for God's existence. It demonstrates that the divine qualities (i.e. absolutely simple perfections) individually exist. However, as we shall see in Section 3.6.4 on the Existential Fallacy, it doesn't prove that there is a single being who unites *all* of these perfection within Himself. Thus there is a further need for an *existential* proof of God's existence.

St. Thomas Aquinas offers "Five Ways" to prove God's existence, of which the 4th is the essential way, already stated. The other four ways to prove God's existence are divided between intellectual and willful and positive and negative (or contrary-to-fact). The two positive ways prove that *God exists*; and the two negative ways prove that God cannot not exist.

Aquinas' Five Ways to Prove God's Existence:

1. From first mover	Willful	Negative
2. From efficient cause	Intellectual	Positive
3. From necessity and possibility	Intellectual	Negative
4. --- Essential ---		
5. From the governance of things	Willful	Positive

Comment [A16]: These two processes of ascending and descending are *separate* (hence they are drawn as separated, and not as overlapping). Whereas Intellect normally knows something as a *part* of another, and thus normally travels from the principle of the thing down through its substance, Will normally wills an entire thing as being '*for*' something else, and thus Will does not travel through substance, but makes the leap from one substance up to another.

Qualification: Of course, in making this leap Will really is *inside* of the second substance, but you don't realize it because the second substance is at that moment only 'potentially' present and hasn't yet come to apply here-and-now. For example, as you are willing to lay a foundation for the sake of building a skyscraper, that foundation is already virtually 'in' and *part of*, and *belonging to* the whole skyscraper, even though the skyscraper isn't yet present. At this point, the skyscraper is there only as an idea: It is *spiritually* present, though not yet physically.

Comment [A17]: Have the students look up inference in the Glossary, so as to know what the word "infer" means. [Ans: To supply/suggest an answer.]

Comment [A18]: It's like trying to compare 'apples and oranges.'

Comment [A19]: Nevertheless, this doesn't stop judges from choosing certain criteria as being *more important* than other criteria, and then ranking different things according to those criteria: For example, (1) figure-skating performances, (2) talent shows, and (3) restaurants are all mixed-perfections that are nevertheless compared and ranked.

Comment [A20]: It becomes a "proof" to someone, only if they admit that there can be an infinite or maximum in that genus. Thus some people will see the logical cogency of this proof and affirm it, whereas others will not see it as a "proof." If a person doubts whether there can even be infinite justice or infinite truth, then it will not be a "proof" for them, as settling the matter. Rather, it will only be a "proof" for those who can follow, understand, and agree with it. However the fact that certain people cannot recognize proofs as "proof," doesn't mean that it is any less a proof. Generally, it can be expected that a person who is wise or trained in that field will recognize the cogency of such a proof, though others may not.

Comment [A21]: These are commonly known as "The Five Ways" to prove God's existence, cf. *Summa*, I.2.3.c.

Aquinas' first way to prove God's existence is from a first mover. However it might be helpful to think of it as a first accelerator or first initiator of activity. Aquinas' argument is that nothing is in motion except that which is put into motion. However if nothing were put into motion to begin with, then nothing would now be in motion. However things now are in motion, and so there has to be something in motion to begin with, and this is God.

Aquinas' second way to prove God's existence is from an efficient cause. Aquinas argues that all that exists, exists because its cause is simultaneously in existence with it. If you remove the cause, the effect is simultaneously removed or destroyed as well. We call this a *per se* series, that is, a series of causes in which there is a direct connection of Being between the two. For instance, if you remove a government, its laws and taxes are simultaneously nullified as well; or if you remove the only light in the room, then all images will instantaneously disappear. Aquinas' argument (against Descartes?) is that things exist, and so an efficient cause must exist, and this is God.

Aquinas' third way to prove God's existence is from a consideration of the possibility or contingency of things. We find many objects that are possible either to be or not to be. However, if everything is truly 'possible' either to be or not-to-be, then every once in a while everything would cease to be. However, if even once everything had ceased to be, then nothing would exist now. Consequently we must conclude that it is false to state that everything is possible either to be or not be. Consequently something must be necessary, having the cause of its necessity within itself, and this we call God.

Aquinas' fifth way to prove the existence of God is through the good governance of the world (universe). Aquinas points out that beings which don't possess reason (e.g. animals, plants, even inanimate objects), nevertheless seek out and, by action, repeatedly obtain ends that are not just good, but *best* for the whole world. Since this is best for the whole world (cf. Wisdom 1:14), it is part of the Common Good which—as we shall study in Section 4.3.2—is always under the oversight and control of the one who has charge over all of society. Since in this case the "society" is the society of the whole universe, we must conclude that there is a ruler over the universe who has concern for its common goodness. Another way of stating it is this: Since there is no in-built and eternal principle of *evil* in the interworkings of the world (no principle of eternal, self-perpetuating evil), we must obviously conclude that there must be one who is ruling over it that intends its goodness, and this must be God, since God alone is good in every way.

We see then that there are four existential ways to prove God's existence.

Questions:

1. Decide which is prior . . .
 - a. . . . in causality: The force of a cue on a billiard ball or the recoiling force of the ball back on the cue. Ans: **The force of the cue on the billiard ball.**
 - b. . . . in Goodness: A president effectively doing his job or a departmental manager effectively doing his job. Ans: **Objectively, the president does a greater service for society than the departmental manager, but subjectively the departmental manager may be better at his job than the**

Comment [A22]: Aquinas isn't talking about motion as the time-rate of change in locational Becoming (in meters/second), but motion as in *change* inside itself. For instance if you say "I am moved [or stirred] by your beautiful music," you aren't talking about a locational kind of moving, but an existential kind of moving. Aquinas' example is that fire "moves" wood into the state of burning. The wood isn't here traveling; it is rather "moving" in the sense of departing one state of Being and entering into another. One way to think of this proof is not as "first mover," but "first alter-er."

Comment [A23]: This is the contrary-to-fact situation.

Comment [A24]: Constructing the idea of *per se* series in the listener's mind is the easiest, and most direct way of demonstrating the existence of God to a person. We will see below (in Section 1.4.2) that *per se* series do indeed exist, even in the physical universe.

Comment [A25]: Descartes famously doubted whether *he* himself exists, then erasing his doubt by the famous "cogito ergo sum" ("I think, therefore I am."). Aquinas, by contrast, takes existence as self-evident. Although Descartes might be entitled to doubt whether He himself as an essence or individual exists (e.g. as indistinct from the world-essence, as in Pantheism), Descartes cannot doubt that something exists, and this indeterminate being—this "something" existing (without concern for what it is)—is the heart of Aquinas' argument.

Comment [A26]: This is the situation which is not contrary-to-fact, and negative, but *positive*. It is a positive proposition which Aquinas is asserting: "Things exist!"

Comment [A27]: This is the part that is contrary-to-fact.

Comment [A28]: "... Nothing comes from nothing; nothing ever could." --from the song "Something Good" in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *The Sound of Music*.

Comment [A29]: The supposition (i.e. that all things are able to be or not to be) leads to an inherent contradiction, and thus we must deny the supposition.

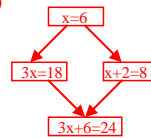
Comment [A30]: For instance, if the world's progress were always at one person's expense, who just got worse, and worse—and against their Will—then we might conclude that its ruler was evil, or that it has more than one ruler, one evil and one good (Dualism). But the evidence is that the world becomes better and better, not worse and worse. ...

Comment [A31]: Sin and Death have entered into the world, which hampers this argument, but doesn't overthrow it, because Sin and Death can be shown not to reign eternally: Sin is always conquered by Justice, and after Death is done with. ...

Comment [A32]: God alone is good in every way.

Comment [A33]: Point out to the students that since "for every force there is an equal and opposite reaction force" (Newton's 3rd Law of Motion), these two events are practically, if not really simultaneou... ..

- president. Thus even a street-sweeper can incite love, admiration, and gratitude if he does his job well.
- c. . . . in time: The year 1960AD or the year 1450AD. Ans: 1450.
- d. . . . in Being: DNA or the body. Ans: DNA. The body fully depends upon DNA to know how to be; DNA does not fully—or at all—depend upon the body.
2. Give examples of hierarchies in creation. Organize the following from prior to posterior:
- a worm, a tiny planaria, a snake, a rod-bacterium. Ans: bacterium, planaria, worm, snake (in time); or snake, worm, planaria, bacterium (in goodness);
 - Green, orange, yellow, violet, indigo, red, blue. Ans: (Prior) VIBGYOR (Posterior).
 - deception, lie, truth. Ans: Truth is prior to deception and truth is prior to lies (in both goodness, and logically)
 - $3x+6=24$, $3x=18$, $x+2=8$, $x=6$ Ans: $x=6$ is prior; the middle 2 expressions come next with no particular order, but are together in causality (since either one can be deduced from $x=6$); and $3x+6=24$ comes last.
 - a hand, a person, a finger, an arm. Ans: person, arm, hand, finger. (In unity,
3. Fill in the blank: “If you *will* something, then it is—at the moment you will it—_____er than you. If you *know* something, then it is—at the moment you know it—_____er than you. Ans: higher, lower.
4. Give at least two examples (one from a living creature, and one from an inanimate object) that demonstrate how things naturally seek the positions that are ‘best’ for themselves and other beings. Ans: Ladybugs control insect pests, which is good for themselves and good for all large animals that feed on plants. Insects eat plants, concentrating certain unique chemicals in their body. Different oceans of air and water seek out heights that are optimal for the world (e.g. if ice were to sink rather than float, life would not be possible). Fuels (e.g. oil) and minerals are liberally spread throughout the world. If men had arisen earlier in geohistory, they wouldn’t have been able to use these natural resources to build up society.



