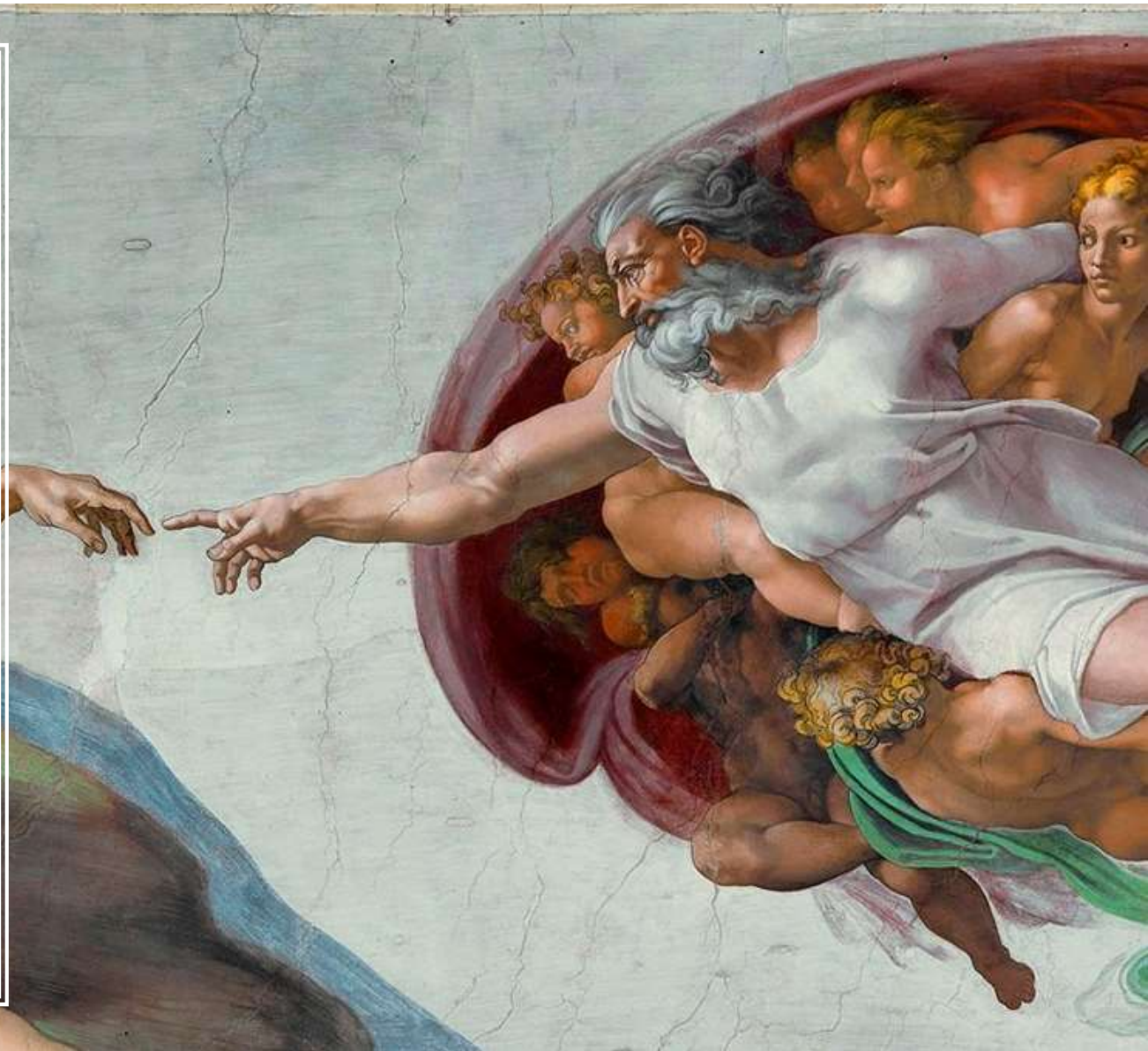


# Attributes of God

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# Classical View of God

- Pure Actuality
- Simplicity
- Aseity
- Necessity
- Immutability
- Eternality
- Impassibility
- Infinity
- Immateriality
- Immensity
- Omnipotence
- Omnipresence
- Omniscience
- Wisdom
- Light
- Majesty
- Beauty
- Ineffability
- Immortality
- Unity
- Trinity
- Holiness
- Righteousness
- Jealousy
- Perfection
- Truthfulness
- Goodness (Love)
- Mercy
- Wrath

