

## **William of Ockham (1280 - 1349) - British Priest of Franciscan order**

Aquinas' Five Ways are unsound arguments.

- No infinite regress of movers or efficient causes can be proved to be impossible
- No first conserver of the whole series of things in time can be proved to be singular.
- It cannot be proved that the world has a governor without begging the question.
- The existence of an infinite being is unprovable

Natural Theology as a branch of Philosophy is impossible.

Only Sacred Theology is possible. Sacred Theology rests solely on faith. Philosophy and theology are entirely separate. Religion has no rational foundation. It rests entirely on the authority of revealed truth.

Ockham's Razor: It is vain to do with more what can be done with fewer. (Sometimes called the principle of parsimony. It states that there is no point in explaining something by using more assumptions when fewer assumptions would provide a logical explanation.)

From this principle, it follows that there is no point in postulating the existence of anything other than singular things. Philosophers such as Aquinas, maintain that some things concerning God (preambles to articles of faith) may be established by the use of our natural power of reason, without already believing in God by an act of faith.

According to Biblical revelation, God is absolutely free and independent. Whatever created things exist are absolutely dependent on His will and are purely contingent. So, no a priori knowledge of any fact in the created world is possible for creatures. Only experience of singular things can tell us anything about the Natural universe.

Only singular things actually exist. There is nothing that is absolutely common to two or more things. Species are just groups of closely similar things.

Nothing in the members of a species is present identically in all members.

So, it is impossible to have knowledge of the common natures of things, for there are no such things. If there were such things as common natures, then it would be impossible for God to create two members of the same species, one having the common nature and the other exactly similar in all appearances but lacking the common nature. But God can do anything. Therefore, there are no such things as common natures present identically in different individual things. So, it is impossible to have any absolute science of the natures of things. At best, we may have highly probable beliefs that some kinds of events in the natural world always happen in the same way.