An act of Creation:

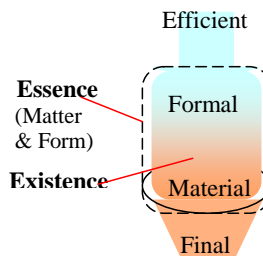


Diagram 1.5

4. Causes

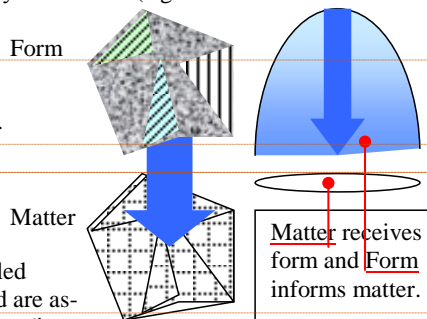
If something is one, being, true, and good, it would seem to be complete in itself, and so we might wonder why there isn’t just *one* being in the universe rather than many. If the truth be told, it *would* indeed

be possible for there to be just one being in the Universe. After all, God is complete in Himself and He doesn't need any other being besides Himself (CCC 317). However it is also in God's power to *cause* other existents (other beings), if He should so choose, and so we must now consider how something can be *caused*. Any act or any being (for any being is already an act of existing), can have up to four causes: Material, formal, final, and efficient.

A material cause is primarily one's physical *matter* (e.g. one's body), but secondarily it can be the situation in which a thing exists. A formal cause is the form(s) that something takes, and can be thought of as the thing itself. An efficient cause is something that makes or 'effects' a form to be or come to be. And a final cause is the end, purpose, goal, or reason for why something is created.

Two of these causes (Matter and Form) comprise a thing's *essence* and are called intrinsic because they belong to that thing and are as-if-were 'inside' of that thing. A thing's essence (its matter and form) exists for all eternity in the mind of God; however, just because there is an essence of something does not mean that it yet exists. For that to happen existence (or *being*) must be granted to that essence, and existence cannot be granted unless two more additional causes (final and efficient) arise and exert their influence. Efficient and Final causes are called extrinsic because they come to the being from without. An efficient cause is a source of existence, and a final cause is a terminus or ultimate purpose for existence; thus to grant an act of existing to something, an efficient cause must *make it to be*, and the efficient cause must have some reason (a final cause) for making it to be.

Diagram 1.6



Proper vocabulary usage: *Matter receives form and form informs matter.*
 A ratio or "reason," (or "account," or "explanation") is the reason for why something happens. A ratio can be a sentence stating one's intentions, or a plan, or a physical law, or a deep, metaphysical principle. In general, every efficient cause has a ratio as its final cause for acting.

Questions:

1. Name the four causes, tell which are extrinsic and which are intrinsic, and given an example of each. **Ans: Efficient and Final are extrinsic; Material and Formal are intrinsic. Examples given may vary.**
2. It might seem easy for your maker (efficient cause) to cause you to be, but in what special way does . . .
 - a. your matter cause you to be? **Ans: Your matter is the context in which you exist, and—as your body—it makes you be different from other human beings. Without matter, humans would be indistinguishable from one another.**
 - b. your form cause you to be? **Ans: Without your form you**

Comment [A34]: Make sure the students know the difference between "existence" (noun) and "existents" (participle):

The "ns" or "nt" (see chart below) indicates a participle (a verbal adjective) in Latin. In Latin, adjectives can represent not just qualities but *things* that have that quality. So the word "existents," deriving from Latin, can mean not just "existing" (like an adjective), but something that is existing: "an existing [thing]."
 existens-----the existing thing (subj.)
 existentes/existentia-----the existing things (subj.)
 . existens-----of the existing thing
 existentium-----of the existing things
 existenti -----to/for the existing thing
 existentibus-----to/for the existing things
 . existentem-----the existing thing (obj.)
 existentes/existentia-----the existing things (obj.)
 . existenti -----by/with/from the existing thing
 existentibus-----by/with/from the existing things

Comment [A35]: Cf. "Proper Vocabulary Usage" box at the start of Chapter 3.

As when you ask someone "What's the *matter*," meaning "In what *circumstances / situation / surroundings* do you find yourself?" Indeed the body is only one's *matter* in the sense that it is the *situation in which you find yourself*.

Comment [A36]: An efficient cause is like an agent pushing; a final cause is like an object pulling or drawing or attracting.

Comment [A37]: Make sure the students know the difference between "effect" and "affect." To **effect** is to make something to be, usually *out of* nothingness—at least in God's case—(the prefix "e-" means "out of" in Latin) and will be shown to correspond to 1st Act later in this Unit. To **affect** is to "make *to/ward*" something, that is, to take something that already exists and alter or adapt it in some way toward some goal. Affecting will be shown to correspond to 2nd Act later in this unit.

Comment [A38]: *Being* and *Becoming* are two aspects of creation. *Being* applies to pure forms (angels, ideas, God, etc.), because they are not affected by time. *Becoming* applies to forms that exist in matter (human beings, rocks, stones, etc.).

Comment [A39]: Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa*, I.82.1.c. on intrinsic and extrinsic causes.

Comment [A40]: Thus God foreknew you from all eternity (cf. Ps. 139:16).

Comment [A41]: Nothing happens without a purpose! Especially when it comes to creating things, nothing is created without a purpose. Even a paper box that came out with a tear and was discarded and never used still had a purpose: The fact of its getting made paid and occupied the workers who made it. Also, even if it wasn't used, its purpose was to *be available* for use, should someone have wanted it, despite the tear. Just because it wasn't used in a grander way doesn't mean that it didn't have a purpose.

Comment [A42]: Aquinas says that without matter there would only be one individual of each species (*Summa*, I.50.4.c). Thus angels (who lack matter) are each of a separate species from one another.

wouldn't be you, but you'd be some other form.
c. your goal/purpose/end cause you to be? Ans: Without a goal or purpose for your existence, you would never have been created in the first place.

3. What two things can a material cause be? Which one is internal and which one is external and more ethereal? Ans: A material cause can be physical matter (i.e. a body) or a situation/context/set-of-circumstances. The situation is comparatively external and ethereal, because it involves a spiritual unity beyond oneself. Physical matter is comparatively internal because it is a unity primarily within one's own being.

4. Surmise: Why do you think that a thing's efficient and final causes must exist outside of it (extrinsically)? Is there any being whose efficient and final causes are intrinsic? Ans: Efficient and Final cause must come from outside something, because no being exists of necessity; only God exists of necessity, and so only His efficient and final causes are intrinsic to (inside of) Himself.

Exception: In a certain sense, Life and machines can be thought of as things that have their efficient (food/energy) and final causes (free will or spirit or purpose) partly within themselves. For instance, life can determine itself to some end (as shown by evolution, and by the free choice of rational agents), and machines can move themselves as directed by some program.

Comment [A43]: Form just distinguishes one thing from another, so everything has a form; without form nothing exists.

Comment [A44]: In a manner of speaking, God the Father can be regarded as the efficient cause of God the Son because God the Son's substances comes from God the Father. However, God the Son never had a determinate beginning in time, and so "Efficient Cause" should be used only loosely of God. Likewise God the Father and God the Son together can be regarded as the efficient cause of God the Holy Spirit, in the same 'loose' manner of speaking.

Comment [A45]: Just because things may evolve and determine for themselves what they should be or how they should act, does not mean that they are outside of God's power or planning. After all, it is said that "All things are possible with God" (e.g. Matt. 19:26), so God in a certain manner has planned for our free choices. Also, such things don't have total freedom to determine themselves, or to do absolutely anything (e.g. to change the laws of physics); rather they only have freedom to act in certain limited ways (known as their *faculties*).

5. Horizontal-ness and Vertical-ness

In the diagrams above (except for Diagram 1.2), you may have noticed that things are represented in a particular way. Certain things are horizontal and other things are vertical. In particular, you may have noticed in Diagram 1.5 that Form appears to flow vertically, whereas Matter appears to expand horizontally. This is indeed the case, and this will be a common theme in this book. In general, vertical-ness is anything that changes or evolves in the kind of Being that it is. By contrast, horizontal-ness is anything which changes in a way that doesn't impact what kind of Being it is. For instance addition of more matter, and growth in quantity would be represented as a horizontal growth. Likewise the enumeration of two qualities that are relatively equal (e.g. blue and green or boys and girls) would occur in a horizontal manner; lastly horizontal (though not vertical) locational motion, would of course be represented in a horizontal manner (as we are in fact familiar with, as demonstrated by maps and the horizontal geography of our world). By contrast, anything that changes in kind or energy would be vertical. Words are vertical (since the predicate modifies the subject), growth in energy or potential energy is vertical (since to a certain extent you become a different kind of thing by switching energy states—e.g. ice becomes water), and in general anything that is obviously higher, better, more inclusive, more universal, sublimer, simpler or more fundamental than another is 'higher.' In general then, anything that is changing being in

Comment [A46]: When a rocket 'takes off,' it grows in kinetic and potential energy, and this is technically vertical. However, if it could go up without significantly changing its energy, then it would be represented as horizontal. For instance, the traveling of a light-beam across the entire universe is a horizontal event, no matter what direction the light beam is going. However, the emission of that light-beam at its source would be a downward event (since the emitting particle is losing energy), and the absorption of that light-beam at its terminus would be an upward event (since the receiving particle is gaining energy).

Comment [A47]: In difficult cases, tell the students to follow their intuition about what to call horizontal and what to call vertical, and they'll probably be right. All they have to remember is that anything that changes in its essential being is vertical, and anything that is stagnant or changing in a non-essential (or *accidental*) way is horizontal.

an essential way is vertical, whereas anything that is stationary or changing in a non-essential way is horizontal.

All diagrams in this book will follow one of two conventions: Either the vertically sublimer direction will be 'up' or the vertically sublimer direction will be pointing to the right. On those rare occasions when it is pointing to the right, it will usually be noted by an asterisk (*) next to the diagram.

Questions:

1. Is the following horizontal or vertical?
 - a. Growing up. **Ans: Vertical.**
 - b. Getting pushed aside by another person. **Ans: Horizontal.**
 - c. A society collapsing. **Ans: Vertical.**
 - d. The travel of light through empty space. **Ans: Horizontal.**
 - e. Promotion in a company. **Ans: Vertical**
 - f. Spinning of an electron around a nucleus. **Ans: Horizontal.**
2. T/F: On this earth where we live, all motion involves at least a little verticalness within it. Explain. **Ans: True. Since you must burn energy and exert force to move (instead of effortlessly gliding along, as you would in space), any time you move you are declining in energy (vertical downward motion), at least a little bit. Thus you don't change purely horizontally on earth; you change mostly horizontally. However, since everything is always a little difficult/bad or beneficial/good, nearly everything slightly affects the vertical level of being that you are.**

Comment [A48]: Since getting pushed isn't vertical (doesn't change the kind or level of being that you are), it doesn't affect your eternal destiny. We should be willing to step aside for others, and let others shine in their own ways.

