

THE
WILL
OF
GOD

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“Whoever does **God's will**
is my brother and sister and mother” Mark 3:35

“For this is **the will of God**, that every one who sees the Son
and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise
him up at the last day.” John 6:40

“For **it is God's will** that by doing right you should put to
silence the ignorance of foolish men.” Peter 2:15

“Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as
wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days
are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand **what the
Lord's will is.**” Ephesians 5, 15-17

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Since we all know that we have discernment and can ponder and reason things out, it naturally follows that we also know we have the human capability of decision; that capability is generally known as our *will*. We've all known strong willed, decisive people, as well as weak willed, namby-pamby people who lack courage or vitality in their choices— and hundreds of varieties in-between regardless of the character of the choices. Aside from death and taxes, one more thing is certain, we *own* our individual choices. Were that not the case, there is no possible way we would ever understand the concept of freedom. However, there is a distinction between free choice and free will. Free choice usually entails somewhat surface decisions made on the basis of aestheticism or a feeling-for something rather than for something else. A free choice need neither be right nor wrong, simply an “attraction” of one thing over another; a minor use of the will in vaguely-reasoned circumstances. On the other hand, the culmination of serious reasoning is usually followed by a commitment of the free human will under conditions that are, to a large extent, more than trivial; generally involving issues of morality incorporating certain values to the person doing the deciding.

The inherent monitor over these issues is the human conscience. That “solenoid-like” mechanism deep in the psyche of a person that clicks “*right*” or “*wrong*” over our decisions. Still, the human will always remains totally free, because it has the ability to override the right and wrong signals that conscience gives it. We can adjust what is wrong and make it right, or reverse what the conscience says is right and make it wrong, *at will*. Depending on the individual, there is always the possibility that the conscience can be in error out of ignorance.

The question is often asked, how does the human conscience get to know the difference between right and wrong, and why does it matter?

Since we are all part of nature explained mostly by physics and psychology, we appear to have the natural proclivities both physically and mentally suited to human survival as opposed to disintegration. After the brain to mind transformation, as human nature evolved and superseded animal nature and reason and will were added to “man,” he became totally free to exercise his will, to act on his desires now within reason, fully understanding the option of right and wrong. We came equipped with a basic inclination to the good and the transcendental knowledge of a super-natural power (God) upon which everything depended. Later, these understandings were transcribed into pictographs or early “texts;” laws that kept the human species thriving with equanimity such as the Code of Ur Nammu, the Code of Hammurabi, or particularly the monotheistic Hebrew scripture by priests of the fifth century BCE. Essentially they were rules for establishing order and justice under the unseen presence of a supernatural being or beings.

There was a continuous and innate need for order in the human species hinged on *human* reciprocal interdependence expressed by the need to satiate God or the-gods; and to respect each other to sustain order. Conscience then, *the cognizance of unlearned good and evil*, is shown to have been embedded in the human mentality along with sympathy, empathy and compassion, as well as their opposites as the human species matured and populated the planet. Conscience arrived with human-nature. It was created when man and woman were created, or emerged, if you will; probably about the time of *Homo rhodesiensis*. “Most scientists now regard Homo

rhodesiensis as to be the local (African) representative of Homo heidelbergensis and as such the direct ancestor of anatomically modern humans” (Wikipedia). “In a 2015 study, the hypothetical man, Y- chromosomal Adam, is estimated to have lived in East Africa about 250,000 years ago. He would be the most recent common ancestor from whom all male human Y chromosomes are descended.” (Wikipedia). Still, there is no empirical proof of that hypothesis. The “missing link” seems to be still AWOL. Although the progression may have been gradual and possibly inter-specieal, there still must have been a time when the first Sapiens couple appeared on the scene and discovered the hypothetical “tree of life,” the biblical understanding of right and wrong, if evolution is correct; the couple Genesis called Adam and Eve. We never cease to marvel at how Genesis and anthropogenesis seem to connect. Also note worthy is the fact that considering the age of the cosmos, one would have to conclude that the human race has not really been around that long. Man had arrived/emerged about 1.54 seconds before the end of a 24 hr. day by comparison to earthly time.