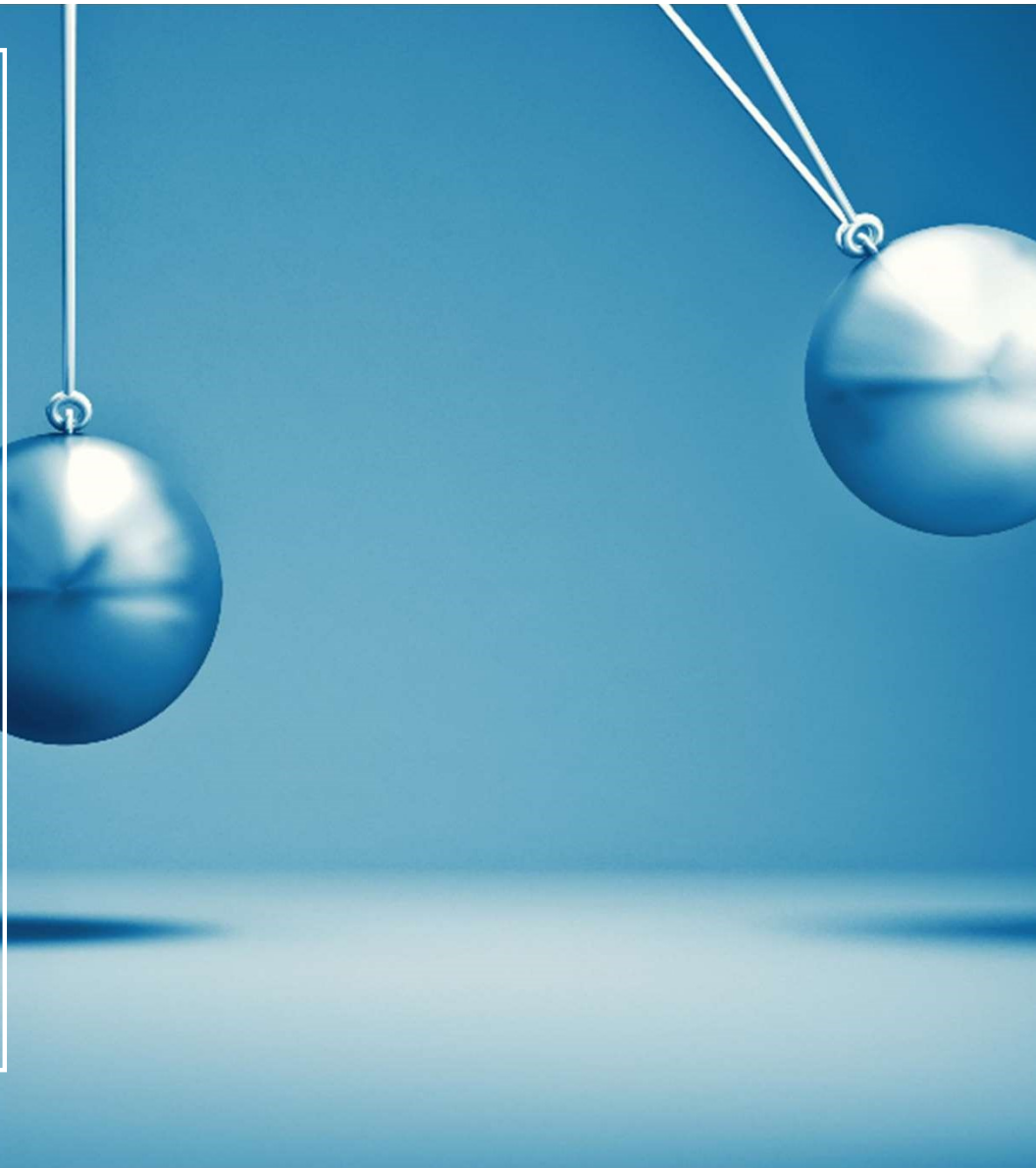




# Pure Actuality

- Actuality means “that which *is* (existence)” in contrast with potentiality “that which *can be* (namely, a *potential* for existence).”
- “Pure actuality, then, is that which *is* (existence) with *no possibility* to *not* exist or to be anything other than it is – existence, pure and simple. Pure actuality has no potential for non-existence, and it has no potential for change. If it could change, then it would have to go out of existence. But nothing can undergo the change to go out of existence unless it has that potential. Pure actuality has no potential of any kind, to say nothing of the potential to cease to exist. It is pure act.”

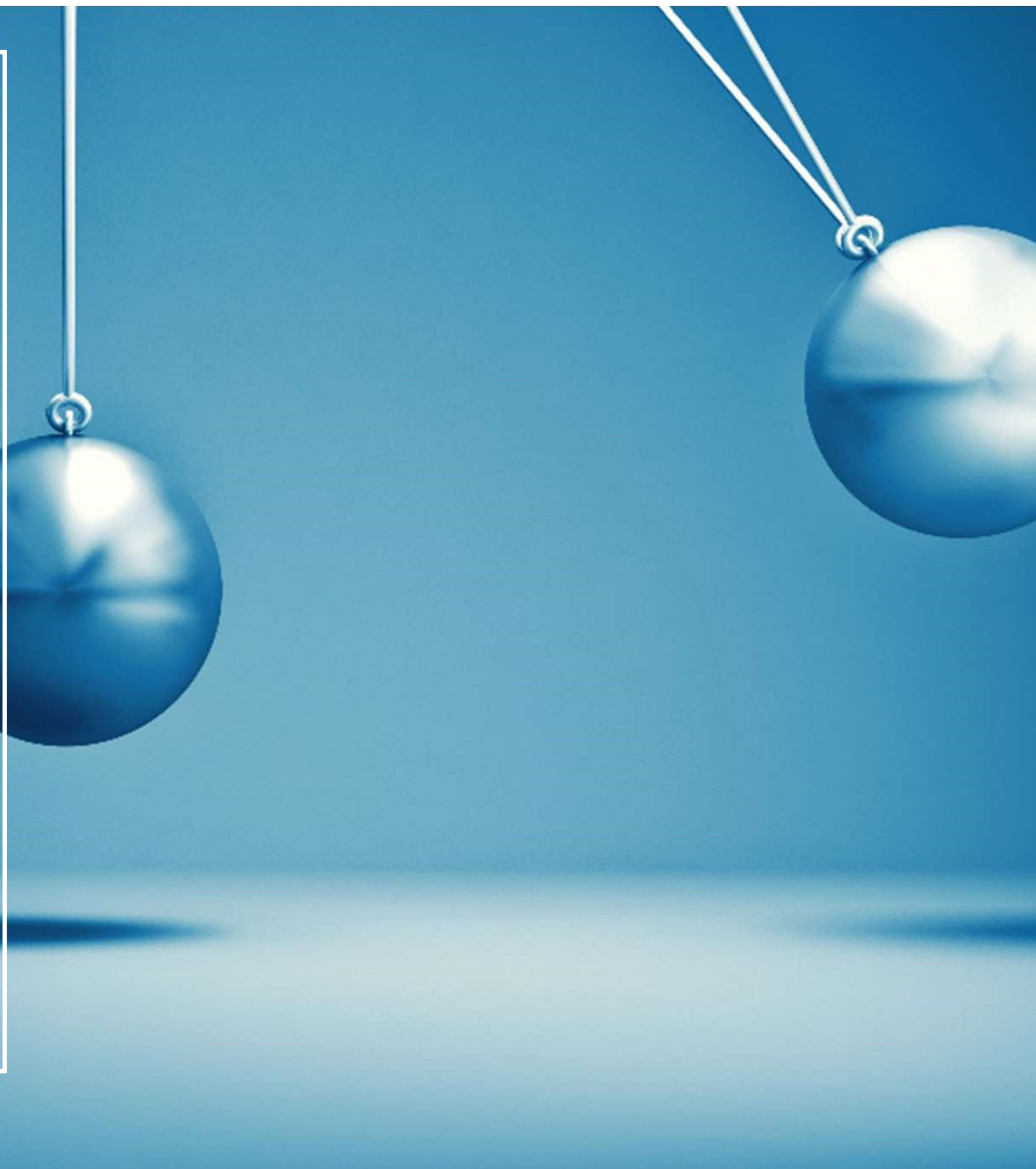
- Norman Geisler, *ST: Vol 2: God, Creation*, (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2003), 30.