Comment [A49]: However the emission or absorption of a light-beam/photon at the start or end of its journey would be vertical. See first comment at the start of this section.

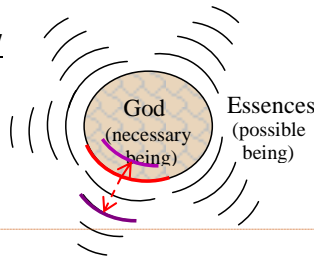
Chapter II. Essences

1. Essence

Before we can consider how God could create/cause lesser participated likenesses of Himself, we have to consider how it is even possible that there could be lesser participated likenesses of Him: How does an essence come to be?

From all eternity, God the Son contains within Himself all the forms of whatever is possible, for He Himself knows not only all that is in God—everything that *is* and *must be*—but also everything that God *can* create—everything that *is possible*. Now just because God knows something as *possible* doesn't mean that it yet exists. For that, existence must be granted to it. However before it exists, it is *possible* to exist; we say that it is potential, or *in potency*. Something that is in potency is able to be acted upon, able to be created, and we will see that Potency and Act are two

Diagram 1.7

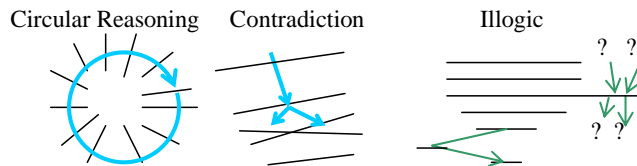


By knowing a form within Himself, God is able to *also* know—by analogy—what its essence would be if it were to exist outside of Himself.

Comment [A50]: Remind the students that an essence is made up of two causes: formal and material (see Diagram 1.5). Thus if we explain how an essence comes to be, we will have explained how God causes two of the four causes of beings (but final and formal causes still need to be explained).

correlative principles that describe everything in the created world. At their base, most simple level then, essences are what is *possible* to be.

But *what is possible to be?*
 What is an essence?
 An essence is an ordered arrangement of forms or truths (and, incidentally, goodnesses as well)



Circular reasoning and contradiction are impossible, while illogic is disorderly and thus not good.

Diagram 1.8

The only limitation on this ordering is that no truth or form which follows later can contradict anything that came before: Everything that follows must be logically consistent with what preceded. We might call this the Law of Logical Consistency, and it holds true because not even God can make a contradiction. An essence then, is an ordered arrangement of truths in which each later truth logically follows from a prior truth. Now “logically follows” doesn’t mean that you’d be able to infer the later from seeing the prior, but only that once you see the later, it cannot contradict, or be inconsistent with what was prior. We might say that the latter must ‘consist’ with the prior.

At this stage let us consider a real essence: There are two ways to demonstrate an essence. One is in formal format, and the other is in material Venn-diagram format:

An Example of an Essence: The Essence of Man

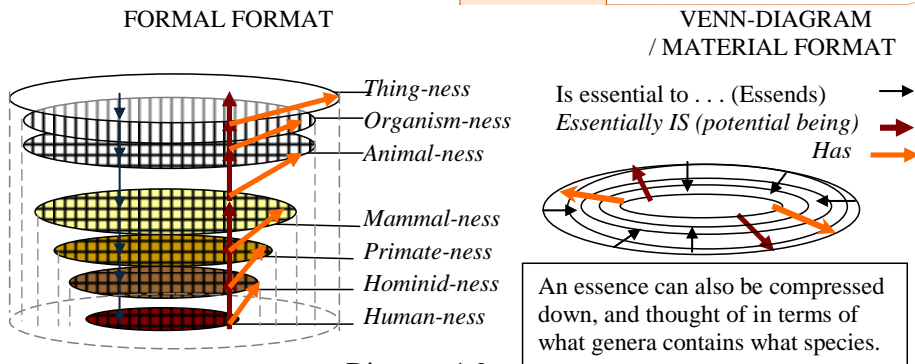


Diagram 1.9

As we look at this essence, we should think of it as different shades or filters of colored glass. The Being that is thing-ly, becomes ‘qualified’ or ‘limited’ (or ‘specified’) by the essence of organism-ness to now refer to only those things that are living. Thus everything under the ‘organism’ circle is an organism, and everything

Proper Vocabulary Usage:
 “Essential to...” (Active format)
 “Of the essence of...” (Passive) } These are synonyms

Comment [A51]: Note that the flat lines in diagrams 1.7 above, and 1.8 below, are really supposed to be fore-shortened circles (cf. 3-Dimensional view in Diagram 1.9).

Comment [A52]: Ask the students “So which two transcendentals comprise an essence?” Ans: Truth and Goodness.

Comment [A53]: After all, the Holy Trinity is definitely ordered (Father comes before Son which comes before Holy Spirit), and so it is logical by extension, to assume that God the Son is ordered in His knowledge.

Comment [A54]: In regard to “essentially being” or “having” (see the key beside the Venn Diagram side of Diagram 1.9), one of these makes room for substantial being, and the other for accidental being. You essentially are that which is part of your substance—i.e. directly above you; you accidentally are things that are not part of your substance, but only intersect your substance (but intersect other things as well)—i.e. relatively to the side of you. Thus each accidental being arrow (“Has”) goes horizontally toward the extremity of the class-in-question to indicate that it is regarding that class *as if it were* accidental to you (rather than substantial to you, as it incidentally also is). Cf. 2nd-to-last diagram of the Handout entitled “The Material Realm as Mirror Image of the Formal Realm,” where what is substantial to you is directly and vertically in line with you.

Comment [A55]: Tell the students that each of these circles is known as a “determination” because it determines what came before in some specific way.

outside of it is not an organism. Another way you can think about it is like a string of billboards on a superhighway, or as in a film strip in which the slides rapidly follow one another, making a movie. As you move from top to bottom through the essence, each new concept is an apt addition to the ones that came before: Thus . . .

Example:

An organism is a living thing.
 An animal is a mobile, living thing.
 A mammal is a nursing, mobile, living thing.
 A primate is a hand-having, nursing, mobile, living thing.
 A hominid is a large-brained, hand-having, nursing, mobile, living thing.
 A man is a rational, large-brained, hand-having, nursing, mobile, living thing.

By the time you have enumerated the last, complete string of characteristics you have an idea of how to think about an essence, and indeed how God Himself thinks about essences as He creates them: First He thinks “thing,” then He thinks “living,” then He thinks “backboned,” etc. He does not skip ahead unnecessarily, but does everything perfectly and completely, at each step of the way. Nothing is contradictory to what came before, but rather each thing is a smooth, agreeable addition: “In wisdom you have created all things.”

Questions:

1. What is an essence? Give several examples of essences. What suffix(es) are often used to denote an essence? **Ans: An essence is a participated likeness of some similar characteristic or set of characteristics in God. Answers may vary, but in general examples should either be some thing/object (e.g. the essence of “a car”) or they should have a suffix such as “-ness” attached to them to substantize them (e.g. “blue-ness” / “ac-tion” / “generosi-ty”).**
2. Take one of your examples, and enumerate as many of its determinations as you can come up with. (*Make sure that the determinations you list are in the correct, logical order in which they should occur, i.e. from most general / logically prior to most specific / logically posterior.). **Ans: E.g. The essence of a house is that it is (1) a building that is (2) solidly built, (3) inhabitable, and usually (4) owned by a single family. When we order the determinations in this way, we are saying that a house is a (1) “building.” This is the house’s genus, and it is most basic answer that you would give to a person who asked “What is a house?” Then we would add that it is a building that is “solidly built,” which narrows the category down slightly and makes it a little more specific (i.e. it isn’t a tent or a hut). Then we would add that it is a solid building that is “inhabitable” (i.e. not a factory). This makes it even more clear what a house is. Lastly, we would nail the matter right on the head and say that it is an abode “for a single family” (i.e. not an apartment-building). This is about as specific as you can get. In demonstrating their own essence(s), students**

Comment [A56]: Ask the students: “Do you see why the circles (in Diagram 1.9) are growing narrower in size?” Ans: Yes, because as more and more determinations get added, the field of applicable individuals gets narrower and narrower.

Comment [A57]: Ask the students: “Do you need to say all the characteristics?” Ans: No; you only need to keep the first and one of the ones above it. The first is known as the specific difference, the one chosen from above it is known as the genus. (Thus a definition = a specific difference + genus, as we shall learn in Section 3.4.6, and in the Handout on Definitions, in the Appendix).

Ask the students: “Is it possible that there are other determinations wedged in between the ones that we mentioned above?” Ans: Of course! For example, you could insert “vertebrate” in between “animal” and “mammal.” A vertebrate is a backboned, mobile, living thing. Since we are dealing here with material beings, in which there are many shades of difference, the progression is gradual and you can nearly always insert an intermediate form or classification in between two others.

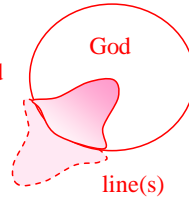
Comment [A58]: Here, the essence is ‘participating’ [in] or ‘reflecting’ those qualities that are found in God.

Comment [A59]: Tell the students, that when you do this you are struggling with the task of properly *defining* something.

Comment [A60]: Referring to Diagram 1.9, “building” would be like the widest circle at the top, since it is most general. “Solidly-built” would be like the next determination/specification right below it; “inhabitable” would be even more specific yet, and at the bottom would come “owned by a single family.” As you keep specifying more and more criteria you are narrowing down your field of view and referring to fewer and fewer objects. The goal is to narrow down as gradually and smoothly as possible, not saying a determination that is taken for granted in something already stated (e.g. saying that man is a “living primate” is unnecessary because “living” is taken for granted in “primate;” so we say instead “rational primate,” not “living primate.”), nor making too rapid a determination all at once (e.g. dividing birds into just “red-breasted robins” and “brown-breasted malards,” rather than first distinguishing songbirds from waterfowl).

should likewise proceed in a slow, methodical order, enumerating its determinations (or elements).