Since earth-time is natural, (the way we have decided to count the cycles,) from a philosophical standpoint is it reasonable to ask the question: Was there a time when humanity invented God in *its own* image, or did it accede to the human-nature installed by a Creator, in whose image we are said be made? If the first part of that question is correct, it would mean that the human will, after due deliberation, decided that there was an originating power behind what was revealed in nature and nature’s laws. Would that not also be the answer to the second part of of the question? By following our human-reasoning we concluded that there must exist an originating-power behind the astounding order and beauty in nature who had become known as God or the gods. In other words, did that free-will-power of

ours prove that God exists? No. Similarly, does the conjunctive “will” of modern science prove that God does *not* exist? Again, no. What this little exercise does show is simply that human “will-power” has no relevancy in proving the existence or non-existence of God. The Creator remains hidden and the human-will remains free. In other words, we didn’t decide to willingly create God but were aware of a supernatural force beyond our reality. Notwithstanding the fact that some saw the Deity existing in inanimate objects.

When the Catholic Catechism mentions God’s will in connection with man it seems he left it up to us to decide who he is. He is said to have told Moses: “I Am Who I Am.”

1743 “God *willed* that man should be left in the hands of his own counsel, so that he might of his own accord seek his creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him (Gaudium et Spes 17 § 1).

Here we have God’s will allowing man’s “own council” (his powers of reason) to find him. As we have said, it is not man’s *will* that is employed to secure the acknowledgment of the existence of God, but now it is being suggested that it may be a sufficient amount of reason to conclude God’s existence so that man may be perfected “by cleaving to him.” Now if reason itself is the cause, or the many accumulated, sensible causes of belief, reason, of itself, cannot be the belief. God does not exist because there are human reasons for his existence. Further, we may say we *feel* that God exists, but then we would again need to provide reasons for that feeling leaving us right where we started, with an equivocal sudo-certainty which we cannot say is faith.

We are not sure we can completely agree with John Locke nor Cardinal Newman either when he said:

“That there are cases, in which evidence, not sufficient for a scientific proof, is nevertheless sufficient for assent and certitude, is the doctrine of Locke, as of most men. He tells us that belief, grounded in sufficient probabilities, ‘rises to assurance;’ and as to the question of sufficiency, that where propositions ‘border on near certainty,’ then we assent to them as firmly as if they were infallibly demonstrated.” (From Cardinal Newman’s *The Grammar of Assent*.)

Wouldn’t we all rather believe with the same surety that the centurion demonstrated in Matthew 8: 8? *“Just say the word and my servant shall be healed.”* Astounded by this foreigner’s faultless faith in him, Jesus commented to the crowd :

“Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ And to the centurion Jesus said, ‘Go; let it be done for you according to your faith.’ And the servant was healed in that hour.”

Who would not want to be graced with the utter faith of the centurion? Though one might say it was easy for him since he had seen Jesus’ miracles all over Galilee, particularly in Capernaum, but it must be remembered that Jesus also said:

Because you have seen me, you have believed: blessed [are] they that have not seen, and [yet] have believed. (John 20: 29)
We would suppose that they might be us.

Every real Christian knows, or should know that what is written in the gospels or simplified in the Apostles Creed is that Jesus is both true God and true man. For average people, as most of us are, it is beyond our capabilities to solve the mysteries of faith. Why some have a strong faith and others weak and still others none at all is a mystery in itself. Jesus is asking us to trust in him by answering Phillip's question about showing him the Father, Jesus said:

“Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?”