# Pure Actuality follows from Uncausality

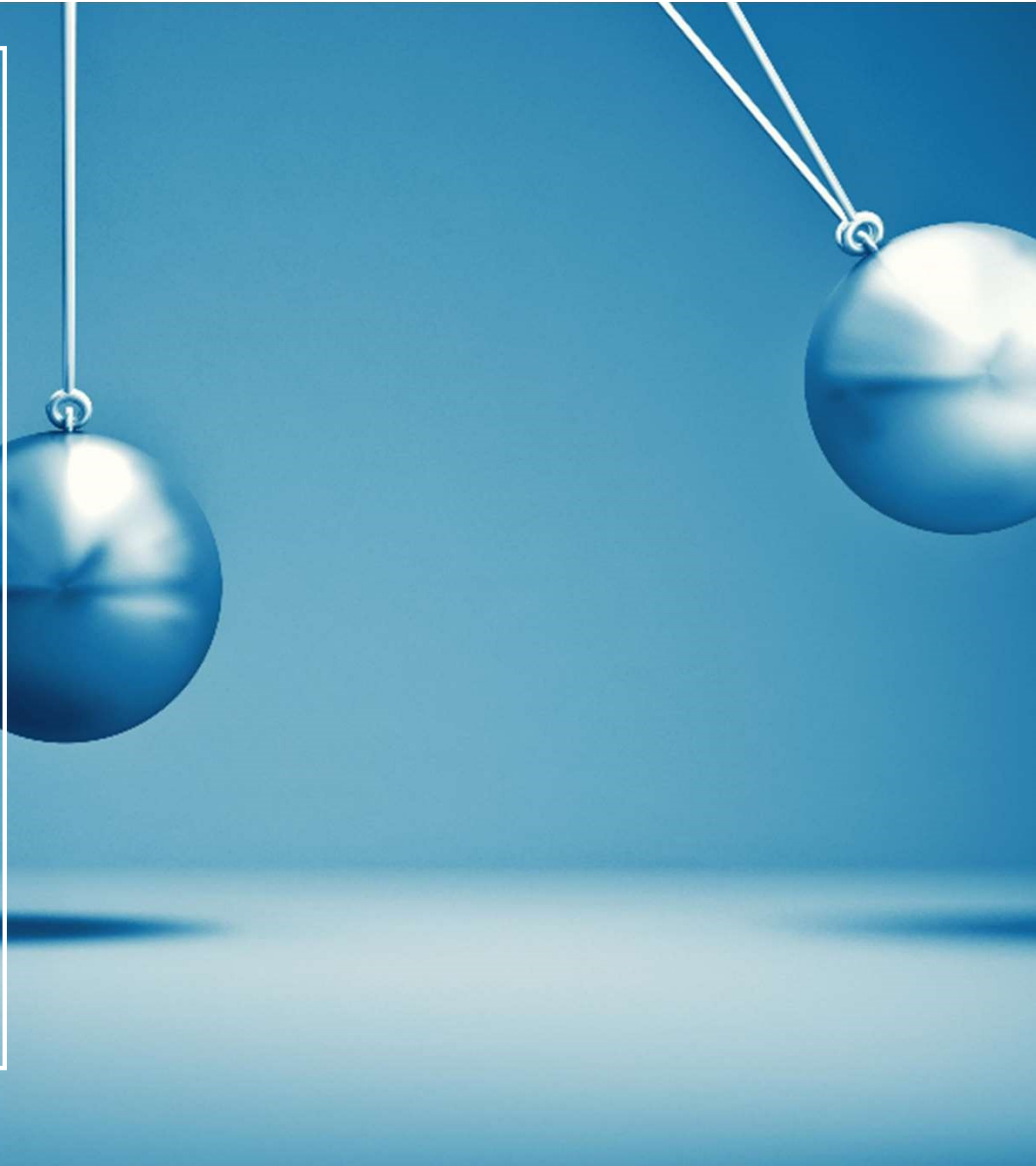
- Pure actuality follows from the cosmological argument. “God is the uncaused cause of all else that exists. What has no cause of its existence is not actualized (caused) by another. And what is not actualized has no potentiality, for potentiality for actualization is a condition for being actualized. Therefore, God as the uncaused cause of all else that exists had no potentiality for existence or nonexistence. He simple exists, pure and simple.”

- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 32.



# Pure Actuality follows from Uncausality

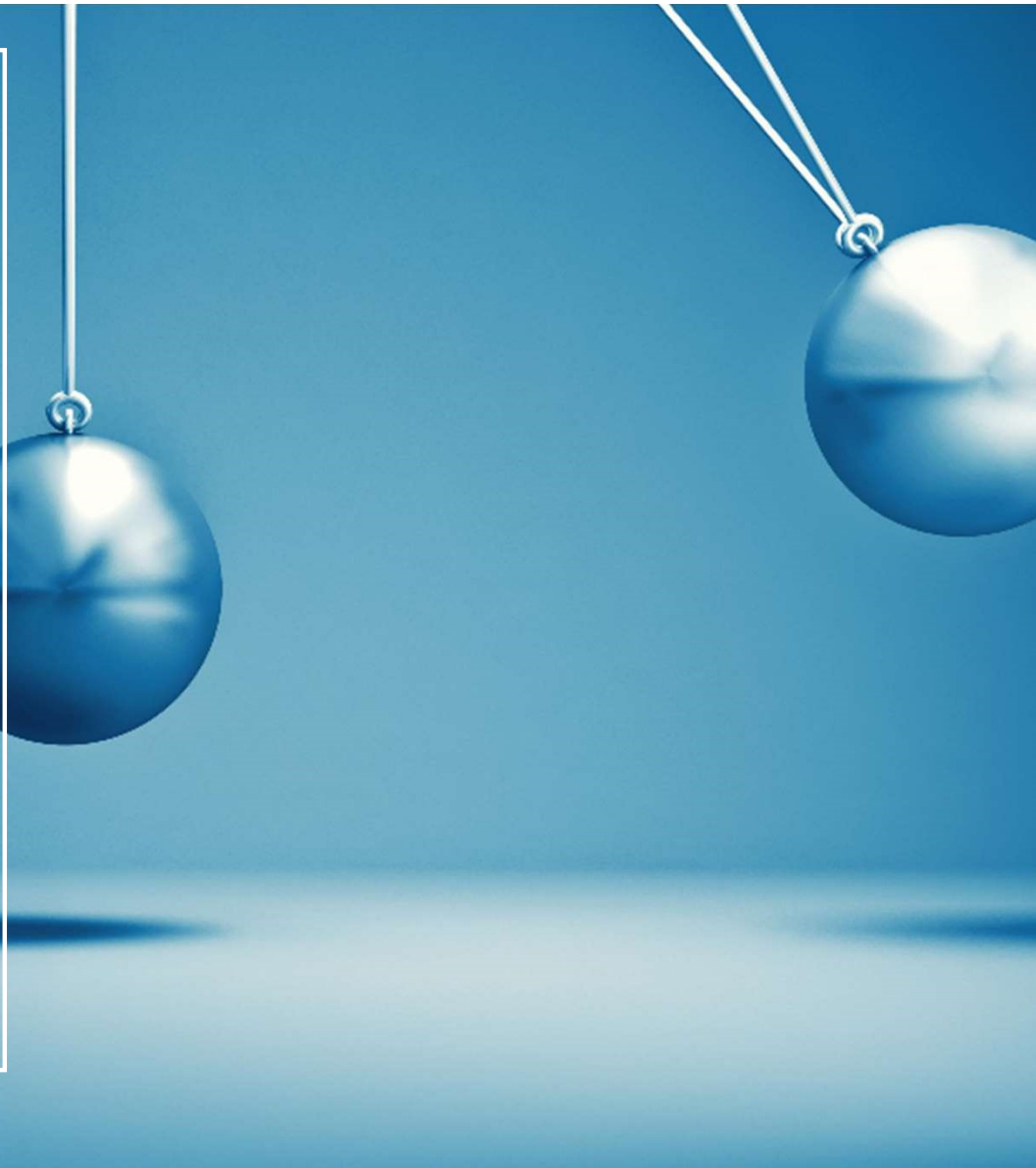
- “The argument for God as the Pure actualizer of all else that has actuality begins in the real change we experience. All real change involves a passing from a state of potentiality for that change to actual change itself. However, nothing passes from potentiality to actuality except some actual cause actualizing this potentiality. No potentiality for existence can actualize its own existence. Therefore, ultimately, there must be a First, Unactualized Actualizer of every other being that has been actualized. This first Unactualized Actualizer must be Pure Actuality, for if it has any potentiality . . .



# Pure Actuality follows from Uncausality

- . . . then it would have needed an actualizer. However, again, nothing can actualize its own existence, since a self-caused being is impossible. (A cause is ontologically prior to its effect, and nothing can be prior to itself. Neither can there be an infinite regress of beings that were actualized, for in that case there would be nothing to put the actuality into the series. Consequently, there *must* be a First, Unactualized Actualizer that has no potentiality in its being, which is Pure Actuality.”

- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation,, 32-33.

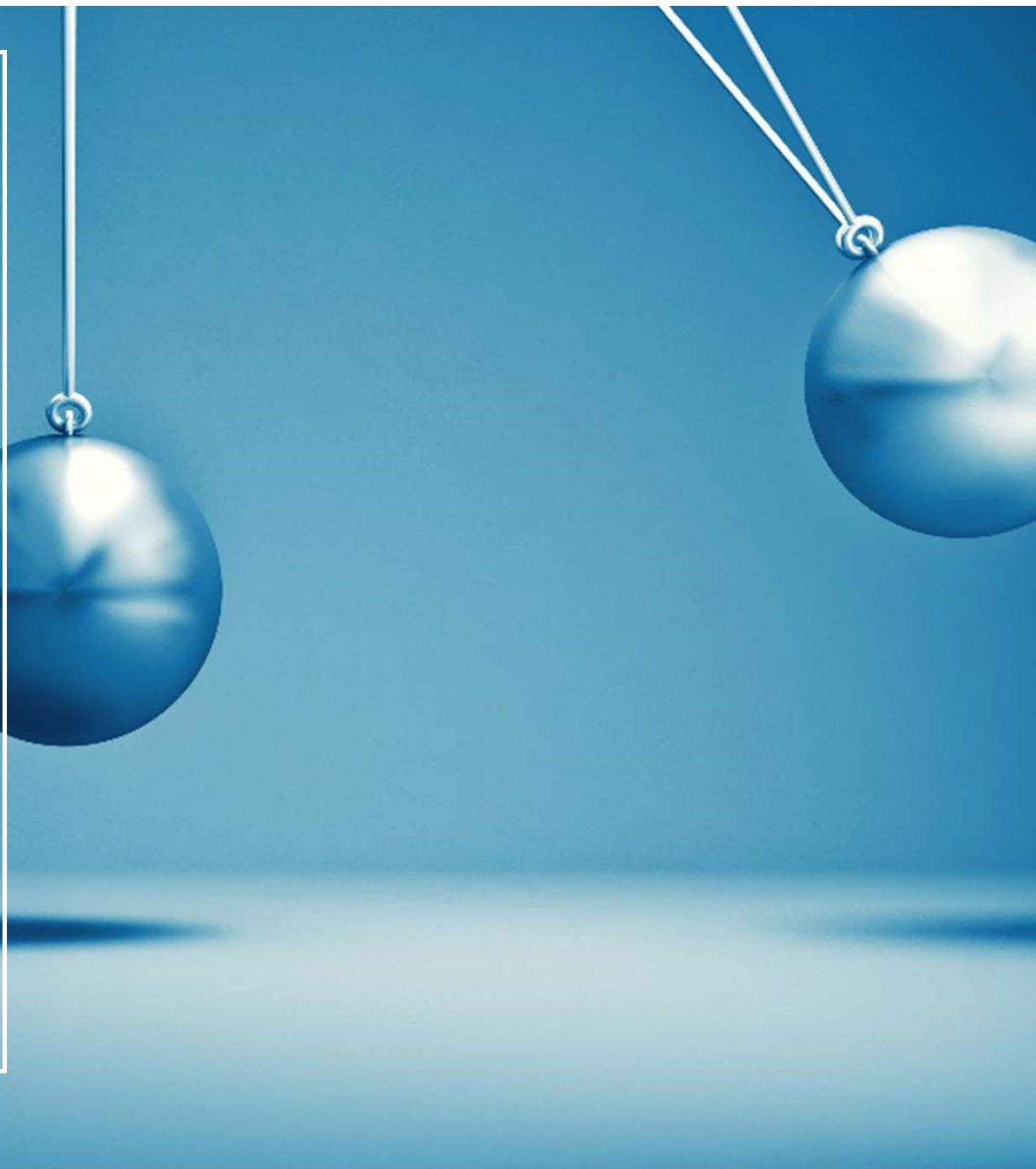




# Pure Actuality follows from Uncausality

- “In brief, God is the uncaused Cause of all that exists. The uncaused Cause has no potential to not exist, and what exists without any potential not to exist is Pure Existence. He is a necessary being (see chapter 3), and as such He has no potentiality not to exist. In summary, God is Pure Actuality with no potency for nonexistence, while creatures are both act and potency, having the potential for nonexistence (ie., they did not exist before they were created).”

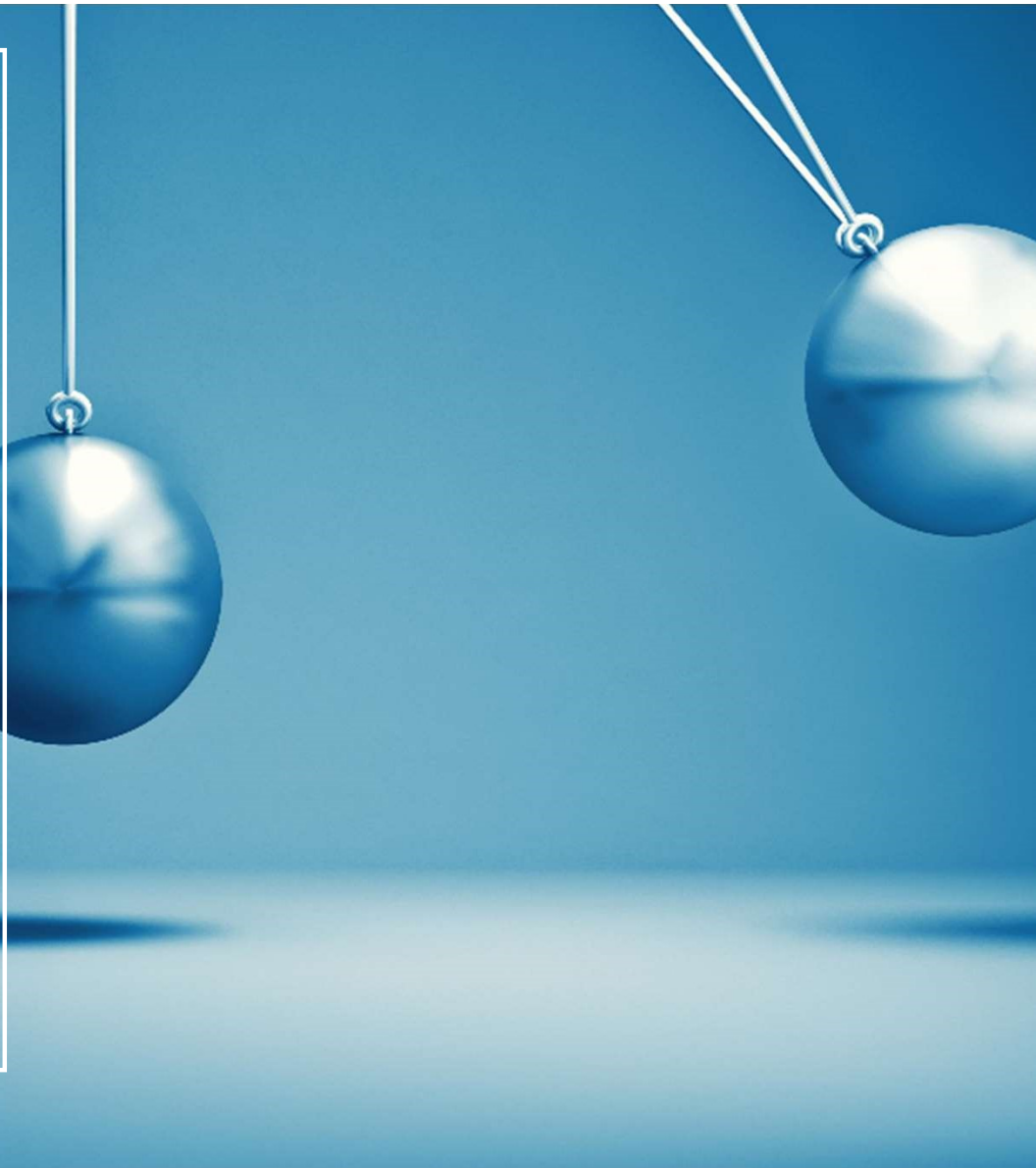
- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 33.



