

Why Think?

There are a lot of reasons that Christians have problems thinking, and reasons why Christians are afraid to think. The church's view of truth and reason has been influenced by the philosophies of the world around us. This is a study of the Biblical view of truth and reason.

Reasons Why People Don't Want to Think

1. Naturalism—We have believed the lie of naturalism, the belief that there is no supernatural.
 - a. If we think about our faith, it will fall apart.
 - b. Ernest Hemingway said, “Every thinking person is an atheist.”
2. Existentialism—We have believed the lie of existentialism, the belief that truth is based on experience.
 - a. Something must be emotional or spontaneous for it to be true.
 - b. In the Bible, God claims to have revealed the truth from His infinite mind to mankind. So, we can know “*true* truth.”
 - c. It is expressed in statements like
 - i. “You have your truth and I have mine.”
 - ii. “Don’t knock it till you’ve tried it.”
 - iii. Statements starting with, “For me...”
3. Pantheism—We have believed the lie of pantheism, the belief that all that exists is deity and of one essence.
 - a. People are afraid to use their minds, because their minds will lead them astray.
 - b. Pantheism says that your mind, because it is tied to the physical world, which is an illusion, will lead you astray.
 - c. True truth
4. Dualism (Greek or Platonic)—We have believed the lie of Platonic dualism, the belief that there is a spiritual/physical dichotomy.
 - a. Augustine brought this pagan philosophy into the Christian church. He held that, “Man is not a body alone, nor a soul alone, but a being composed of both... the soul is not the whole man *but the better part of man*; the body is not the whole *but the inferior part of man*... and when both are joined they received the name of man.” (Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIII, Chapter 24)
 - b. The Secular/Sacred Dichotomy
 - c. “If Christ is Lord, then nothing is secular.”
 - d. True Truth

5. Super-Spirituality—Any or all of the above philosophies can creep into the church and lead to the belief that thinking isn't a spiritual activity or that thinking is actually opposed to spirituality, that we need to shut off our minds and "just believe."
 - a. It is expressed in statements like
 - i. "Don't worship logic or truth or make them into an idol."
 - ii. "Think with your heart, not with your mind."
 - b. Scriptures are sometimes appropriated to this cause.
 - i. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." (Proverbs 3:5)
 - ii. "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up." (1 Corinthians 8:1 - NIV)
 - c. The balanced biblical view is that if love rules the mind then thinking is spiritual, and that neglecting or misusing the mind is *unspiritual*.
 - i. "Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?" (Luke 12:57)
 - ii. "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgement." (John 7:24)
 - iii. "But Peter and John answered and said to them, ' Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge;'" (Acts 4:19)
 - iv. "I speak as to wise men; you judge what I say." (1 Corinthians 10:15)
 - d. We can be intimidated by intellectual unbelievers, afraid that our faith won't stand up to scrutiny, we seek shelter in a "blind faith."
 - e. Sometimes those who fall away give intellectual arguments as an explanation.
 - i. Mental deception always follows moral deception, not the other way around.
 - ii. So Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself." (John 7:16-17)
 - iii. Romans 1:18-25
 - iv. John 3:19-21
 - f. To be truly spiritual is to be truly human.
6. It's Difficult
 - a. Laziness, or we want a quick fix.
 - i. We don't count the cost of discipleship.
 - ii. We accept the easy ways to learn
 1. Sunday School
 2. Study Bibles and Paraphrased Versions

3. Dumbed-Down Feel-Good Sermons—Joel Osteen

- b. Fear of Failure
- c. An Intuitive Sense That Answers Should Be Simple
This intuition is valid, but the reality is that the world has gone wrong, now the answers are more complicated.
- d. Invincible Error—
 - i. We think that we can avoid incurring further moral obligation by avoiding learning about our responsibilities.
 - ii. “Ignorance is bliss.”
- e. Fear of losing friends; wanting to fit in with the group.
Jesus said, “Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:32-33)
- f. The answer to it being difficult:
Therefore, let us “encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” (Hebrews 3:13)