Right off the bat this opens up the complex mysteries of the Trinity; how can a man be God; how can three be one, and one be three, etc. At the same time the gospels, (the good news), clarifies with many simple parables what Jesus wants us to know about the Father. The God of creation appears to have reason and a will with a purpose similar to Jesus' and ours but in most omnipotent and omniscient ways. For those who have studied it, the order in the cosmos and the natural-law, his creations, are mind boggling. Maybe the very reason for the Incarnation, is for us to know the Father's will through Christ by living in the Spirit and having the Spirit living in us, coming as it were, at the fullness of time. Could this be the explicating reason why human-life is what it is; with its very own powers of reason and freedom of will? As Genesis says, are we really “images” of the Father, planned as such from the beginning of time? Jesus said, *“Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.”* Is “everlasting life” a state beyond the confines of the created order where God is Being itself—

both here and there? e.g., “*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?*”

Folks like Freud and Einstein, geniuses as they were, thought religion to be childish, the weakness of immature minds. Still, with a good deal of hope and maybe even some trust in our hearts we are reminded by Jesus:

“*Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like [a] child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*” (Matthew 18: 3). We all know that children tend to be more honest than most adults. We know very well what Jesus meant by humility. Maybe the hubris of certain geniuses struggle with humility.

“*I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.*” (Matthew 11: 25).

We should have a look at what St Thomas Aquinas says about God’s will. This excerpt is from the Summa Theologica, First Part, question 19, article 4: *Is the will of God the cause of things?* There is much more about God’s will in Q. 19. If you are inclined to pursue the Summa further, it is easily gotten online, from the New Advent blog. but keep your aspirin bottle handy, unless, of course you are an Aquinas scholar, in which case you won’t need the aspirin. We’ve only pulled one article from Q. 19, so as not to discourage your reading the rest of this essay. Article 4 says:

“We must hold that the will of God is the cause of things; and that *He by the will, and not, as some have supposed, by a necessity of His nature.* This can be shown in three ways:”

“First, from the order itself of active causes. Since both intellect and nature act for an end, as proved in Phys. ii, 49, (Aristotle) *the natural agent must have the end and the necessary means predetermined for it by some higher intellect; as the end and definite movement is predetermined for the arrow by the archer. Hence the intellectual and voluntary agent must precede the agent that by nature.* Hence, since God is first in the order of agents, He must act by intellect and will.”

“This is shown, secondly, from the character of a natural agent, of which the property is to produce one and the same effect; for nature operates in one and the same way unless it be prevented. This is because *the nature of the act is according to the nature of the agent; and hence as long as it has that nature, its acts will be in accordance with that nature; for every natural agent has a determinate being. Since, then, the Divine Being is undetermined, and contains in Himself the full perfection of being, it cannot be that He acts by a necessity of His nature, unless He were to cause something undetermined and indefinite in being: and that this is impossible has been already shown. (7, 2) He does not, therefore, act by a necessity of His nature, but determined effects proceed from His own infinite perfection according to the determination of His will and intellect.*”

“Thirdly, it is shown by the relation of effects to their cause. For effects proceed from the agent that causes them, in so far as they pre-exist in the agent; since every agent produces its like. Now effects pre-exist in their cause after the mode of the cause. Wherefore *since the Divine Being is His own intellect, effects pre-exist in Him after the mode of intellect, and therefore proceed from Him after the same mode. Consequently, they proceed from Him after the mode of will, for His inclination to*

put in act what His intellect has conceived appertains to the will. Therefore the will of God is the cause of things.”

St. Thomas’ “proofs” are generally more reasons for belief than proofs. *Catholic Community Forum*, gives us a nicely written list of all five:

Aquinas' Five Proofs of the existence of God:

“What real evidence can be supplied for God's existence? St. Thomas, in his *Summa Theologica*, sets forth five separate proofs for the existence of God, Unlike St. Anselm's proof, which deals with pure concepts, St. Thomas' proofs rely on the world of our experience— what we can see around us. In these proofs we can easily see the influence of Aristotle and his doctrine of the Four Causes.”

“1) **The Proof from Motion.** We observe motion all around us. Whatever is in motion now was at rest until moved by something else, and that by something else, and so on. But if there were an infinite series of movers, all waiting to be moved by something else, then actual motion could never have got started, and there would be no motion now. But there is motion now. So there must be a First Mover which is itself unmoved. This First Mover we call God.”

“2) **The Proof from Efficient Cause.** Everything in the world has its efficient cause—its maker—and that maker has its maker, who has a maker, and so on. The coffee table was made by the carpenter, the carpenter by his or her parents, and on and on. But if there were just an infinite series of such makers, the series could never have got started, and therefore be nothing now. But there is something— everything there is! So there must

have been a First Maker, that was not itself made, and that First Maker we call God.”