3. Draw. Combining diagrams 1.7 and 1.9, draw a word or essence being known by God, outside of God. Then draw its mirror image inside of God. Explain the order in which God knows the different parts of this essence. **Ans: Students should somehow superimpose Diagram 1.9 upon Diagram 1.7. At least the internal element should resemble diagram 1.10 below. God knows an essence knowing first its most general element (the line(s) nearest to Himself), and then progressively more specific elements (the line(s) farther away from Himself). Make sure the students understand that (1) what is outside mirrors what is inside (for all creatures are but dim reflections of God), and (2) the two are different inasmuch as what is inside is eternal and unchanging (since it is part of God's own substance) but what is outside unfolds (top-right to bottom-left) successively, or even in time. Also, (3) the elements of the essence must be consistent and follow logically from one another (i.e. you can't perform any of the fallacies shown in Diagram 1.8 above).**
4. What are three things that are *impossible* for God to create? **Ans: God cannot create something that is circular, contradictory, or illogical.**
5. Looking forward: When you say a thing's name, do you implicitly include all the internal forms implicit in that thing's essence (e.g. animal-ness, thing-ness, etc.)? **Ans: Yes!**
6. Connection to Theology: Read Gen. 1:2. What part of this verse might represent the essences of uncreated contingent (possible) things? **Ans: "The waters."**
7. Think creatively: Why does existence confine itself to essences? **Ans: Because nothing can be (existents) except that which is possible to be (essences). [Accept other creative answers, as well.]**



Comment [A61]: You might ask the students how one might visualize in the diagram God the Son, who is called "the Eternal Word" (words are what is 'logical'). [Ans: He is the interconnected series of truths that penetrate logically from the edge into the center.] You might also ask the students how they would represent in this diagram the Holy Spirit, who is called "Love." [Ans: He is that which penetrates from the center back out to the edges (like the concentric rings of a ripple). Lastly God the Father would be everything in the circle (i.e. not just the outer edge).

2. Essences Emerging into Existence

Now we already know that not only in essences is there Truth and Goodness, but (see section on the four Transcendentals) Being is true and good as well. So when Being / existence fills essence (i.e. when God creates it and calls it out of darkness, out of the

A Complete Thing:
Existence poured
into an Essence

(from
God)

An essence is the knowable content of a concept. Since everything that is knowable about something is summed up in its name, essences conclude with names. To become real, it must be filled with Existence.

Diagram 1.10

potency of near-nothingness), the two become practically indistinguishable: They are a single thing. The only difference between them is that existence involves two extra transcendentals that essence lacks (i.e. Being and Oneness). An essence lacks Being and Oneness because it is itself merely potential (i.e. It hasn't yet begun to exist), and as such it exists as a confused possibility overlapping with other confused possibilities. Thus the relations of its different parts or elements (its forms) is completely incidental: There is nothing that requires that these particular forms should be combined in this way, and not others in addition, or instead. All that is required is that the forms that are involved should follow logically from one another. Even God is not able to make a contradiction (as stated by the Law of Logical Consistency)!

When God creates something, He knows it to be as its own individual kind of thing. The word for "kind" in Latin is *genus* (or pl. *genera*). Having been created, that kind of thing then exists as an entirely simple, pure reflection of one or some of God's divine qualities. As a new kind of being, it casts a light—a light of existence—upon all that which it itself is. If it is a rational creature, then this light passes through its totality and radiates, reflects, or bounces around it in one act of simple self-comprehension, or consciousness. However if God has created it as a non-reasoning creature, then the light indeed enters into it, and makes its essence to be, but it is not there known by that creature. The light then passes on to other things which physically or mentally participate in the creature, either being a part of it or knowing it.

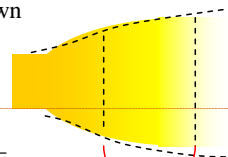
Example of a rational being: The Soul

Diagram 1.12

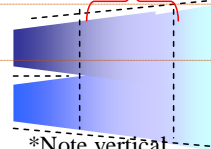
Since this light can pass on to other things, and there are many lights (As many as there are different species of things that God has made) there is much sharing and overlapping of existence and essences, so that one thing may be common to many other things, or distinct and opposed to them. Consequently, there are four phenomena or situations that can occur as a result of this sharing: definitions, properties, accidents, and genera (or groupings). Each of these four help to constitute a thing's existence, and we will call them predicables, and will study them in Section 3.4.7.

Questions:

1. Which transcendentals does _____ involve?
 - a. essence **Ans: Only Truth, and Goodness**
 - b. existence **Ans: All four (Unity, Being, Truth, and Goodness).**
2. What is the particular relationship between essence and existence?
Ans: Existence fills essence.
3. Describe what essences are like in their states of potency. **Ans: They exist (and it is a very low level of existence) in a confused way, overlapping with other essences, as the "waters" from which**



Examples of non-rational beings: forms.



*Note vertical direction -->

Diagram 1.11

Comment [A62]: This implies that essences contain truth and goodness. They're true in that lower forms within them, correspond to higher ones; they're good in that higher forms in them correspond to lower ones. Essences have this, even though they're as yet non-existent.

Comment [A63]: In the diagrams, we represent logical consistency by having the lines ordered one after another, and appearing to follow from one another. Note the diagrams of logical inconsistency above (Circular reasoning, contradiction, and illogic).

Comment [A64]: The immediate things that God creates are all simple (mostly angels; however, even the human soul is simple—though not the human body). It is only the interactions of these simple beings that produces complexity. Thus the complex, material world that we know was created on command of God, through the work of angels (Cf. left side of Diagram 1.38).

At the moment of creation, all human beings are essentially identical in their souls; it is only their material bodies which enables them to be differentiated one from another. Humans are all identical because they are all made in the same way in God's image (Cf. Gen. 1:26-27, Col. 1:15): They are made in the image of Christ, who is God-become-man.

Comment [A65]: i.e. upon/through all of its determinations. The light shines from God into its most general determination and then right on through it all the way down to its most specific determination (see Diagram 1.10, in which the light of Being is depicted as blue and is passing in a downward direction).

Comment [A66]: In his book *The Acting Person*, Karol Wojtyla (later Pope John Paul II), deeply studied "the reflexive function of consciousness," namely that you can think not just about things, but about yourself thinking about things.

Comment [A67]: Think about this: *You* [automatically] *know yourself* (Here, by "yourself" we mean your own mind . . . that is, who you are internally . . . your soul). There's nothing you can do to test it, but you must admit that you know yourself through and through. Now God of course...

Comment [A68]: Here we are not talking about animals (which are to some degree self-conscious), but about things such as the essence of blueness, or the essence of alcohol.

Comment [A69]: Alternatively, you could say that there is but one general light of creation (by which God creates), and that this one light has divided and separated out into many different qualities, each its own essence/species of thing. God is of course entirely in control of this dividing, and...

Comment [A70]: If desired, give the students the Handout on Formal Progressions (in Appendix).

Comment [A71]: Essences are like the waters of creation, confused and overlapping. Therefore they only have vertical relationships, and the two vertical relationships are truth and goodness. Before they are created, and called forth into existence, they don't really possess their own Being or Unity.

- God calls forth creatures and makes them be.
- Can essences separate and divide into more than one species? Do they have to? **Ans: Yes, they can, but no they don't have to. See Diagram 1.11. For instance, there is only one kind of Ginko tree, or only one Great Wall of China, or only one you.**
 - What two things can the light of existence do when it enters into a being? **Ans: The light can either radiate around it and becomes suspended and 'trapped' in it in an act of consciousness, or it can pass on through it.**
 - What is consciousness? **Ans: Consciousness is the radiation or reflecting of the light of existence around the various parts of an object. It would seem that this is a largely horizontal circling, but as we grow and mature, it becomes somewhat vertical as well (cf. Diagram 1.10).**
 - Think: What are some differences between animal self-consciousness and human self-consciousness? **Ans: When a man looks at himself (e.g. in a mirror or on TV), he sees his own mind running, whereas when an animal looks at itself, it just sees the reflection of its outer shell, its body.**
 - Looking forward: What are the four situations that can occur when two lights of existence overlap? List them. **Ans: The four Predicables: a definition, genus, accident, or property.**

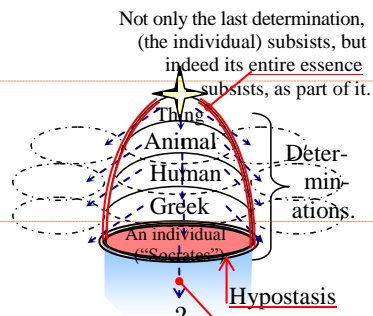
Chapter III. Hypostases

1. Creation of Subsistents

As God creates ideas/essences that He knows, these creaturely ideas **must sooner or later terminate** and be complete. Whenever God terminates an idea, and makes it to be complete in its own little way (though not as complete as He Himself is Complete), He is making it to **subsist**. To subsist means to exist *in* (and *for*) *oneself*, rather than *in another*.

Proper Vocabulary Usage: "Subsistence" sounds exactly like "subsistents," but they are two different words. Subsist-*ence* is the abstract noun that captures and sums up the idea of subsisting. Subsist-*ents* (from Lat. subsistentēs) are the many individual *beings* that subsist (plural of "subsistent").

Diagram 1.13



When God creates a hypostasis, He keeps it from generating even more determinations. Rather, He makes it exist in and for itself, so that it is the end or goal of the creative process.

Comment [A72]: Otherwise, they'd go on forever and be an infinite idea, in which case they'd be equivalent to God the Son, who is the only truly infinite idea.

