

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY



# SELF-EXISTENCE

- Aseity
- God Exists Necessarily
- It Is Not Possible For God To Not Exist

# ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

- Attributes of God- Things that we can know about who God is.
- Several Different Ways

# HOW WE DETERMINE AN ATTRIBUTE

- Two Controls:
  1. The Bible
  2. Perfect Being Theology

# ATTRIBUTES FROM SCRIPTURE

- What does the Bible say explicitly?
- What does the Bible infer?
- What does orthodox interpretation say?

# PERFECT BEING THEOLOGY

- Based on St. Anselm: God is the greatest conceivable being.
- What attributes make sense for the greatest conceivable being?

# TWO NECESSITIES

- Factual Necessity-
  - A necessity that must be true based on the facts.
  - God exists necessarily in the sense that he is uncreated, he is eternal, he is incorruptible, and he is indestructible.

# TWO NECESSITIES

- Logical Necessity
  - A stronger argument.
  - A necessity based on logic.
  - It is impossible for God to not exist.



# WHY IS LOGICAL STRONGER?

- First, It is more perfect for God to exist necessarily than for God to accidentally exist.
- Second, arguments for the existence of God point to God as a logically necessary being.

# COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause of its beginning.
2. The universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the universe has a cause of its beginning.

# CHALLENGE OF PLATONISM

- Do abstract objects exist?
  - Platonists say Yes
- Numbers (Math Concepts), Propositions (Information in a Sentence), Properties (Being Green)

# WHY IS PLATONISM A PROBLEM?

- If those abstract objects exist, then they would need to exist necessarily.
- If they exist necessarily, then God is just one tiny part of things that have always existed.

# SOLUTIONS FOR PLATONISM

1. Absolute Creationism
2. Conceptualism
3. Nominalism

# ABSOLUTE CREATIONISM

- God created these abstract objects.
- Possible vicious circle.
  - Property of being powerful.
    - Was God powerful before the creation of the abstract object: the property of being powerful?

# CONCEPTUALISM

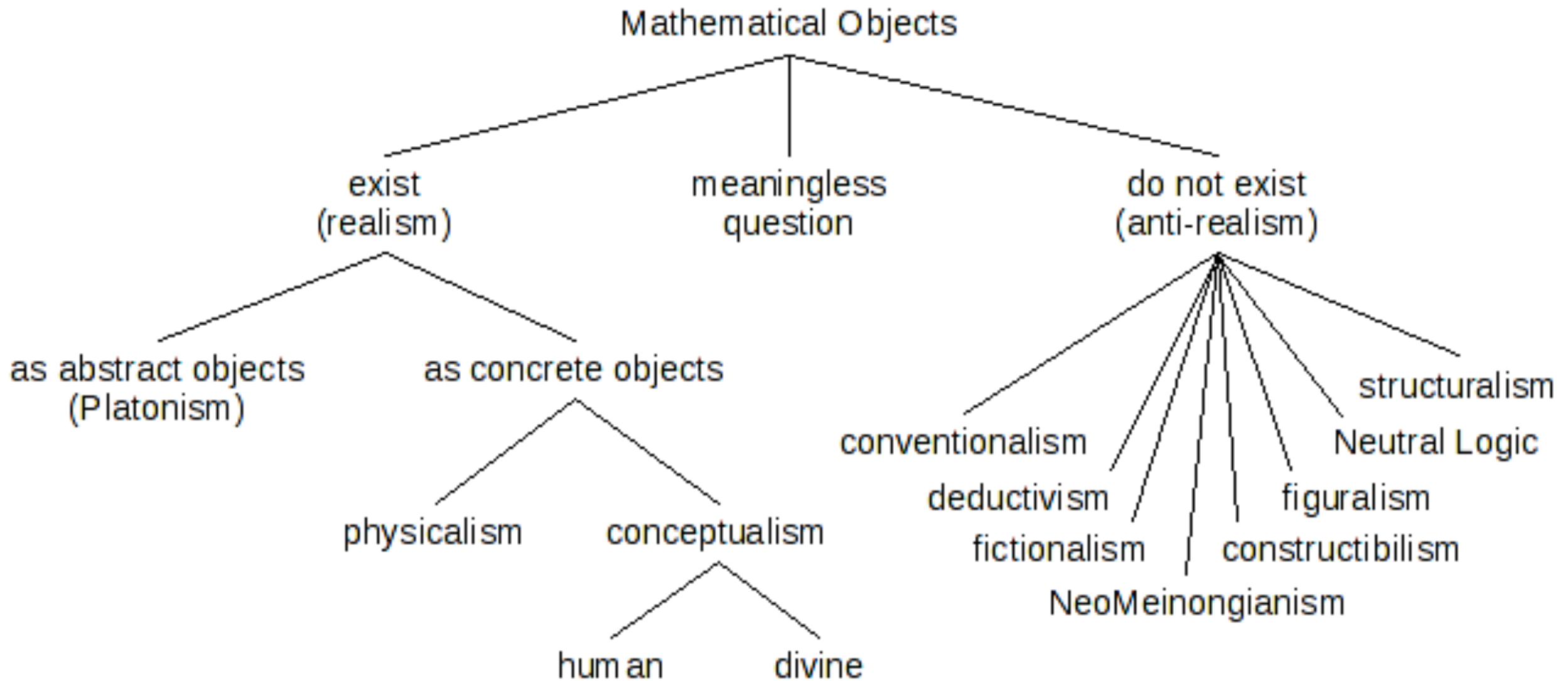
- Platonic objects are God's ideas.
- We are simply talking about things that God knows or has ideas of in his mind.
- How do know these things then?