Reasons We Don’t Need to Be Afraid to Think

- 1. The Word of God
 - a. Starting our thinking from our finite minds (as the humanist does) guarantees we will end up with false conclusions about life. We need to start our thinking with revelation from the mind of God.
 - b. We should start our thinking with the “philosophy...that is after Christ.” (Colossians 2:8)
- 2. The Spirit of God—the Spirit of Truth
Jesus said, “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.” (John 16:13)
It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. (1 John 5:6)
- 3. Our Integrity
 - a. The integrity of the upright will guide them,
But the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them. (Proverbs 11:3)
 - b. “If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God”

Reasons to Think

- 1. We are commanded to think
 - a. Mark 12:28-31
 - b. Keeping one’s eyes shut to avoid temptation.

- c. Eastern Meditation vs. Christian Meditation
In Eastern philosophies they are encouraged to empty their minds of all thought (they use a mantra to aid in this). In the Bible we are taught to use our minds to contemplate the truth about God.
 - d. We are commanded to meditate on
 - i. the word of God— Psalms 1:2, Psalms 119:148
 - ii. God’s character—Psalms 63:6, 104:34
 - iii. God’s works—Psalms 77:12, 143:5
 - iv. The reason for meditating on these things is to know Him.
 - e. Romans 12:1-2—“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”
This is how Christians are healed and grow in character. Most healing is not mystical.
 - f. Ephesians 4:17-24 (Read all of this with emphasis on thinking words.)—Paul compares Christians to non-Christians, the main differences being the Christians use their minds well.
2. We were created to do it.
We cannot help but use our minds. Either we use it correctly or incorrectly.
 3. Because “men suppress the truth through unrighteousness,” Romans 1:18.
 - a. People reject the gospel because of selfishness not because it is irrational.
(Sometimes people may reject false versions of the gospel.) (See also John 3:19-21.)
 - b. We may have suppressed the truth through unrighteousness in the past. On an ongoing basis, we need to submit to the truth when we become aware of it.
 4. We can be easily misled if we don’t think.
 - a. The devil quotes scripture. Jesus had to think to come up with His answers, so do we.
 - b. People distort scripture: 2 Peter 3:15-16. “...in which are some things hard to understand.”
 - c. The world uses crafty arguments to deceive.
Example: The “Law of Attraction” taught in *The Secret* uses the logical fallacy known as affirming the consequent:

It goes like this:

*If an animal is a cow, then that animal has four legs.
This animal has four legs.
Therefore, this animal is a cow.*

In logical terms it looks like this:

If A, then B.
B.
Therefore, A.

The argument *The Secret* uses is
If A, then B.
B.
Therefore, A.

A = Times I had a bad attitude.

B = Times something bad happened to me.

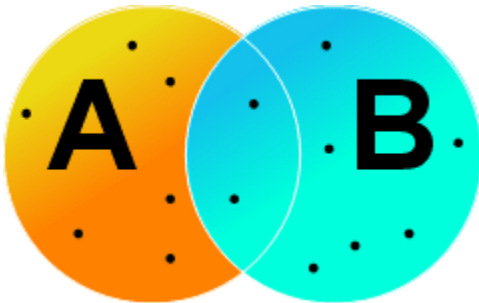
Assertion: Every time something bad happens to me it is because I had a bad attitude, and every time I have a bad attitude something bad happens to me.

(Or, all of my A's are B's and all of my B's are A's)

Logical Conclusion: False.

(Not all of my A's are B's and not all of my B's are A's.)

The [Venn diagram](#) looks like this:



- d. Because the church has been infiltrated by existentialism
 - i. Definition of existentialism
 - ii. Our culture is permeated with the belief and it has infiltrated the church.
 - iii. Someone who is a Christian solely on the basis of subjective experience has been irresponsible with his mind and is like a cult member or a drug addict.
 - iv. Christians need both truth and experience.

Pre-Evangelism

When we preach the gospel, we need to prepare people first. We must pay attention to where we are now in our culture.