“3) The Proof from Necessary vs. Possible Being. Possible, or contingent, beings are those, such as cars and trees and you and I, whose existence is not necessary. For all such beings there is a time before they come to be when they are not yet, and a time after they cease to be when they are no more. If everything were merely possible, there would have been a time, long ago, when nothing had yet come to be. Nothing comes from nothing, so in that case there would be nothing now! But there is something now—the world and everything in it— so there must be at least one necessary being. This Necessary Being we call God.”

“4) The Proof from Degrees of Perfection. We all evaluate things and people in terms of their being more or less perfectly true, good, noble and so on. We have certain standards of how things and people should be. But we would have no such standards unless there were some being that is perfect in every way, something that is the truest, noblest, and best. That Most Perfect Being we call God.”

“5) The Proof from Design. As we look at the world around us, and ourselves, we see ample evidence of design—the bird's wing, designed for the purpose of flight; the human ear, designed for the purpose of hearing; the natural environment, designed to support life; and on and on. If there is design, there must be a designer. That Designer we call God.”

It becomes more or less obvious that “reasons” no matter how crafted they might be aren't going to give us a Centurion certitude about the existence of God in real time. All reason pales when compared to the veracity as presented by the eye

witnesses to acts of scripture. Jesus made it very clear when he is said to have said:

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 6: 14)

Many other questions arise regarding the Father when Jesus is recorded to have said:

“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.”
(John 14: 28)

Any ordinary person whose reasoning powers are working properly would logically think “How, in the world could God the Father be “greater” than God the Son, or for that matter the Holy Spirit if they are all God.” The answer to that question is not too difficult, but it cannot be a “worldly” answer. First, one has to believe in the omnipotence of God. If one does not initially believe in God as the ultimate power, only existentialism remains available, and the conscience is given to temporal, relative judgements, prone to changeable ethical formulas where nothing exists outside of matter. The will of every individual remains completely free to come to that conclusion. For those who are reasonably sure of God’s existence and power, though never having met him personally, it is through Jesus that we have been given to know the Father’s functional pre-eminence regarding earthly time as the *Creator* and the God of Israel. On faith, Jesus is God incarnate, made man by the Holy Spirit (also God) through Mary, a virgin, (proclaimed sinless at birth, not God). As a result, another mystery crops up, i.e., the two natures of Christ in the

one person of Jesus; leaving the three persons of the Trinity—the Father, Son and Spirit still unified as ONE GOD.

While Jesus preaches the “Kingdom of God”; leaves himself, body and blood, soul and divinity, with us in the accidents of bread and wine, the Eucharist; dies on the cross; and is risen from the dead—the Church has no choice but to persist in the truth of the gospels as she was taught by Christ, through the Apostles, and put under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, believing that:

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.” (Matthew 24: 35 – Luke 21: 33)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it more formally:

266 “Now this is the Catholic faith: We worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity, without either confusing the persons or dividing the substance; for the person of the Father is one, the Son’s is another, the Holy Spirit’s another; but the Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal” (Athanasian Creed: DS 75; ND 16)

267 “Inseparable in what they are, the divine persons are also inseparable in what they do. But within the single divine operation *each shows forth what is proper to him in the Trinity*, especially in the divine missions of the Son’s Incarnation and the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

We will continue to pursue a course other than complying with reasoned argument, and try to assimilate in a contemporary way the complete willingness or total faith of the Centurion who drew such an astounding accolade from Jesus. Then we

will try to apply that “rock bottom” faith to the Father who is hidden from us yet joined to us in life. Although, we believe full well that there is no surer route to the Father than through the Son. It is through God the Son, after all, that man’s sins are expiated on the cross and by whom we are “saved” from destruction. We all spiritually died with Christ and are also raised with him, giving our *human* will its true purpose, that is, loving God and neighbor with all our minds, hearts, souls and strength. Hopefully, with Baptism, prayer and good works, and the virtuous use of our freedom, we will remain steadfast and not turned to “ill will” by the self-centeredness that is always easily available to free-willed human beings. Jesus said:

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.” (Matthew 7: 13)

We are aware of our will-power because we are able to act on our deliberations then go ahead and change our minds regarding what ever our desires may be. An act of the will is ostensibly a commitment. We initiate something. What did the Centurion initiate? Well, he first spoke up when he saw Jesus walking near the lake with a small coterie. He had a need, and he said:

“Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress.’ And [Jesus]said to him, ‘I will come and cure him.’ The centurion answered, ‘Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, “Go”, and he goes, and to another, “Come”, and he comes, and to my slave, “Do this”, and the slave does it.’”

One might ask why Jesus was especially astounded by this particular request? After all, he had been curing people all day long. First, Jesus was undoubtedly impressed by the fact that this Roman officer had real compassion for his servant, unusual for those who were known as barbarians. Secondly, not being a Jew, he did not feel worthy enough for Jesus to come to his house. The centurion placed total trust in the belief that Jesus would grant his request by merely saying the word. He also referred the fact that he and Jesus were both subject to higher authority, he being under the authority of Caesar; Jesus, under the authority of his Father, the God of Israel. In other words, the soldier surrendered his will completely to the will of Jesus as Jesus had submitted his will to his Father. In this way the Roman officer showed great sympathy for Jesus' ministry. At that hour a most fortunate servant was healed by the distant words of Jesus— according to the gospel. (Matthew 8: 5-13) Luke's gospel has a little different twist to it:

“When he [the centurion] heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, ‘He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.’ And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, ‘Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you.’” (Luke 7: 3)

In Luke's version one could presume that the officer was too shy or humbled to even show up. Regardless, the story is still much the same. It's no mystery that Jesus' miraculous activities generally took place having to do with peoples faith or lack of it. His usual remark was, *“Your faith has saved you”* or occasionally in the case of the disciples, *“You of little faith.”*

In a modern context: “Faith is confidence or trust in a person or thing; or the observance of an obligation from loyalty; or fidelity to a person, promise, engagement; or a belief not based on proof; or it may refer to a particular system of religious belief, in which faith is confidence based on some degree of warrant. The term ‘faith’ has numerous connotations and is used in different ways, often depending on the context.” (Wikipedia.) In the Catholic Catechism, Part III, Characteristics of Faith, §155 We found a couple of lines which nicely sums up our intellectual involvement with faith:

155. “In faith, the human intellect and will cooperate with divine grace: ‘Believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the divine truth by command (act) of the will moved by God through grace.’”

The father of a boy whom Jesus cured of epilepsy spoke for many of us when he responded to Jesus:

“Jesus said to him, ‘If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes.’ Immediately the father of the child cried out, ‘I believe; help my unbelief!’”

In many ways we echo the father’s cry. Who wouldn’t want to believe in the Ultimate Good, the Supremely Beautiful, Perfect Favor and an eternal flow of Mercy? The fact is, humanity intrinsically knows of these seemingly unreachable graces. They cannot form a mental picture because they are the integral qualities of God himself. We sense them internally, in the human spirit where we are made in his image. All human beings desire the Ultimate Good and innately know it is, was, and always shall be available in human life. It is our propensity to reversion, to an earlier nature that is the characteristic from which human selfishness springs; still, every human being has

the intellectual power of the will to persevere when any retrogressive inclination or “temptation” arises. We’ve all been known to take a bite out of the proverbial apple. Recognition of the grace of God is the first and only step in securing a claim of faith; and only in the willing practice of faith understood in this way does faith become habitual. We become cognizant of *grace* as the Father is revealed to us in creation itself – and in our own supernatural status among living organisms. “In all things visible and invisible” and particularly in Jesus himself, the offering God made of himself to humanity as a kindred soul; given entirely in love; proven by his life, death and resurrection– saving us from an infernal regression. We are re-born with Christ. We have been given the sacramental tools to survive and prosper in *the life of the Good* on earth– and thereafter. The Sacraments are specific channels of grace institutionalized by Jesus during his time with us and available to all through his Church, beginning with the ancient ritual of Baptism.