Comment [A73]: Diagram 1.13 is the first illustration of what will become a commonly-used convention in this book. Rather than representing the forms as coming from a source that is broader and wider than oneself and more universal or general (i.e. as wide circles—cf. Diagram 1.9, and Diagram 1.15b), we have here contracted (or 'pinched') the tops of the forms, representing them as if they are coming from a point-source, i.e. from a spark of light. In so doing we have inverted the triangle so that instead of looking like this " \wedge " (or " $<$ " if vertical is to the right) as in diagrams 1.9-1.10, it now looks like this " \vee " (or " $>$ " if vertical is to the right), as in Diagrams 1.13-1.15a. We have here reminded the reader that the top *should* be visualized as wider by putting a star there (as if that star is the source of a flash of light or of Being, which is so far away that it now appears as a point). When we illustrate things in this point-source way, we are thinking of God—located at the very top—as being more concentrated and somewhat separate from us, rather than being more universal and all-infusing over everything and everywhere. Admittedly God is *BOTH* more concentrated than us *AND* more universal than us, however it is all a question of which we are choosing to emphasize. This new manner of representation is actually most proper and applicable to the material (not spiritual) realm, and the material mindset (see Diagram 1.25, and imagine it as if it were upside-down), where the strongest forces (which are closer to God) are concentrated in the very tiniest particles (cf. also Diagram 1.16 where the former concentrated "top" is now at the very bottom), but since we often think in this earthly sort of way, it is useful to be able to switch in and out of either mindset, converting from one to the other. Students should then become familiar with both modes of representation (see Question 1 in this section), which we shall here call a "broad-source diagram" vs. a "point-source diagram."

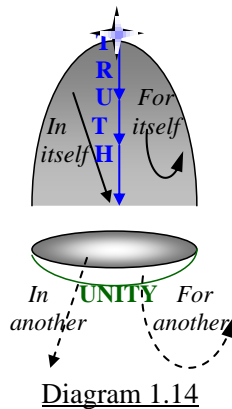
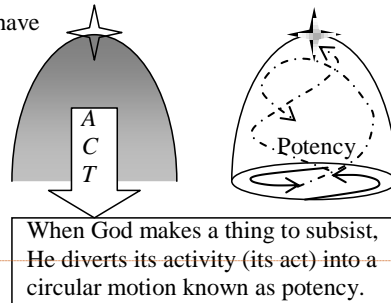


Diagram 1.14

For God to decide to make something complete, He has to decide to make it be *for itself*, rather than for some further determination (blue area in diagram at right). To do this, God makes a transcendental of Unity apply to its transcendentals of Being/Truth. The transcendental of Unity as-it-were ‘cuts off’ (or rather, just makes *unnecessary*) any further development or evolution that it might have had, and from that moment on, directs it rather to concentrate on what is within itself, rather than on what other things it is becoming. In this



When God makes a thing to subsist, He diverts its activity (its act) into a circular motion known as potency.

Diagram 1.15

state it continues just as that **spiritual substance** that it currently is, and seeks to become no further and more specific kind of thing.

As subsisting, a thing no longer directs all its Being outwardly in a process of change and development, but now it instead focuses on what is inside of itself. Consequently, whereas before it was caught up in a state of **Act** (the act of the one who was ‘speaking it forth’ and thereby creating it), now it **diverts its activity** into a kind of **recirculation** that is known as **Potency**. As we shall see in Section 4.2.1, Potency is called “Potency,” because it is potent or ‘able’ to become or do different things but is right now not being committed to any one of them (i.e. it **hasn’t yet determined itself** to any one course of action). We see then that the change from becoming Act to existing Potency is an effect of God’s applying a thing’s transcendental of Unity to its transcendental of Being.

To *subsist* also has a secondary meaning which means to endure and last in a permanent way. When God makes something complete, a secondary outcome of this is that it tends to last, without changing or evolving into something else. Consequently, when we say that something is “subsisting,” we are saying that **it is staying ‘as it is.’** This analogous meaning of subsistence can be applied to the material realm, because although nothing material truly subsists so as to last forever, yet many things do last for a long time. Thus, in an analogous sense, we can say that certain material things ‘subsist,’ as well.

If a thing analogously subsists, it must have a spiritual substance or principle (because all true subsistence is spiritual). For instance, organisms ‘subsist,’ based on the internal principle of life that sustains them; planets ‘subsist,’ based on the principle of gravity; rocks and crystals ‘subsist,’ based on the principles of electrical attraction and their atomic 3D structure. In all of these cases, we see that the thing that ‘subsists,’ has a spiritual

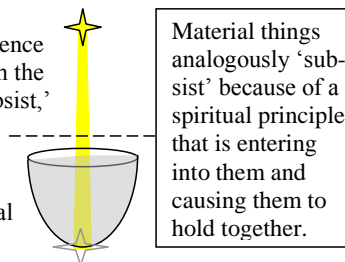


Diagram 1.16

Material things analogously ‘subsist’ because of a spiritual principle that is entering into them and causing them to hold together.

Comment [A74]: In the physical realm, things subsist when they ‘hold their shape,’ rather than getting swept away by the forces of change; the same applies to the spiritual realm. A spiritual substance is one that does not lead to further perfections, but is already perfect in itself.

Comment [A75]: Have the students read the definition of Act in the glossary, telling them to pay special attention to the explanation of “First Act” which is what is being talked about here.

Comment [A76]: Earlier, while it was being created, the being had had this potency, this ability to do or be used in different ways; however, since God’s act of adding on more and more stuff to it in the process of creating it was a much more important process, this element of potency inside of it was comparatively unimportant. Now that the act of creation has been terminated, its inner element of potency becomes much more significant. You can even visualize the ‘recirculation’ not as a horizontal 2D spiraling, but as an even vertical 3D spiraling, as well (cf. Diagram 1.15). A good synonym for potency is “stasis.” A being that is ‘in stasis,’ is ‘standing’ (from Lat. *stare* “to stand”), but not changing.

Comment [A77]: Just like consciousness (in the last section), which was also a state of potency.

Comment [A78]: Horizontal re-circulation is this state of not-yet determining oneself to any up- or down- action (à la Diagram 1.20).

Comment [A79]: For instance a person on a ‘subsistence diet’ just barely gets by with enough nutrition to survive, but doesn’t have enough energy to do anything else.

principle, to which it is connected and which ‘codes for’ and explains its physical cohesion. Thus we can know flowers and planets and rocks because there are spiritual principles hidden ‘behind’ or within them that make them be complete in themselves, and not needing to change. By contrast, things that clearly don’t subsist are things like flows of energy, ongoing processes, incomplete ideas, accidents (e.g. whiteness), etc.

Implied in subsistence is *individuality*. For God to make something be an end in itself, a terminus of creation, it must be a single thing. Thus a dual body (such as a binary-star) doesn’t subsist, because it is not the logical *end* or perfect expression of the idea/principle (gravity) that is causing it to be: Even if the two should continue orbiting forever, they would still be an imperfect physical expression of that spiritual principle. Rather, it would be an expression of the dual principles of gravity and centrifugal force which, being two separate principles and not one, cannot spiritually subsist.

Questions:

1. Draw: Transform the essence of Socrates, as shown in Diagram 1.13 from point-source notation (as shown) into broad-source notation (as in Diagram 1.9). **Ans: The layer of “thing” should be widest, “animal” slightly less wide, “human” narrower, “Greek” narrower still, and “Socrates” narrowest, or even a point. Emphasize to the students that it doesn’t matter which notation you use to represent it; it is still the same thing.**
2. What is an hypostasis? What does it mean to subsist (*give two definitions*)? **Ans: An hypostasis is something that subsists, an individual. It is the end-product or final stage in an act of creation. To subsist means to exist in and for oneself, rather than in another. In a lesser sense, subsist just means to endure or last.**
3. Are we human beings in a state of total subsistence? **Ans: No, we are still in a state of becoming something different. Alternate answer: Yes, we are in a state of subsistence since we have an eternal soul and are in a state of potency constantly reflecting upon whom we have become. Synthesis: We are subsisting but not totally subsisting, inasmuch as our material situation permits us to still develop, change, and become knowledgeable of new things.**
4. What are the two metaphysical aspects of subsistence? **Ans: For-itself-ness and in-itself-ness (or permanence and individuality).**
5. Is an hypostasis the end-product of an intellectual process, or of a willful process? **Ans: Intellectual (Creation is an act of Intellect).**
6. How would you characterize the activity of something that is subsisting? **Ans: It is in a state of semi-permanency and potency (potency to act in its own name, rather than as something else).**
7. Explain: Do physical things (e.g. a crystal or a table) subsist? **Ans: Yes, but imperfectly. Nothing physical lasts forever, as it would if it truly did subsist. However, physical things subsist in a lesser, analogous way, in that they cohere and hold together through the**



Comment [A80]: After all, subsistence occurred by the adding of the transcendental of “Oneness” to the thing (see Diagram 1.14). “Oneness” implies *individuality*.

Comment [A81]: The logical end would be for one star to fall into and unite with the other, so that only one thing would perfectly express the final outcome of the principle of gravity (rather than two doing it imperfectly).

Comment [A82]: Even if you should try to ‘sum up’ the two of them in the idea of ‘tension’ or ‘a balance of opposition,’ that principle wouldn’t subsist, because it is incomplete: ‘Tensions’ and ‘balances of opposition’ occur not just in planets but in all kinds of similar scenarios (e.g. Republicans and Democrat political parties are in a balance of opposition), which says that such an idea is only a general idea, not a specific one, and thus it is equivalent to one of those prior and general determinations (e.g. “Animal” in Diagram 1.13) that do not exist in *themselves*, but exist in *other things and situations*.

Comment [A83]: This is the condition of our wayfaring state of this life, that we are constantly perfecting ourselves, seeking to better our character and become something that we can ‘give back’ to God. Only those who are dead can no longer become and change.

Comment [A84]: For instance “Steven” can do something, but “Human” cannot.

Comment [A85]: Point out to the students that the failure to acknowledge the connection between the physical and the spiritual, and the failure to admit that spiritual things subsist, has historically led to great cynicism. Historically, a certain brand of Empiricism / Positivism, has held that physical substances are the only things that subsist (and that the whole spiritual realms with its angels, is *nothing*). However this itself is a sweeping mental assumption, and thus it has led to a kind of Idealism (the opposite extreme) in which one presumes to have ‘figured out’ the whole universe. This then can lead to depression, because suddenly the world may appear very bleak and limited as nothing more than a hard, cold, mechanistic machine without higher purpose.