# Pure Actuality follows from Necessity

- “A necessary being by definition is one who cannot not exist (if it exists at all). But what cannot not exist has no potential for nonexistence. And what exists with no potential not to exist is Pure Existence.
- So if even one contingent being exists, then a necessary Being must exist, for no contingent being (viz., that one that *can* not exist) can cause its own existence, for the mere potential to be does not account for why such a being does exist. Hence, ultimately there must be a Being who *cannot* not exist to ground all beings that can not exist but do exist (ie., humans).

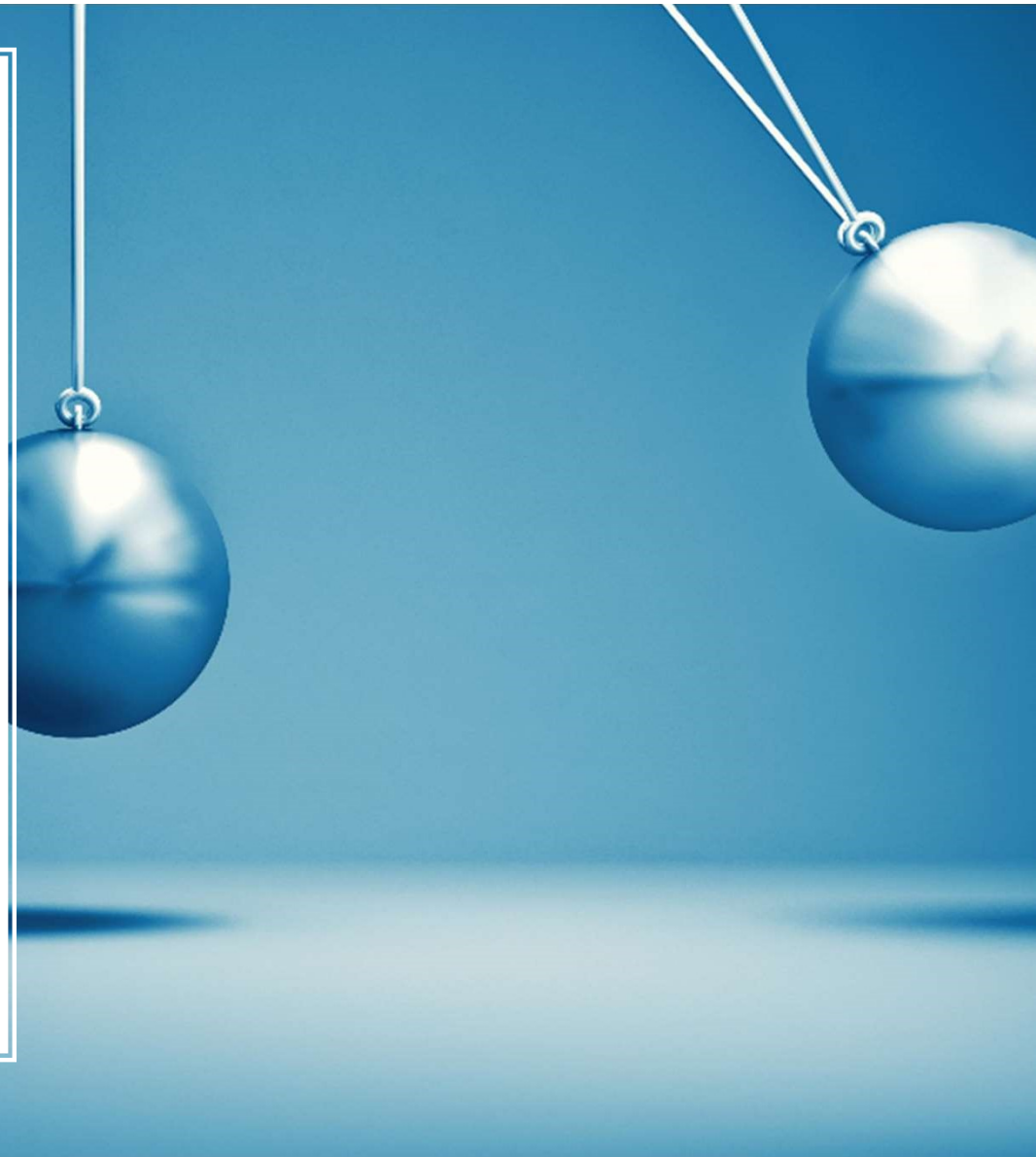
- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 33.