# NOMINALISM

- Abstract objects are simply useful fictions.
- They do not really exist.



# NOMINALISM - MATH



# TWO TYPES OF NOMINALISM

- Fictionalism
- Figuralism

# FICTIONALISM

- Literally False, but useful.
  - Sherlock Holmes
    - Fictionally True, Literally False
  - $2+2=4$ 
    - Fictionally True- the end result is true.
    - Literally False- no such thing as 2 and 4

# FIGURALISM

- States things are just figurative ways of speaking about things.
- Raining cats and dogs

# INFINITE: ETERNITY

- Application of God's Self-Existence
  1. God ought to be our ultimate concern in life.
  2. It excludes our selfishness.

# ULTIMATE CONCERN

- If God is the ultimate being, should not he be our ultimate concern?

# EXCLUDE SELFISHNESS

- We are radically contingent on God.
- Dependence does not allow for selfishness.

# GOD'S ETERNITY

- Scriptural Data
  - God exists without beginning or end.
  - God's eternity contrasts with the transitory nature of man.
  - God existed before "time" began.



# GOD'S ETERNITY

➤ God exists without beginning or end.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. You return man to dust and say, "Return, O children of man!" For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.

PSALM 90:1-4

ESV

# GOD'S ETERNITY

- God's eternity contrasts with the transitory nature of man.

My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass. But you, O Lord, are enthroned forever; you are remembered throughout all generations. Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end.

PSALM 102:11-12, 25-27

ESV

Behold, God is great, and we know him not; the  
number of his years is unsearchable.

JOB 36:26

ESV

# GOD'S ETERNITY

➤ God existed before “time” began.

to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ  
our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and  
authority, before all time and now and forever.  
Amen.

JUDE 25

ESV

# TWO VIEWS

- Is God timeless?
  - Exists outside of time.
- Is God everlasting?
  - Exists in time (temporal) but forever?



# WHAT IS TIME?

➤ “a duration involving an earlier and a later.”

# IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- Does God experience past, present, and future?
- Does God simply exist outside of time with none of the above?

# NEXT WEEK

- Read:
  - Defenders 2-3- 5 & 6: Doctrine of God, pg. 34-48  
(Eternity/Relation to Time, Application of Eternity)

QUESTIONS?