Jesus is reported to have said to Nicodemus:

“Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” (John 3: 5)

In terms of baptism, it’s no mystery that “water symbolizes the universal sum of all virtues; it is *fons et origo*, ‘spring and origin,’ the reservoir of all the possibilities of existence; it precedes every form and supports every creation... Immersion in water signifies regression to the pre-formal, reincorporation

into the undifferentiated mode of pre-existence.” (*Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, 1959.*) Water is life support for every living thing, without it nothing lives. Its cleansing and life giving effects have become ritualized since earliest times. Needless to say, water is the most precious commodity on earth. “Jewish esoteric tradition derives from the belief that water is a key component in invoking and encountering divine power.” (*Encyclopedia Mythica, Rabbi Geoffrey Dennis.*) There was no earthly reason why Jesus would exclude the necessity of its ritual function in the New Covenant where mercy is required, not sacrifice. We are “re-born from above,” committed to the Father, to Christ and to the Spirit through it. Although baptism has morphed over the centuries it remains an originating source of what is known as sanctifying grace. It would be a mistake to think of baptism as an unimportant religious ritual. It is steeped in human history. It was brought into the New Covenant as the precursor to the coming of the Messiah in the First Century CE by John the Baptizer referencing the Prophet Isaiah who wrote between 740-686 BCE: Before the Christian Era. It was Jesus who sanctified baptism.

“ Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ Jesus replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then John consented.” (Matthew 3: 13-17)

A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” (Isaiah 40: 3)

“This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: ‘A voice of one calling in the wilderness, Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him.’” (Matthew 3:3)

“The prophets used the image of the lamb to describe the Messiah. Isaiah prophesied; ‘Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearer, he was silent and opened not his mouth’ (Isaiah 53:7). However, the image is twofold: the Messiah would be both the sacrificial lamb to atone for the sins of humanity, and the suffering servant of mankind.” (*Catholic Straight Answers*)

The intellect is that power or faculty of the mind by which one knows or understands, as distinguished from that by which one feels and that by which one wills. It becomes obvious that experience is our primary teacher. The Cambridge Dictionary says experience is *“the process of getting knowledge or skill that is obtained from doing, seeing, or feeling things, or something that happens which has an effect on you.”* Doing, seeing or feeling things from a determinist's point of view must, of necessity, involve the senses and the human neural network activating the brain where all previous experiences are somehow stored in a conscious, sub conscious or unconscious place or state. We presume then, that experience comes from an action— an act of some sort which again, of necessity, must have a cause. One might say there is a reason for everything but might it not be more appropriate to say that everything has a cause— even though we might not be able to find a satisfactory reason for it? Reasoning is a thought process, though it is true we could say we are in the “act” of reasoning because the brain is physically working. For the determinist *all is physical*, even all mental activity is physical. Since that is his

or her accepted belief, all has got to be matter, i.e., physical substance in general, as distinguished from mind and spirit; (in physics) that which occupies space and possesses rest mass, especially as distinct from energy. But, because matter is condensed-energy, energy is also simply matter as is mind and spirit.

This is the world we live in; the world since about the seventeenth century has more or less determined that God is imaginary and therefore cannot exist in reality. Let us say the determinists are correct. If the human imagination being part of “mind” is substantially matter, or rooted in matter; then any imaginary mental creation or causation must be substantial as well. Though it seems improbable that God would be a physical part of our imagination when God has always been known as Spirit.

What about spirit? Well, if all is physical, spirit must be physical too, but the dictionary gives us a little different picture: “Spirit: noun: *The principle of conscious life; the vital principle in humans (or every living thing) animating it. Conscious, incorporeal being, as opposed to matter.*” Shouldn’t we assume when this “vital-principle” of life is missing— a thing is dead? It becomes difficult to say that life-itself is physical. Human-life is the incorporeal being of a person that is created when sperm meets ovum for whatever scientific reason. We can remove a life by killing the organism but we cannot dissect that *life* once it has been removed. The question is, is it gone? Let us continue with the determinist credo that everything existing is physical and nothing comes from nothing. Life or spirit as the incorporeal enlivening of a corporeal body (matter) and is one and the same with it called a soul, a person. If all is physical as the determinist claims, shouldn’t the spirit once removed from matter also remain,

only still unseen, perhaps just in a different state of being. After all, it came from something, why would it become nothing? That would seem to defy the natural-law, the laws of physics. We know that “nothing comes from nothing”; how can something become nothing? What is life if it has no purpose and just disappears as if it never existed.? Or what is freedom without truth? What is truth if it has no value? What is valuable if not good; and what can be good if there is no highest Good?