What is needed is an admission that physical things subsist *by reason of* higher spiritual principles. By admitting this, one opens the door to a wealth of vibrancy and mystery. This vibrancy and mystery can be found in the physical world, but is not limited to the physical world.

spiritual principles that find expression in them (cf. Diagram 1.16). Thus spiritual things subsist *more* perfectly and permanently.

8. Why do physical substances eventually decay? Ans: Because their 'subsistence' is only analogous, and thus eventually breaks down. To eternally subsist they would need to be primarily spiritual, rather than primarily physical.

9. Research project: Look up the following schools of philosophy. When and where did they exist, and what did they say about the subsistence / substantial-ness of physical / material things?

a. Idealism and/or Rationalism b. Empiricism and/or Positivism

Ans: Both schools arose from the writings of René Descartes (1509-1650AD), split into the schools of Idealism and Empiricism (1650-1750), briefly reunited in Immanuel Kant (1724-1804AD), and then split back apart again as Rationalism and Positivism (1820-), respectively, and ultimately trailed off into the late 19th century. Empiricism/Positivism was in England; Idealism / Rationalism was on the continent (France and Germany).

Empiricism (John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, David Hume) held that reality is primarily material, and that it cannot accurately be known except by induction, experiments and amassing lots of data. Empiricists were very loathe to ever operate on the basis of broad or sweeping principles. To them matter was always coming apart, and thus substances were not really anything at all, but just dividable piles of atoms. Thus empiricists would tend to hold that nothing really subsists, and that any principles or natures expressed in matter are so subject to exceptions, that they aren't anything at all, or at least aren't worth worrying about. Empiricists—esp. Isaac Newton—always strove to find the really deep physical laws (or principles) through which the more ordinary ones might be explained.

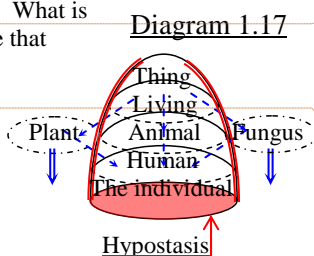
Idealism (Leibniz, Spinoza, Berkeley) said that ideas are primary, and that the outer material world itself is what is the illusion. To Idealists, the senses are deceiving and unreliable, and so reality is determined to be whatever you choose to think it to be. To them the outer world is just an exemplar or expression of mental principles caused by some world-creating 'mind,' but it isn't necessarily any better than your own thoughts. If you choose to think of the world in a different way, nothing makes you wrong, and you are entitled to your unique perspective as much as anybody else is. Consequently, material things subsist not in themselves but in each individual's mind. This soon leads to the belief that the only thing subsisting is the person's own mind (Solipsism), and everything else is unreal. Thus later As Hegelianism (Hegel 1770-1831AD), it held that you should willfully try to change the world and advance the course of history by coming up with new ideas and world-views.

Comment [A86]: Positivism is the successor to Empiricism.

Comment [A87]: For example, they might assume that a rabbit isn't anything but just a pile of atoms, and that if you could figure out how all the atoms act, you would be able to fully explain how the rabbit acts.

2. Hypostasis – What makes me be me?

A thing that subsists, is known as an hypostasis. In fact the two are **direct translations** of one another, one Latin, and the other Greek. What is an hypostasis? The very last determination in your essence that makes you be you, is your **hypostasis**. Your hypostasis is indicated by **your name**, since both capture or ‘sum up’ all your essential characteristics into one. Your hypostasis is also what makes you be an individual. You are nearly identical to every other human being, but you are different from them because the very last determination in your essence is in some way different from everybody else’s. We will investigate just *how* it is different, later. In a real sense, though you are ‘special,’ not meaning by this that you are your own species, but rather that you have your own hypostasis.



Comment [A88]: Hypostasis (Lat.) and “subsistent” (Gk.) mean something that is ‘standing under,’ because it ‘stands underneath of’ or underlies all your other essential characteristics. Perhaps at one time hypostasis was the same word as substance. However, with the advent of studied Philosophy and Theology, hypostasis/subsistent and substance have become technical terms used in different ways.

Comment [A89]: cf. Diagrams 1.9 and 1.13. However, whereas name serves only as a labeling device (as a nominal term), hypostasis represents a real, metaphysical part of your being (as a metaphysical term). The two are identical insofar as each make you be individual, however.

If you were not a human being but a dog or plant, would it still be you? The answer is that no, it wouldn’t. Why wouldn’t it? Because each characteristic in your nature flows down and infuses meaning into the ones below it. For example a cat is not just a ‘cat,’ but a ‘cat-that-is-an-animal.’ If you were to change it to a ‘cat-that-is-a-bacterium’ it would be meaningless. Thus if you change even one characteristic in a thing’s essence, the hypostasis at the very bottom is changed, as well.

Your hypostasis contains in a perfectly unified manner all the characteristics that are essential to you. Remove or change even one of them, and the hypostasis is **simultaneously affected**. Why is this? Because the fact of your existence is **posterior or secondary** to all your essential characteristics. So if you arbitrarily altered even one of those essential characteristics, the being created would be essentially different from you: It would be a **new** and different being. Now human beings contain not just the characteristics that are essential to them, but also many accidental characteristics as well. For instance, I may contain the knowledge of English, whereas another person will contain the knowledge of Spanish. For two people to be absolutely identical to one another, you would have to not only make them identical in their essence, but you would have to remove one person’s memories and habits and replace them with the other’s memories and habits. As we live in our bodies, we accumulate vastly different experiences, and these experiences or memories become embedded in our nature.

Comment [A90]: Your existence includes all your essential characteristics, so your existence is a further addition after them, and sums them all up and ties them all together in a real, cohesive, acting, whole. Point to the diagram and, moving your hand from top to bottom across the diagram, show how God creates you and *knows* you to be—He creates/knows all the top layers before He gets down to the level of the individual, which is the level at which He makes/knows *you-as-an-individual* to be. When He is knowing those top layers, they exist too, but they exist as general essences that God is knowing, not as this or that person. Thus God doesn’t know you as you until He gets to the bottom, at which He knows you (and, incidentally all other human beings simultaneously).

Thus the top layers are the levels at which your essence comes about, whereas the bottom layer is the level at which your existence comes about.

Also, once you come to be, the entire thing (essence + existence) *subsists* as you, that is, your Being, who and what you are.

Comment [A91]: This is perhaps what occurs in the process of Justification, when a person becomes “a new creation in Christ.” By ‘clothing’ himself in [the Being of] Christ, he becomes “a new creation.”

Questions:

1. What is it in you that determines you to be *you*, and not someone or something else? **Ans: Your hypostasis.**
2. If someone were to perfectly clone you, would there be two of you?

Ans: No. Even if someone were to perfectly clone you, it wouldn’t be you because even if your essences were perfectly identical, yet you would be different in your hypostases. One person would be a person in an hypostasis existing here and now, and the other would be a person in an hypostasis existing then and ‘over there.’

Also, the circumstances of each individual's body would make them separate. We will see below that your body is a key part of your hypostasis.

3. What does "hypostasis" refer to directly? What does it refer to indirectly, or *also*? **Ans:** Directly, it refers to the last determination in a thing that makes that thing be individual; indirectly (or one might say *retroactively*), it refers to the entire essence (all that came before and that is implicitly present in that last determination—cf. red in Diagram 1.17, and caption atop Diagram 1.13). Alternate answer: Indirectly, it refers to your body.
4. Explain why two people who get married don't become the same person. **Ans:** Even though they become one in flesh, yet their spirits (what they bring to the marriage) are different, and so they don't become fully identical (in opinions, intentions, etc.). Because they have different souls/spirits, even though they may strive for unity of mind and heart, as a good and fitting end to be sought (Unity is one of the two ends of marriage—cf. CCC 1643), yet it is never totally accomplished.

Comment [A92]: The two ends of marriage are the unitive end, and the procreative end.

3. Personhood

Since an hypostasis makes you be an individual, an hypostasis is also what makes you be a person. Boethius (480-524 AD) classically defined a person as "an individual substance of a rational nature," with the emphasis here being upon the word "individual." Where general spiritual being crystallizes or condenses down into distinct individuals is where personhood occurs. Borrowing from Section 1's treatment of hypostases, we might add to this two further criteria for personhood, namely that it is complete in itself, and for itself. In this way, a spiritual substance's individuality is expressed by its completeness and its completeness is expressed by being 'for itself.'

The term hypostasis is also used when speaking about God: It is said that God is three *hypostases* (pl. of "hypostasis") in one *ousia* (Gk. for "substance" or "nature"): three *persons* in one *nature*.

Comment [A93]: Refer to Diagram 1.18. Notice how a person (an angel) occurs where the divine light concentrates down to a point.

Also, refer to Diagrams 1.3 and 1.14. Note how the transcendental of Being (implicit in or accompanying or 'riding on' the transcendental of Truth) must ultimately arrive at the transcendental of Oneness. When and where this occurs is where personhood occurs. Thus the fact that we are talking about persons means that we have moved into the realm of the transcendental of Oneness.

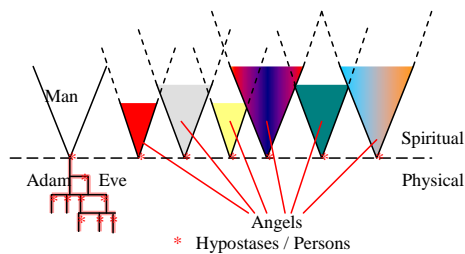
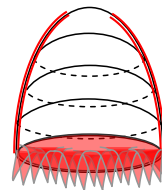


Diagram 1.18

For instance, if you had two angelic spirits that were identical, they would instantly

coalesce into one. Existing totally without time and place, there would be no opposition to keep them apart: Spirit unites with spirit

What then is the principle of individuation between humans? What makes one human different from another? In the case of angels, angels lack bodies, and thus each angel differs from every other only in its form.

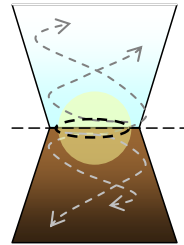


Human nature crystallizes into many distinct individuals.