Example: telling a Hindu, “God loves you and Jesus died for your sins,” will be interpreted as “everything in the universe (for the trees, the ocean, each individual person, are all ‘God’) is harmonious, and Jesus, one of many manifestations of God, died to teach us that sin and death are illusions.”

Presuppositions

This lesson, and the next few, deal with the area of theology called apologetics. [Define]

1. Apologetics categories
 - a. Scientific Evidence
 - b. Historical Evidence
 - c. Philosophical Evidence—Today’s discussion falls in this category. Our presuppositions are foundational to all of our beliefs.
2. We all have presuppositions, whether we’re aware of them or not.
 - a. Since the original audience of the Bible may have had different presuppositions from us, it is important that we be aware of these concepts as we study the Bible.
 - b. It is like the translating of the Bible into other languages.
 - c. Philosophical Categories
 - i. Metaphysics (or ontology) – The nature of *things*.
 - ii. Epistemology – The nature of *knowledge*.
 - iii. Morality – The nature of right and wrong, good and evil, and *choices*.
 - d. Presuppositions by Philosophical Category
 - i. Metaphysical Presuppositions
 1. A Metaphysical Unity
 - a. Naturalism
 - b. Pantheism
 2. A Metaphysical Diversity
 - a. Judaism
 - b. Christianity
 - ii. Epistemology

1. Naturalism
 - a. no basis to trust our minds
 - b. no basis to know absolute truth
2. Pantheism
 - a. There is no distinction between truth and non-truth.
 - b. All that appears to be diversity is an illusion.
3. Christianity
 - a. Man has the capacity to know truth.
 - b. He believes absolute truth can be revealed from an infinite mind.

iii. Morality

1. Naturalism – since all that is is a result of chance, there is no absolute basis for morality.
2. Pantheism – There is no diversity. Good and evil are an illusion.
3. Existentialism – an individual’s subjective experience determines right and wrong – *for them*.
4. Christianity – Good and evil are real and can be understood by objective revelation from the mind of God.

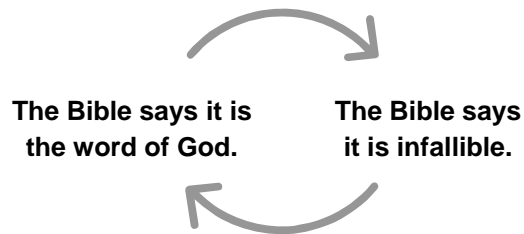
e. Quiz

- i. Into which philosophical category do the following statements fall?; and
- ii. What presuppositions are behind these statements?
 1. “All paths lead to God.”
 2. “You have your truth and I have mine.”
 3. “We are all part of God.”
 4. “The universe has always existed.”
 5. “All people are basically good.”
 6. “You can do as much as you think you can.” or “Whatever you think about will be attracted to you.” (both from *The Secret*)

3. Christian Epistemology and Authority

- a. Christians believe we have the capacity to know truth.
- b. Because we have finite minds, we cannot know anything with certainty without revelation from the mind of God.

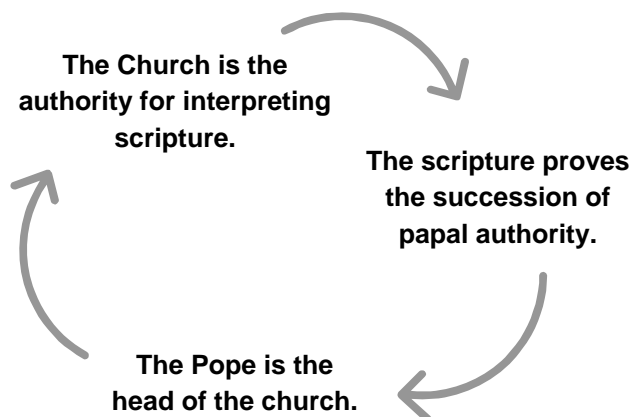
- c. We must ultimately put our trust in some authority that claims to have this revelation, such as the Bible or the church. How do we choose?
- i. Based on evidence. We don't require an infinite amount of evidence, but a sufficient amount.
 - ii. We need to avoid circular proofs.
 - iii. The Bible (first example)



- iv. The Bible (second example)



- v. The Catholic Church



vi. Who has provided sufficient evidence to earn our faith in their authority?