Rightly, science is always trying to empirically prove cause and effect. Something comes from something else. When religion says that God created *ex nihilo* (out of nothing) it means that no *matter* existed—matter as we know now exists. It does not mean that God did not exist to create it. In fact, the skeptical nature of science probing the unknown based on what is already known, in our opinion, is human nature’s way of trying to reach out and understand how it was all created. Science, in many ways, seems to be doing the work of theology in this respect.

The human intellect, the receptacle of what we know about the cosmos and our own human-nature provides each of us with the faculties of reason and will. Some believe conscience, i.e., knowledge of the difference between right and wrong, is learned in the span of a lifetime, others believe it to be innate in the human genome, a part of who we are to start with. In physiology, metabolic equilibrium actively maintained by several complex biological mechanisms that operate via the autonomic nervous system to offset disrupting changes appear to favor the latter. As humans we tend to the “good” for comfort rather than the opposite knowing that both the good and the bad are offered in the course of human experience where the “coincidence of opposites” are at work. Many other physiological and psychological traits are passed on to us in the

genes we inherit. As we mature both nature and nurturing are in play in our lives as we become what makes us who we are, but as we have said, essentially we own our choices. Unless we are totally coerced, we must stand responsible for what we put in motion. Good-will and not ill-will is our purpose and the common-good our communal goal, ergo, “Peace on earth to men and women of good will.”

When our various acts are for the good of human-existence we are essentially doing what can be known as the will of God, who, in creation, human-existence came to be from nothing other than an act of his will. Those who are interested in the will of God cannot fail to see a direct correlation between God’s will and man’s will. As to why it should be this way, one must surely recognize the commonality of love. While science continuously searches for “how” things came to be, many in philosophy and theology search for the “why.” The answer seems quite clear. It is the love of God for his willingness in the gift of creation, and equally the love of others who were similarly gifted over time with human intellect and will for the purpose of returning acts of love to the Creator. A magnificent unity in the Spirit.

“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”
(Matthew 5: 48)

A book titled *Creation and Evolution* was published following a conference with Benedict XVI in 2006 in Castle Gandolfo, the Summer Residence of the Roman Pontiffs. Peter K. Schuster a theoretical chemist known for his work with the German Nobel Laureate Manfred Eigen in developing the quasispecies model, was one of the participants. At the end of his talk he deviated from his formal presentation and made the

following remarks which we have taken the liberty of copying for you here:

“In this final paragraph I would like to deviate a little after all from my stated intention of writing only about natural science and add a personal remark. What fascinates and moves me is the relatively narrow corridor in the multiplicity of all possible worlds through which the path leads from the beginning of scientific ideas about the Big Bang to the present cosmos. My friends who are cosmologists tell me that a small change in the natural constants would result in completely different worlds. The pre-biological or chemical evolution upon earth requires a rather narrow range of temperatures, and the development of the biosphere, understood as biological evolution from the original formation of life down to the human being, passed through a considerable number of “needle’s eyes”, which were determined by climatic and other adverse environmental conditions. The successful interplay of these many conditions seems to me utterly remarkable, and it is here, I could well imagine, rather than through interventions in the course of biological evolution, that there would be room for a bridge to be built between theology and natural science.”

Over the years what we have found are theologians and philosophers who are not at all opposed to science, but many in the scientific milieu who are opposed to God. Dr. Schuster’s view is refreshing.

You are a mortal and not God, however you may think yourself like a god (Ez 28: 2)

August 15th

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Happy Birthday Marie Arundell James