# Pure Actuality follows from Necessity

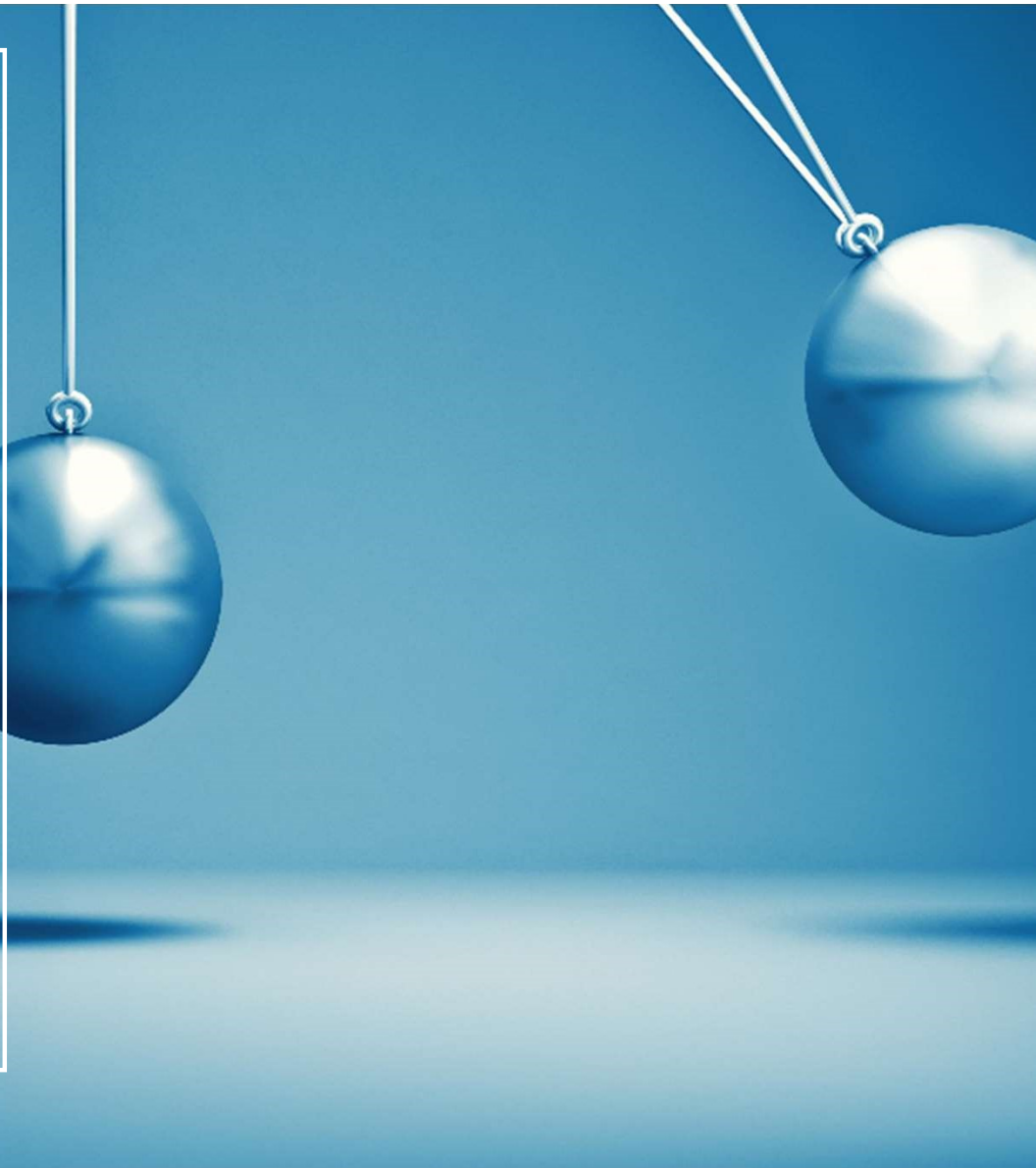
- “To state the argument another way, if a contingent being exists, then a necessary being must exist. Otherwise, nonexistence could be the cause of existence, for if another being who cannot exist is the cause of one who does exist, then it is possible for nothing to be the cause of something. But this is absurd, since nothing cannot cause anything – it is nothing. Only something that exists can cause existence . . . .



# Pure Actuality follows from Necessity

- ... This being the cause, if God is a necessary being (one who has no potential not to be) then he must be Pure Actuality. As we have seen, a Being with no potentiality for nonexistence is Pure Existence.”
- *All other essential metaphysical attributes of God follow from Pure Actuality: simplicity, aseity, necessity, immutability, eternality, and infinity.*

- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 33.



# Simplicity

- “‘Simple’ means without parts, for what has parts can come apart. Simple also means indivisible; that is, God is not capable of being divided. There are no “seams” in God, so there is no place in which the fabric of His being can be torn or come undone. Further, God’s simplicity means that He is absolutely one: Not only does He have unity, but He *is* absolute unity. It is not oneness within many-ness; it is oneness without many-ness in His Being (essence), even though there is plurality of persons (see chapter 12).”

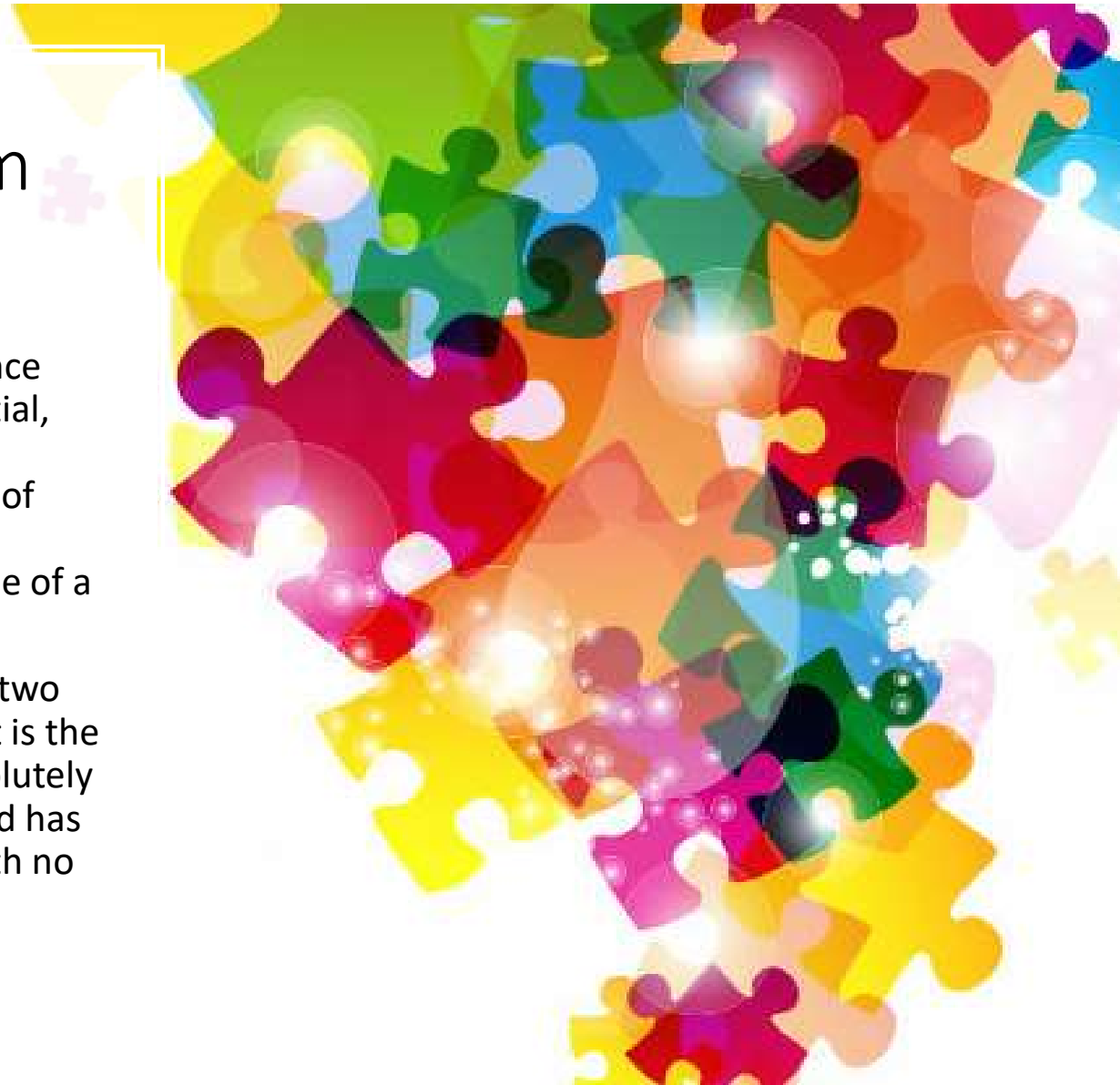
- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 39.