1. John 1:30-34; 10:41-42
John the Baptist bears witness.
2. John 2:45
Moses and the prophets bear witness.
3. John 3:2
Nicodemus saw Jesus' signs and believed He was from God.
4. John 5:30-37
The Father bears witness. John the Baptist bears witness (vs. 33-35). The scriptures bear witness (vs. 39). Moses bears witness (vs. 45-47).
5. John 8:12-19
Jesus bears witness of Himself. The Father bears witness.
6. John 10:25
The works that Jesus does in the name of the Father bear witness.
7. John 10:37-38
Jesus urges them to believe based on the works of His Father that He does.
8. John 12:17
The people who witnessed him raising Lazarus from the dead bear witness.
9. John 2:18-19
Jesus and the Father bear witness.
The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
10. John 10:17-18
Jesus has authority to resurrect Himself after He dies.
11. Acts 3:14-15; Acts 13:30; Many more verses say this.
God raised Jesus from the dead.
12. John 21:24
John bears witness to these facts.
13. 1 John 1:1-4
John and other disciples bear witness to these facts.
14. Acts 1:21-22
The apostles were witnesses of these facts. And they performed many miracles attesting to their authority.

References

(New American Standard Bible)

Thinking and Truth

John 1:1-5

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

²He was in the beginning with God.

³All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

⁴In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

⁵The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Colossians 2:1-8

¹For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face,

²that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,

³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

⁴I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.

⁵For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

⁶Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

⁷having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Mark 12:28-31

One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?"

Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD;

AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'

"The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Psalm 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 119:148

My eyes anticipate the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word.

Psalm 63:6

When I remember You on my bed,
I meditate on You in the night watches

Psalm 104:34

Let my meditation be pleasing to Him;
As for me, I shall be glad in the LORD.

Psalm 77:12

I will meditate on all Your work
And muse on Your deeds.

Psalm 143:5

I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all Your doings;
I muse on the work of Your hands.

Ephesians 4:17-24

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their *mind*, being darkened in their *understanding*, excluded from the life of God because of the *ignorance* that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not *learn* Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been *taught* in Him, just as *truth* is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of *deceit*, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your *mind*, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the *truth*.

2 Peter 3:15-16

¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,

¹⁶as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things **hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.**

2 Corinthians 11:2-4

²For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.

³But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your *minds will be led astray* from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

⁴For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

Philippians 1:9-10

⁹And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in *real knowledge* and *all discernment*,

¹⁰so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

1 Timothy 1:3-7

³As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men **not to teach strange doctrines**,

⁴**nor to pay attention to myths** and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.

⁵But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

⁶For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion,

⁷wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though **they do not understand** either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

Proverbs 11:3

The integrity of the upright will guide them,
But the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them.

Proverbs 4:13

Take hold of instruction; do not let go
Guard her, for she is your life.

Proverbs 13:10

Through presumption comes nothing but strife,
But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.

John 4:22-23

"You worship that which *you do not know*; we worship that which *we know*; for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and *truth*; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers."

1 John 5:22

And we know that the Son of God has come, and has *given us understanding so that we may know Him* who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ This is the true God and eternal life.

James 1:18

In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the *word of truth*, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

Philemon 6

and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective *through the knowledge* of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

Authority

John 1:30-34

³⁰"This is He on behalf of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'

³¹"I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water."

³²John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.

³³"I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

³⁴"I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

John 10:41-42

⁴¹Many came to Him and were saying, "While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true."

⁴²Many believed in Him there.

John 3:2

this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

John 5:30-37

³⁰"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

³¹"If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.

³²"There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.

³³"You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

³⁴"But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

³⁵"He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

³⁶"But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish--the very works that I do--testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

³⁷"And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.

John 8:12-19

¹²Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

¹³So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

¹⁴Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going.

¹⁵"You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.

¹⁶"But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me.

¹⁷"Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true.

¹⁸"I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

¹⁹So they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also."