Diagram 1.19

Comment [A94]: Indeed, you could even say that they would *will* (by their very substances) to be one.

so that there is no way to distinguish them, and they are in fact (i.e. even in the eyes of God) one thing. However, in the case of humans something more is involved than just form. Humans differ from one another in their *bodies*, that is, in the matter that receives their spiritual-substantial forms. Consequently, there can be a multiplicity of humans within the same species, whereas in the case of angels (who lack bodies), every angel “exhausts its species” (*Summa* 1.50.4.c), meaning that every angel is different in kind from every other. However, since humans have bodies, their hypostasis (what makes them individuals) is slightly deeper than that of angels. In humans, the hypostasis will have to be some principle that involves their bodies, as well.



The hypostasis of a complete human being unites spirit & body.

We must remember that the hypostasis is Potency within the being (recall Section 1.3.1). In the case of humans, **Spirit** (i.e. its essence or nature) is what is **Act** in the spiritual realm, and **Body** is what is **Act** in the material realm. As we shall see in Section 1.4.3 below, these two are mirror images of one another. However, that which unites them and which enters into both of them is the principle of **Potency** which circulates throughout the totality of both of them, holding them in stasis, and supplying all parts of each with the benefits afforded by other parts (just like blood). This principle of Potency that works inside of both of them, is the **soul**.

Diagram 1.20

Questions:

1. Think: Does **your body** subsist? How can you prove that it does/doesn't? **Ans: No, only your soul subsists. The body continues to be only as long as the soul is in it. When the soul departs (at death), the body wastes away, which shows that it doesn't subsist.**
2. What are the four aspects of personhood? Which two come from Boethius? **Ans: Being a (1) Spiritual (i.e. "Rational") substance, (2) individual, (3) complete, and (4) for itself. (1) and (2) come from Boethius.**
3. Think: Are any of the four aspects of personhood implicit in another? **Ans: Yes. Aspect 4 is implicit in aspect 3; 3 is implicit in 2; and 2 is implicit in 1: By God making it be for itself, it becomes complete (i.e. going no further); by God making it complete, it becomes individual; by making it individual it becomes a substance. Thus Boethius only needed to say that it was "an individual substance of a rational nature" (i.e. criteria 1 and 2); criteria 3 and 4 follow implicitly from these.**

Comment [A95]: The three diagrams in this section are really just the same diagram, focusing on different aspects of the unity between spirit and matter, and presenting it in different ways.

Comment [A96]: In Diagram 1.20, you can visualize the soul either as the flat horizontal circle at the center-line (which is what it is in itself, as created by God, i.e. just one's transcendental of Unity), or you can visualize it as penetrating throughout the interior of the entire being (gray dashed arrows), because this is what it expands into, as the person grows to use and integrate more and more of their faculties.

Comment [A97]: What is meant here is 1st Act (see under "Act" entry in Glossary).

Comment [A98]: Recall that when God applies the transcendental of Unity to the transcendental of Truth (cf. Diagram 1.14 above, noting how potency circulates horizontally in that diagram), God thereby puts the being into potency (i.e. to keep it from acquiring more and more determinations).

Comment [A99]: Indeed it is said that "the Life (soul) of something is in the blood" (Gen. 9:4, Deut. 12:23), so blood is a key part or expression of this principle of potency, that is, at least in the bodily realm.

Comment [A100]: When and where and with what characteristics God creates you is not determined by God, but is determined by your parents. God merely wills what is already there to become rational, and in so doing infuses the rational soul. Whenever God confers some special characteristic on a soul (as, for example, the soul of Mary, or of John the Baptist), it is an act of grace, rather than an act of nature.

4. Spirit, Soul, and Body

Spirit, Soul, and Body are the three parts of the human being. Spirit is substance as Form, Body is substance as Matter, and Soul is substance as the composite of the two.

Spirit

That which it is in a person's spirit to do, they invariably do. Consequently one's spirit is often judged by one's actions, the actions being a *manifestation* of their spirit. For instance, if it is in a being's spirit to catch and eat rabbits, then it will often spontaneously give chase after rabbits. If it is in a rational being's spirit to vindicate the wronged, then they will readily perform actions that do just that! As we shall find in Unit II, actions are a downward motion (toward what is below you or in your power), but they flow from and reflect (or mirror) an upward characteristic that is part of one's essence. For instance, the dog's act of chasing rabbits flows specifically from its higher principle of carnivore-ness. The human's action of vindication flows from the higher principle that he/she has known and freely chosen to put into practice. Really, actions are just a manifestation, a **putting-into-practice** and expressing out in the world of physical matter of that which has been inwardly formulated within one's spirit.

As we shall see in Section 1.4.3 below, the material realm is a mirror image of the spiritual realm. Consequently, if Spirit is momentarily identical to Action in flowing down and away from you in the material realm, then in the spiritual realm it would be generally visualized as flowing upward. Viewed in this context, Spirit is the inclination **to satisfy** some higher principle within one's nature. However since all things are really flowing downward (with the order of Intellect, cf. Diagram 1.4), then in the spiritual realm, Spirit's supposed upward-ness (to mirror-image material Action) is really just an **instantaneous** downwardness. Although it seems like you are inclining toward some higher thing, in reality the higher is just suddenly pouring down into you. You have merely permitted it to suddenly become effective upon you by the dispositions of your soul.

Spirit is then really a downward Act, poured into you by God, who makes your spirit possible by having constructed you the way you are.

Body

Just as things' spirits are **downward intellectual acts** in the spiritual realm, so bodies are downward intellectual acts in the material realm. Both such acts are given by God, but it is in the soul's power to decide when and where and how they are applied. The body is often taken as a representative or tool of the spirit, having spiritual value.

Diagram 1.21

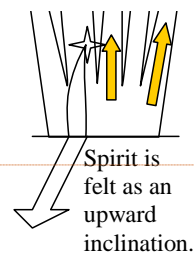
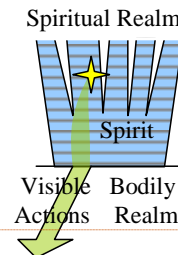


Diagram 1.22

Comment [A101]: We will understand more about the body and about its actions in the material realm 'below the line' (see diagrams below and on the previous page), when we study the natures of Matter and Form in the next chapter. Tell the students not to get too hung up on the specific mechanics of what is going on in the material realm (below the center-line) and how these relate to spiritual principles, because it will soon become much more clear.

Comment [A102]: By "upward" here we mean upward in the sense that it is *from* something above you (i.e. from some essence above your hypostasis).

Comment [A103]: Gk. *pragma* (πραγμα, πραγματος) is some "deed" that is done and put into reality. Pragma is then also translated as "an act" (since acts are real), or even occasionally as "a being" (since beings are real things, which God has made).

Comment [A104]: You are satisfying it with an action—a spiritual Act—that simultaneously manifests itself out in the material world as a material action.

Comment [A105]: You never perceive the inclinations of your spirit as being drawn out in time; rather, you perceive them as instantaneously and immediately arriving at their object. Consequently, St. Theresa of Avila describes Spirit as "a bullet from a gun" (Theresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, 200). This instantaneousness is caused by the fact that what is perceived by you as an upward (willful) inclination is however being effected in a downward (intellectual) manner: What is really happening is that your soul is disposing the circumstances or 'clearing the way' within your nature to permit that principle in you to propagate and have its full effect. Having its effect is here a downward event, but since you are concentrated on it in an upward manner, it seems to happen instantaneously (just as an oncoming train that is passing you, seems to pass you by, instantaneously).

Comment [A106]: Hence, God is referred to as "the Lord of Spirits" in the book of Enoch (Ch. 40). Even when it is in a person's spirit to sin, their spirit is still given by God in its basic, fundamental principles. The person's sin consists in unnaturally applying, rearranging, or even inhibiting those principles in a way different from how God intended them to be used. The Devil invented the principle of Pride by misapplying God's God-given and good principle of supremacy, to himself, rather than to the One to whom it was owed. Consequently, Sin became something real, when the Devil consented to it and made it a principle for himself, as-it-were 'institutionalizing' it.

Comment [A107]: It is not one's own act, but an act created by God, when He 'knows' a creaturely spirit as real, and thereby creates it to be.

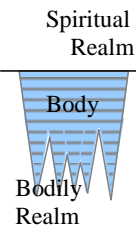
When we think of a person, we often think of his/her physical characteristics, i.e. his/her body. Why is it that we associate the physical body with this or that spiritual person? When God unites a soul to a body, the body attains spiritual value. It becomes an acceptable substitute or representative—at least in the physical realm—for the spiritual hypostasis.

In its positive elements, the body (and especially the face) is distinctive of one human being from another. We often associate a person with his/her face, because the face is distinctive, different from everybody else. With time as we get to know more and more about a person, we may come to know them more deeply, at a spiritual level, but even then it still remains the fact that we associate each person with the face that they have.

Besides identification, the body is often used by the soul as a tool to perform actions. After all, the body is the most immediate and disposable tool that the spirit has to effect its will. If you want a drink of water, you simply activate the set of spiritual impulses in you that cause you to walk over to the sink and get a drink of water. This is easy, and there is no debate that must precede this action, because the body is fully under your sovereign control, and nobody can prevent you—at least internally—from doing what you want to do. Consequently the body often acts immediately in union with the soul's decisions.

Diagram 1.23

Because the body acts in union with the soul, it often suffers identically the same negative effects as the soul. If a person is going through psychological stress, their body may develop wrinkle-lines. If a person indulges in over-eating, their body may become corpulent, just as their soul equally slows down and becomes hindered in its mental processes. Conversely, if a person performs acts of self-cultivation, self-denial, self-critiquing, honing, and training, their body may develop into an efficient machine for actively carrying out the soul's Will. We see then that in its negative effects (or their lack thereof), the body is an unavoidable statement or sign of what a person has been through.



We see then that the body is an identical sign of the spirit. Just as the spirit is essence merely waiting to be put into act, so the body is also essence merely waiting to be put to some course of action. However, one's spirit is not just indicated through one's body. One's spirit is also bespoke through the outer, exterior, and accidental effects that surround the body, such as clothing, hair, posture, etc. Many people try to arrange these outer effects to symbolize or suggest what they are able to do. For instance some people may try to cultivate an attractive or efficient image, that says "This person can serve you" in some way. Many people try to make their body or clothes reflect what they admire or even idolize. In such cases, the body says "I stand for this principle," or "I stand for the principles that so-and-so represents."

