

J.P.L. Lubek's compilation on Faith and Reason by St. Augustine, Saint Aquinas, St. John Paul 2...

FAITH AND REASON GO HAND IN HAND. IT'S MIND-BODY DUALISM, IT'S LIKE COMBINATION OF SOUL AND BODY THAT MAKES HUMAN BEING AS IT IS ENSOULLED IN ITS BODY. ONE CAN NOT WORK WITHOUT ANOTHER. IT'S LIKE DAY AND NIGHT. IT'S LIKE WHEN LAWS OF PHYSICS CONTROL THE EXPANDING UNIVERSE -LUBEK

St. Augustine on Faith and Reason in Lumen Fidei:



In honor of the feast of Saint Augustine, I would like to share an excerpt from the commentary in [The Lumen Fide \(Light of Faith\) Study Guide](#). Pope Francis and his predecessor, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, frequently cite Saint Augustine in the [encyclical on faith](#).

In Chapter Two, St. Augustine is at the center of the discussion about faith and philosophy in the section titled, “**The dialogue between faith and reason.**” St. Augustine is a prime example of a scholar who can balance faith and reason as well as theology and philosophy together in an integrated way.

In this section of [Lumen Fidei](#), the Holy Father also alludes to ongoing the ongoing themes in this encyclical of light/seeing and word/hearing and applies them to the theological work of St. Augustine.

Read *Lumen Fidei* 32-34, then read this commentary from [The Lumen Fidei \(Light of Faith\) Study Guide](#):

Faith and Philosophy (*Lumen Fidei*, 32–34)

Philosophy no longer exists—only philosophies. Thus, acceptance of a philosophy signifies, no longer assent to the common heritage of the human spirit, but merely the taking up of a position that may be reasonable but that aligns one against other equally reasonable positions. (Faith and the Future, 62–63)

One of the common themes in the writings of Pope Benedict XVI on faith is an attempt to restore a kind of philosophy that has been lost in recent centuries. According to this line of thinking, Christianity, once it encountered Greek culture, became intimately linked with the philosophy of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and other Greek thinkers. These philosophers had incredible influence on great Christian saints and thinkers, such as St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, and made an undeniable impact on the way the Church communicates faith.

Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger) argues that in recent centuries, philosophy has no longer searched for a truth that has always existed universally throughout time. Instead, philosophy is less about a search and more about applying the scientific method to propose and argue for certain personal positions on truth.

This is the background to the connections between St. Augustine and Greek culture in *Lumen Fidei*. In many ways St. Augustine is at the crossroads between biblical faith and Greek philosophy. St. Augustine was a well-respected and gifted philosopher before he personally encountered God. His scholarly training enabled him to properly align Christianity with the best of Greek philosophy.

During St. Augustine's time, many people in the Christian world considered God to be wholly transcendent and beyond the world. They saw our bodies and creation to be evil compared to that which is spiritual. Manichaeism—a religion in which St. Augustine participated before his conversion—is the rejection of the body and the world in favor of a separate spiritual world. It is a belief system that improperly integrates biblical faith and Greek philosophy and one that still influences us today.

What is a better way to think of the connection between God and the world? Calling on his background in the philosophy of Plato, St. Augustine uses the analogy of light to show that the world is good. God is light and all of creation is a reflection of that light. In other words, God can be seen in his creation.

St. Augustine also shows that God is not wholly separate from the world, because he can be heard. In a brief description of the pinnacle moment of his conversion from non-believer to devoted Christian, St. Augustine heard God's voice. God shows himself to us all in Word and sight.

Today, at a time when science and philosophy are valued so highly compared to religious pursuit of knowledge, the pope reminds us of the life and thought of St. Augustine, who encountered God and used reason to uncover the deep and primordial truth which unites us all and shows the good of all creation.

St. Thomas Aquinas:



The truth of the Christian faith surpasses the capacity of reason.

~ Thomas Aquinas

AZ QUOTES

St. Thomas Aquinas was the greatest medieval philosopher. He tried to show the harmony between faith and reason, and between Christianity and philosophy. Aquinas's views have been very influential, especially in Catholic thought.

Faith and Reason:

Aquinas sees reason and faith as two ways of knowing. "Reason" covers what we can know by experience and logic alone. From reason, we can know that there is a God and that there is only one God; these truths about God are accessible to anyone by experience and logic alone, apart from any special revelation from God.

"Faith" covers what we can know by God's special revelation to us (which comes through the Bible and Christian Tradition). By faith, we can know that God came into the world through Jesus Christ and that God is triune (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). These truths about God cannot be known by reason alone.

Faith builds on reason. Since faith and reason are both ways of arriving at truth -- and since all truths are harmonious with each other -- faith is consistent with reason. If we understand faith and reason correctly, there will be no conflict between what faith tells us and what reason tells us.

Saint John Paul 2:



“Faith and Reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of Truth.”

These are the opening words of “[Fides et Ratio](#),” St. Pope John Paul II’s encyclical on faith and reason. In his encyclical, St. John Paul II addresses the vitally important role of both faith and reason in the pursuit of Truth. In a [previous post on intellectual conversion](#), I mentioned that Truth is the object of the intellect. Aristotle sheds light on our attraction to Truth in his “Metaphysics,” proclaiming:

“All men by nature desire to know.” -Aristotle

Built in our very nature is a desire to know about the world around us so that, ultimately, we may rise to an understanding of Him who is Truth itself.

In “Fides at Ratio,” St. John Paul II explains that the search for Truth begins when we start to ask important questions, such as, *Who am I? Where have I come from, and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?*

He also says these questions pervade human life and are inescapable. Every person, by their very nature, desires to know the ultimate meaning of life and, in turn, also has a right to know. God

the Father understands the human heart and desired to make himself known by entering history and becoming man.

Now with Jesus Christ, the incarnation of Truth, we have a person to look to in our pursuit of Truth. Christ helps us see how Truth is not just an objective function of reason, but also the mysterious and loving power of faith.

If you are interested in deepening your intellectual conversion, then “Fides et Ratio” can offer a guiding light and a helping hand. Within the encyclical, St. John Paul II will define and analyze faith and reason, proclaim why faith and reason must never be separated, and explain the role we must all play in salvation history with regard to proclaiming Truth to the world.

In their respective worlds, God and the human being are set within a unique relationship. In God there lies the origin of all things, in him is found the fullness of the mystery, and in this his glory consists; to men and women there falls the task of exploring truth with their reason, and in this their nobility consists. -St. John Paul II, “Fides et Ratio”