John 10:25

Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me.

John 10:37-38

³⁷"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;

³⁸but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

John 12:17

So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him.

John 2:18-19

¹⁸The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?"

¹⁹Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

John 10:17-18

¹⁷"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.

¹⁸"No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again This commandment I received from My Father."

Acts 3:14-15

¹⁴"But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

¹⁵but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.

Acts 13:30

"But God raised Him from the dead;"

John 21:24

This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

1 John 1:1-4

¹What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life--

²and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us--

³what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

⁴These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

Acts 1:21-22

²¹"Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us--

²²beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us--one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

Glossary

nat·u·ral·ism

nat·u·ral·ism (nàch¹er-e-lîz¹em, nàch¹re-) *noun*

Philosophy. The system of thought holding that all phenomena can be explained in terms of natural causes and laws without attributing moral, spiritual, or supernatural significance to them.

ex·is·ten·tial·ism

ex·is·ten·tial·ism (èg¹zî-stèn¹she-lîz¹em, èk¹sî-) *noun*

Philosophy.

A philosophy that emphasizes the uniqueness and isolation of the individual experience in a hostile or indifferent universe, regards human existence as unexplainable, and stresses freedom of choice and responsibility for the consequences of one's acts. As a movement, existentialism began with the nineteenth-century philosophers Søren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche, and literary figures such as Fyodor Dostoevsky also contributed to the movement.

pan·the·ism

pan·the·ism (pàn¹thê-îz¹em) *noun*

Pantheism is the view that everything is of an all-encompassing immanent abstract God; or that the Universe, or nature, and God are equivalent.

(Greek: πᾶν ('pan') = all and θεός ('theos') = God, it literally means "God is All" and "All is God".)

du·al·ism

du·al·ism (djî¹e-lîz¹em, dyî¹-) *noun*

1. The condition of being double; duality.
2. *Philosophy.* The view that the world consists of or is explicable as two fundamental entities, such as mind and matter.
3. *Psychology.* The view that the mind and body function separately, without interchange.
4. *Theology.* **a.** The concept that the world is ruled by the antagonistic forces of good and evil. **b.** The concept that human beings have two basic natures, the physical and the spiritual.

— **du¹al·ist** *noun*

— **du¹al·is¹tic** *adjective*

— **du¹al·is¹ti·cal·ly** *adverb*

Pla·to·nism

Pla·to·nism (plât¹n-îz¹em) *noun*

Philosophy.

The philosophy of Plato, especially insofar as it asserts ideal forms as an absolute and eternal reality of which the phenomena of the world are an imperfect and transitory reflection.

— **Pla¹to·nist** *noun*

— **Pla¹to·nis¹tic** *adjective*

pre-sup-pose

pre-sup-pose (prê'se-poz¹) *verb, transitive*

pre-sup-posed, pre-sup-posing, pre-sup-poses

1. To believe or suppose in advance.
2. To require or involve necessarily as an antecedent condition. See synonyms at presume.

— **pre-sup'po-si'tion** (-sùp'e-zîsh¹en) *noun*

— **pre-sup'po-si'tion-al** *adjective*

a pri-o-ri

a pri-o-ri (ă' prê-ôr¹ê, -or¹ê, â' pri-ôr¹i, -or¹i') *adjective*

1. Proceeding from a known or assumed cause to a necessarily related effect; deductive.
2. Based on a hypothesis or theory rather than on experiment or experience.
3. Made before or without examination; not supported by factual study.

[Medieval Latin *â priori* : *â*, from + *priori*, former.]

met-a-phys-ics

met-a-phys-ics (mèt'e-fîz¹îks) *noun*

Abbr. met., metaph.

1. (*used with a sing. verb*). *Philosophy*. The branch of philosophy that examines the nature of reality, including the relationship between mind and matter, substance and attribute, fact and value.
2. (*used with a pl. verb*). The theoretical or first principles of a particular discipline: *the metaphysics of law*.
3. (*used with a sing. verb*). A priori speculation upon questions that are unanswerable to scientific observation, analysis, or experiment.
4. (*used with a sing. verb*). Excessively subtle or recondite reasoning.