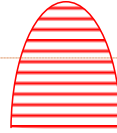
Questions:

1. Why do clergymen wear vestments? **Ans: Because the vestments bespeak the spirit of what they are doing.**
2. What are some examples of clothing that stand for somebody else? **Ans: Designer ware (standing for some team or some celebrity); distinctive haircuts (e.g. mohawk or military crew-cut) that stand**

Comment [A108]: In its own proper physical realm, the body is the most unified, individual and complete manifestation of human nature (more complete than just an arm and more individual than a couple, or family, or tribe); thus the body is a kind of hypostasis or principle of unity in the physical realm.

Comment [A109]: Inasmuch as a sacrament is a sacred sign, some have even said that the body is a "sacrament" of the soul. We will have to wait until vol. II to learn the technical definition for what a sacrament is.

- for a particular group with which one associates oneself; uniforms.
3. What are some things that clothing often ‘says?’ Ans: “This person is valuable or special;” / . . . a professional;” / . . . rugged;” . . . unconcerned about minor details;” . . . sad or depressed;” . . . an ‘average guy;’ / etc.
 4. Draw: Diagram 1.21 is a diagram of the spirit using broad-source format. Instead, illustrate it in point-source format. Ans: See [diagram at right](#).
 5. How are the body and spirit similar? Ans: (1) They are each *Act* in their respective realms (material and spiritual). (2) Now we are already familiar with what the body is: It is like a physical object built up from many small unities into one big unity. Spirit would be just the same, but in the spiritual realm: Spirit would be many small and local instances of being (E.g. what food I like to eat, whom I like to hang out with, etc.) overlapping and eventually merging into a single larger instance of being (Who/what kind of a person I want to be). We see then that both the spirit and the body are in a manner the result of combining smaller instances into a large instance. In fact, if you correctly drew the spirit using point-source format (in the previous question), you would’ve noted that the two appeared practically identical, like mirror images of one another. Thus just as the body is a physical object in the physical realm, the spirit is like a spiritual thing or object in the spiritual realm.
 6. Connection to Theology: Why are the relics of saints venerated? Ans: Relics are venerated because the body is directly yoked to the spirit, and as such bespeaks the spirit and suffers the same effects as the spirit. As such, if a person’s spirit is holy, their body and outer effects become holy by having been used for their spirit’s holy purposes.
 7. Discuss: How accurate and truthful a reflection of the soul is a person’s body? Ans: Answers may vary. Some students may say that the body is very ‘telling’ whereas others may say that just as you can’t judge a book by its cover, so also you can’t judge a person by their outward appearance.
 8. Think: How instantaneous is a spirit? Is it in time (in its unfolding / operation / forceful exertion) or outside of time? Hint: Consider what classes of spirits there may be. Ans: If it is an animal spirit, it operates by means of the nervous system, and so causes its effects from within time. If it is a human spirit, it causes its effects in themselves, that is, by definition, without passage of time, and so a human spirit is fundamentally outside of time. Nevertheless a human spirit may act and be seen in time, even though it is really eternal.



Comment [A110]: Notice how all the seemingly separate upward-inclinations of one’s spirit, have now been schematically melded or united together.

Comment [A111]: Demonstrate this to the students using Diagram 1.23. The very small unities at the very bottom (atoms, and molecules, and cells), join and cohere and mount upward into one big unity (the entire body) at the top.

Comment [A112]: Demonstrate this to the students using Diagram 1.21. The very narrow but intense (since they are high) spiritual inclinations at the top ultimately overlap (at lower levels) into a general area of wide but less forceful (since it is lower) spiritual inclination at the bottom. Incidentally, this general area of wide but less forceful inclination will be shown to be where the soul is located in the next section.

Comment [A113]: The relics of saints can be either their body, or their clothes, or even things they touched.

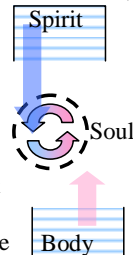
Soul

Whereas Spirit and Body are *acts* in their respective realms, Soul is a principle of *Potency*. Soul re-circulates within the acts of Body and Spirit, and activates different parts of them based on the outside circumstances. Soul tends to do this by disposing the rest of the body to ‘get out of the way’ and permit this or that particular principle or faculty to freely and unhinderedly exercise its natural effect, here and now. Thus whereas Spirit and Body are substantial and permanent, Soul is in a manner accidental, choosing when and where and how.

We tend to gauge the state of a person’s soul by looking not at the objects of their body or their clothes, but at their activity, that is, what they are in the process of doing. For instance, you might look deeply into a person’s eyes, or at their manner of acting

When does God infuse the soul? Although a vegetable or sensate soul is present during the early months of gestation, God infuses the rational soul about 4½ months into the pregnancy. (Source: Bl. Anne Catherine Emmerich, *Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, 77.)

(erratic/graceful/furtive/nervous/confident/official), or even at what they *fail* to do. From these things you can start to loosely estimate whether they are acting under a state of grace, or confusion, or sin, or just by their ordinary nature: As you become more and more familiar with them,



A spirit ‘pours’ into a soul and sets it in motion. Likewise, the body supplies energy.

Diagram 1.24

you will tend to recognize what spirit(s) they are ‘drinking of’ so as to fuel their activity.

Soul mediates the activities of Body and Spirit. It commands the body and mind to do now one thing, now another, as time passes and surrounding situations change. Since Soul is the only thing connecting Spirit and Body, Soul is actually incredibly important for both of them. If you take away the soul, the body will cease from life (as happens at death), and thus the soul is often called “the life of its body.” Likewise, if you wound or impair the soul by the commission of a sin, the spirit will be equally and perhaps even permanently impaired as well. Thus we see that Soul—despite its comparative weakness and potency—is incredibly important for the other parts of a human being.

We can see the soul’s weakness in the problems and difficulties that constantly arise in daily human life. Many times so many principles and considerations are involved in the soul’s calculation of what to do, that the resulting action(s) flow from one’s spirit in a confused, muffled, and generally imperfect way. Thus those who are saddled with many worldly responsibilities and concerns, often do things not as they would like to, in a fully spiritual way, but rapidly and in an imperfect manner. Even when not working, most humans then slip into a state of weakness or relaxation, and thus their insignificant habits and idiosyncrasies shouldn’t be taken as

- Degrees of spiritual value found in Bodily Activities:**
- ▲ - Facial Expressions (*indicated reality*)
 - Symbolic activity (e.g. song, dance, or acting – *feigned reality*)
 - Inspired performance (when the song, dance, or acting become *momentary reality*)
 - ▼ - Formal Ritual (*absolute reality*).

Comment [A114]: We will study *Act* and *Potency* in Chapter 6.

Comment [A115]: In the case of mortal sin, the spirit is permanently impaired. In the case of venial sin, it is just temporarily or partially wounded or inhibited.

deliberately willed. Conversely, those who have become very spiritual, tend to have learned to narrow down, control, and order their activities to just the important ones, so that those activities may have their full spiritual force. Thus the connection of spirit to body can be stronger or weaker depending upon the condition and purity of one's soul.

From the foregoing, we can conclude that an angel's hypostasis—the principle of its Unity—resides solely in its formal principle, since it lacks a material principle. However in the case of humans, the principle of a thing's unity resides solely in the soul, that is, the principle that connects Spirit (one's formal principle) and Body (one's material principle). Consequently, Aristotle says that soul is not a person's substance as form, nor a person's substance as matter, but a person's substance as the composite of the two (Aristotle, *De Anima*, Bk. II. Ch. 1, 412a9). Consequently, the human hypostasis goes deeper toward the transcendental of Oneness, uniting in itself more things—both spiritual and bodily—than any other created nature.

Questions:

1. Is Soul a principle of potency, or of act? **Ans: It is a principle of potency but it effects acts (2nd acts).**
2. What does the soul do . . .
 - a. in relation to the body? **Ans: Soul gives life to the body and moves/disposes it to expressing various spiritual actions.**
 - b. in relation to the spirit? **Ans: Soul chooses which spiritual principles (that are part of one's spirit) to effect or call upon, and when and where to do so.**
3. When Boethius says that a person "is an individual substance of a rational nature," what kind of substance(s) is he talking about . . .
 - a. in the case of God or angels? **Ans: Among angels or the divine persons, it is just substance as form (i.e. a distinct spirit);**
 - b. in the case of humans? **Ans: Among humans, it is substance as the composite of form and matter (i.e. a distinct soul).**
4. Many people often define the soul as "the form of the body" (CCC 364). Comment upon this definition. **Ans: When people say this, they are referring to soul as including all of a person's spiritual nature (i.e. their Spirit—cf. CCC 363).**
5. Are we making a mistake when we talk about carrying one's backpack "on one's person?" **Ans: No. The individual body is a fitting representative of the individual soul / hypostasis / person.**
6. What makes bodily activity sacred? Involve the condition of the soul in your discussion. **Ans: The body is sacred because it is a fitting representative/sign of the eternal being of the person's spiritual soul. When the soul is effecting a strong connection between spirit and body, then anything in one's spirit directly flows into and gets expressed in bodily activity. Consequently, the body, clothing, location, etc., becomes intensely sacred by direct association with the soul's activities. When the soul is effecting only a weak connection between soul and body, the body and surrounding are still sacred, but not as much so.**

Comment [A116]: We can take an analogy from the physical world. It is like saying that Soul, is not substance as gas, nor substance as solid, but substance as liquid. We see then that even though Soul is a kind of potency (and not act), it can still be called a "substance" (just as water is a substance), even though it is constantly flowing around and changing.

Comment [A117]: Small wonder then that the whole universe is constituted in that of a human being (God-become-man Jesus Christ), rather than in the nature of an angel. See Col. 1:17.

Comment [A118]: This will be a key principle in morality in Unit IV: Even though circumstances cannot make a good action bad or a bad action good, they do make actions slightly more or slightly less good, or slightly more or slightly less bad.