[Pl. of Middle English *methaphisik*, from Medieval Latin *metaphysica*, from Medieval Greek (*ta*) *metaphusika*, Greek (*Ta*) *meta (ta) phusika*, (the things) after the physics, the title of Aristotle's treatise on first principles (so called because it followed his work on physics) : *meta*, after. See meta- + *phusika*, physics. See physics.]

on-tol-o-gy

on-tol-o-gy (òn-tòl¹e-jê) *noun*

The branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature of being.

— **on'to-log¹i-cal** (òn'te-lòj¹î-kel) *adjective*

— **on'to-log¹i-cal-ly** *adverb*

— **on-tol¹o-gist** *noun*

e-pis-te-mol-o-gy

e-pis-te-mol-o-gy (î-pîs'te-mòl¹e-jê) *noun*

The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity.

[Greek *epistêmê*, knowledge (from *epistasthai*, to understand : *epi-*, *epi-* + *histanai*, *stê-*, to place, determine) + *-logy*.]

— **e-pis'te-mo-log¹i-cal** (-me-lòj¹î-kel) *adjective*

— **e-pis'te-mo-log¹i-cal-ly** *adverb*

— **e-pis'te-mol¹o-gist** *noun*

mor-al

mor-al (môr'el, mòr'-) *adjective*

1. Of or concerned with the judgment of the goodness or badness of human action and character: *moral scrutiny*; *a moral quandary*.
2. Teaching or exhibiting goodness or correctness of character and behavior: *a moral lesson*.
3. Conforming to standards of what is right or just in behavior; virtuous: *a moral life*.
4. Arising from conscience or the sense of right and wrong: *a moral obligation*.
5. Having psychological rather than physical or tangible effects: *a moral victory*; *moral support*.
6. Based on strong likelihood or firm conviction, rather than on the actual evidence: *a moral certainty*.

[Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *morâlis*, from *mos*, *mor-*, custom.]

— **mor'al-ly** *adverb*

Lo-gos

Lo-gos (lô'gos', lôg'ôs') *noun*

1. *Philosophy*. **a.** In pre-Socratic philosophy, the principle governing the cosmos, the source of this principle, or human reasoning about the cosmos. **b.** Among the Sophists, the topics of rational argument or the arguments themselves. **c.** In Stoicism, the active, material, rational principle of the cosmos; nous. Identified with God, it is the source of all activity and generation and is the power of reason residing in the human soul.
2. *Judaism*. **a.** In biblical Judaism, the word of God, which itself has creative power and is God's medium of communication with the human race. **b.** In Hellenistic Judaism, a hypostasis associated with divine wisdom.
3. *Theology*. In Saint John's Gospel, especially in the prologue (1:1-14), the creative word of God, which is itself God and incarnate in Jesus. In this sense, also called *Word*.

[Greek.]

Logos

[from the [Wikipedia article](#)]

Logos (Greek λόγος, = logos) is an important term in philosophy, analytical psychology, rhetoric and religion. It derives from the verb λέγω legō: to count, tell, say, or speak. The primary meaning of logos is: something said; by implication a subject, topic of discourse, or reasoning. Secondary meanings such as logic, reasoning, etc. derive from the fact that if one is capable of λέγειν (infinitive) i.e. speech, then intelligence and reason are assumed.

Its semantic field extends beyond "word" to notions such as "thought, speech, account, meaning, reason, proportion, principle, standard", or "logic". In English, the word is the root of "logic," and of the "-ology" suffix (e.g., geology).

Heraclitus established the term in Western philosophy as meaning both the source and fundamental order of the cosmos. The sophists used the term to mean discourse, and Aristotle applied the term to rational discourse. The Stoic philosophers identified the term with the divine animating principle pervading the universe. After Judaism came under Hellenistic influence, Philo adopted the term into Jewish philosophy. The Gospel of John identifies Jesus as the incarnation of the Logos, through which all things are made. The gospel further identifies the Logos as God (theos).