# Simplicity follows from Pure Actuality

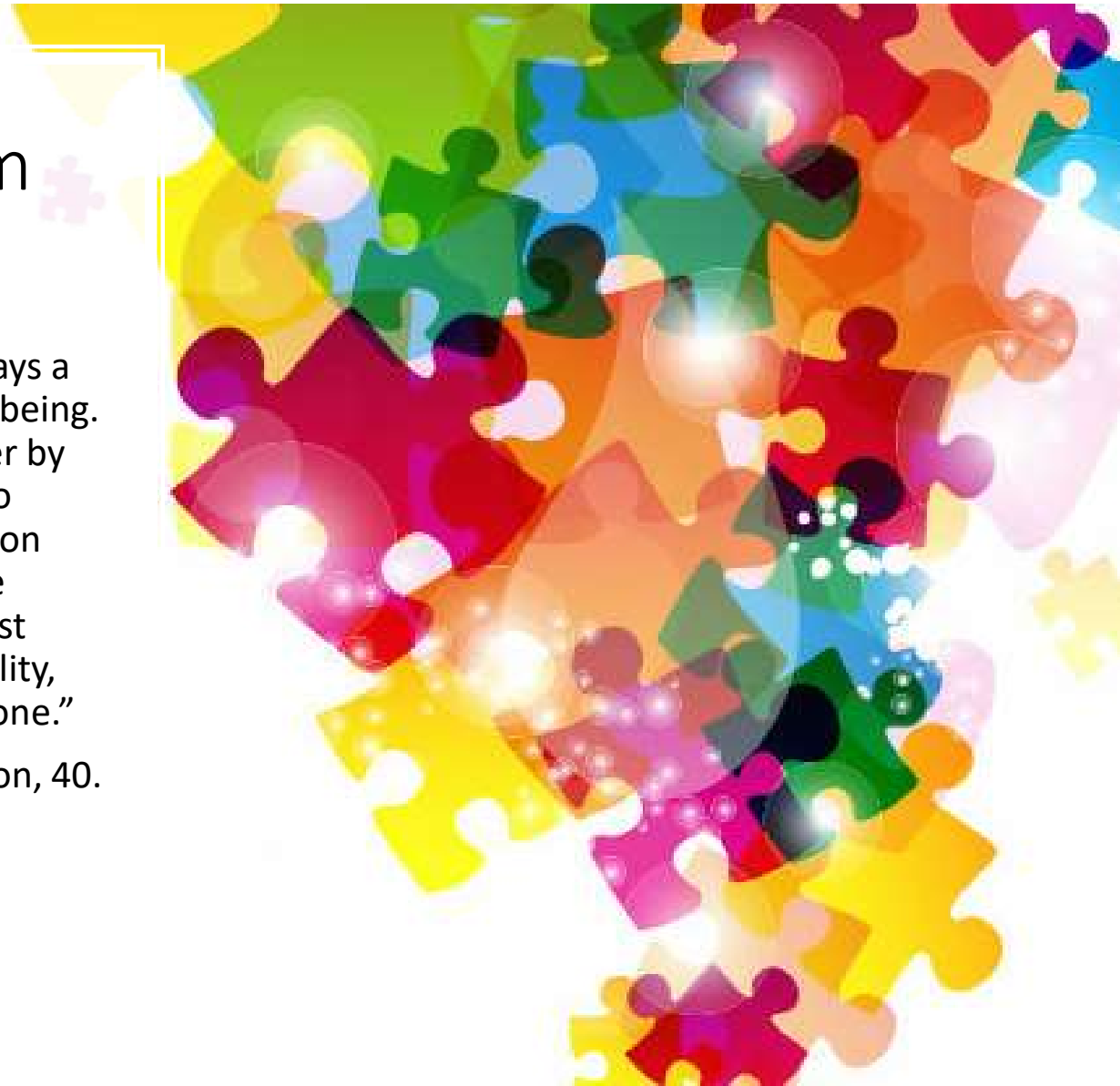
- “What has no potentiality for nonexistence cannot be divided, since it has no potential, including no potential for division or destruction. And what has no possibility of division is indivisible (ie., simple). Pure actuality is unlimited and unique; it is one of a kind.
- To state it another way, there cannot be two beings who are entirely the same – what is the same is absolutely one, and what is absolutely one is simple (indivisible). Therefore, God has absolute simplicity. As Pure actuality, with no admixture of anything else . . .



# Simplicity follows from Pure Actuality

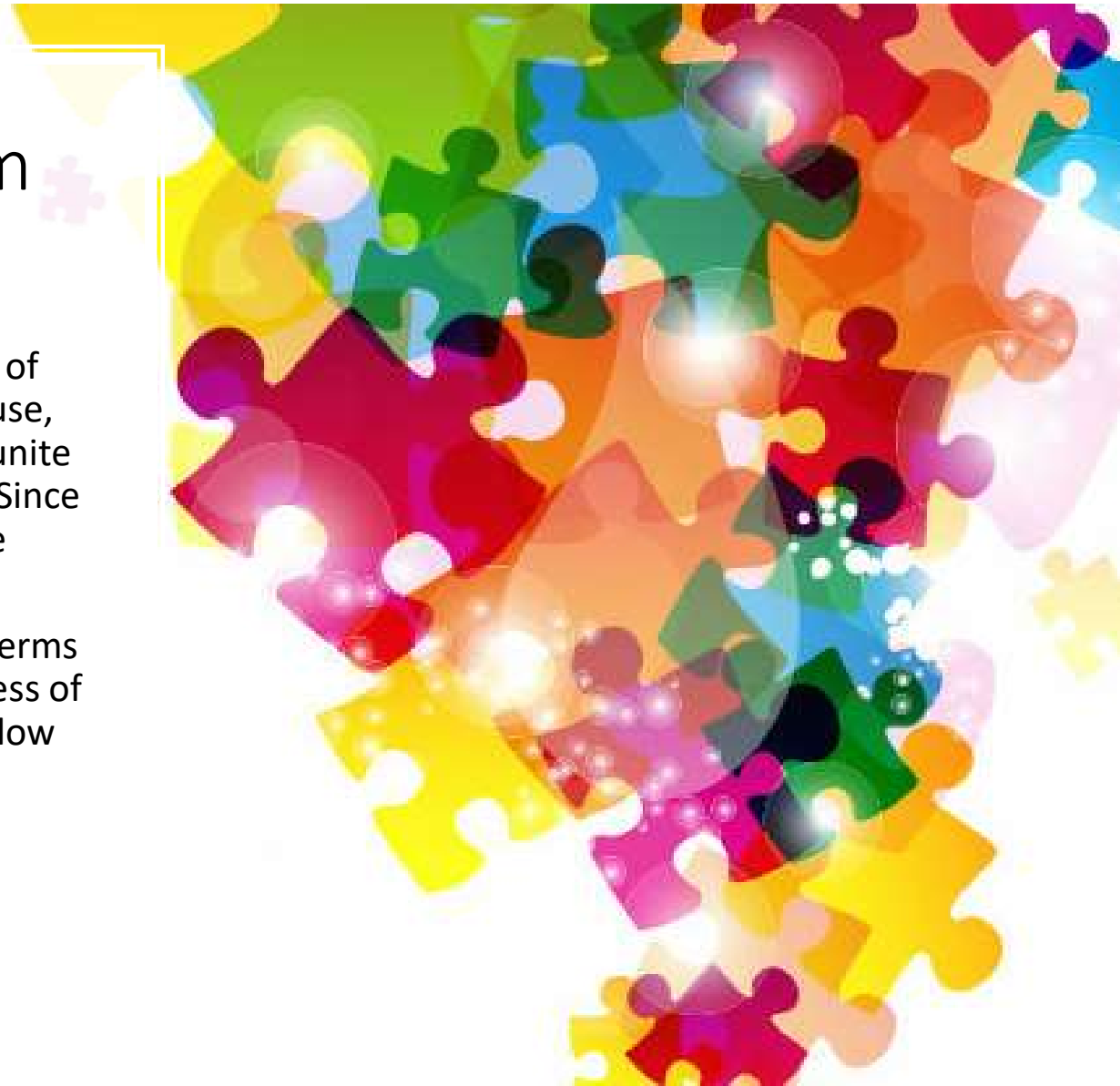
- . . . God must be simple. The only two ways a being can differ is either by being or nonbeing. However, to differ by nonbeing is to differ by nothing, and to differ by nothing is not to differ at all. Furthermore, this is the reason that there cannot be two beings who are absolutely the same: to be two, they must differ. It follows that a God of pure actuality, with no potentiality must be absolutely one.”

- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 40.



# Simplicity follows from Uncausality

- “As for the first Cause, God has no cause of Himself. Every composite being has a cause, for things diverse in themselves cannot unite unless something causes them to unite. Since God is uncaused, He cannot have diverse elements to Himself.
- To rephrase this in more contemporary terms ... Intelligent design proponents, regardless of how much natural evolution they may allow for . . .

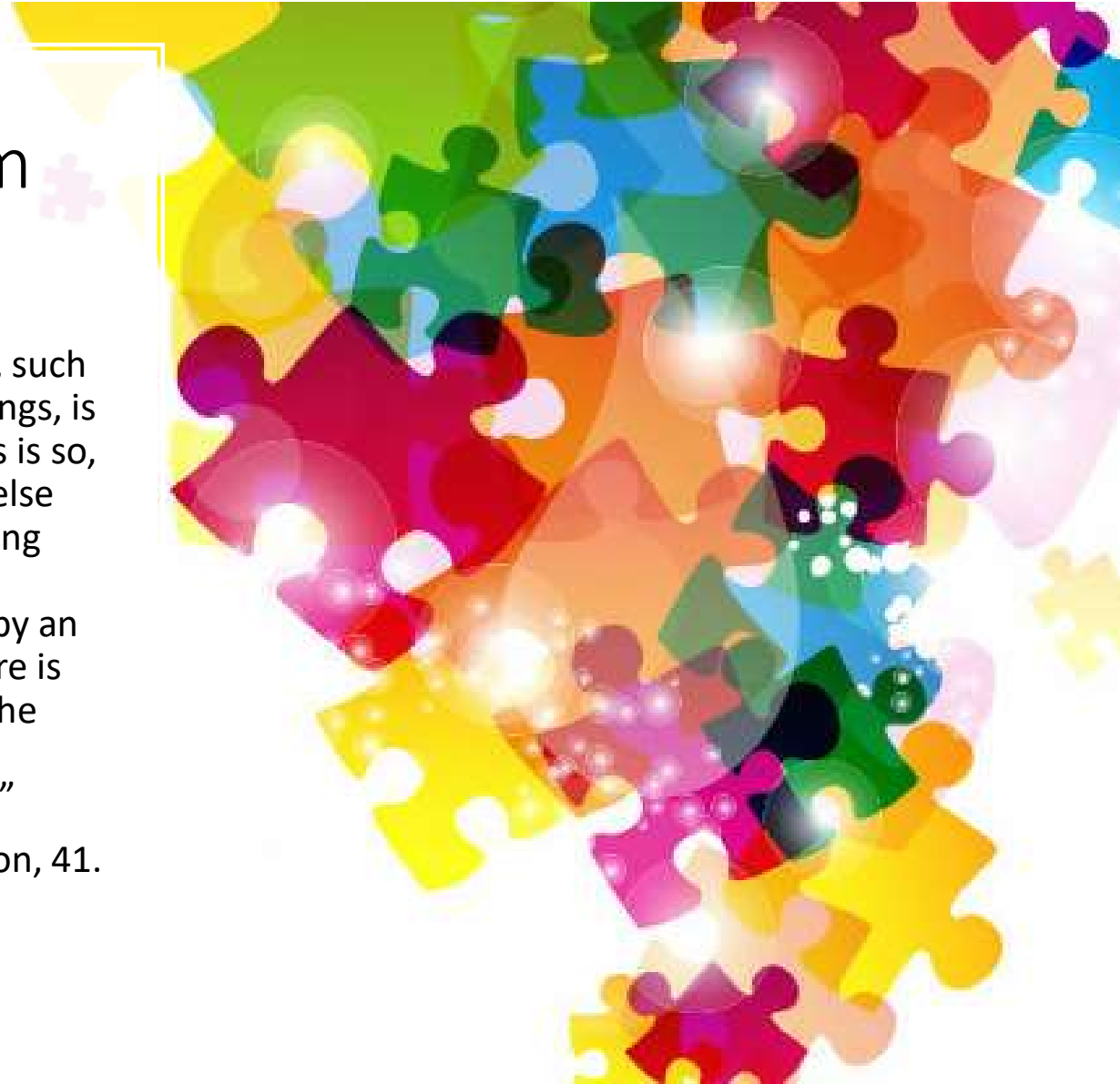




# Simplicity follows from Uncausality

- . . . point out that irreducible complexity, such as is found in even the smallest living things, is evidence of an Intelligent designer. If this is so, then God could not have complexity, or else He must have been designed by something above and beyond himself ... If he was complex, he would have been designed by an intelligent designer beyond Himself. There is no such being (because we speaking of the Uncaused first cause), so God cannot be complex – he must be absolutely simple.”

- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 41.



# Necessity

- “Again, aseity and necessity are closely related: Both are incommunicable or nontransferable attributes of God; both refer to God’s unique kind of Being. Aseity and necessity are often lumped together by theologians, even though they are distinguishable concepts. A necessary Being is one whose nonexistence is impossible; that is, if a necessary Being exists, then He must exist necessarily. This can be stated in at least four ways.





# Necessity

- A necessary Being is
  - A Being whose nonexistence is not possible
  - A Being whose existence is essential
  - A Being whose essence is to exist
  - A Being whose essence and existence are identical





# Necessity

- In contrast to a necessary Being, a contingent being is
  - A being whose nonexistence is possible
  - A being whose existence is not essential
  - A being whose essence is not to exist
  - A being whose essence and existence are not identical
- Hence, a necessary Being is one who is not contingent, and a contingent being is one who is not necessary. A contingent being is one who *can* not exist, and a Necessary Being is one who *cannot* not exist.”

- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 64.





# Necessity follows from Uncausality

- “The necessity of God’s Being also follows from the fact that He is an uncaused Being. What is uncaused exists independently, and what exists independently is a necessary existence. Consequently, God is a necessary existence.”

- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 65.





# Necessity follows from Pure Actuality

- “The necessity of God’s Being also follows from the fact that He is an uncaused Being. What is uncaused exists independently, and what exists independently is a necessary existence. Consequently, God is a necessary existence.”

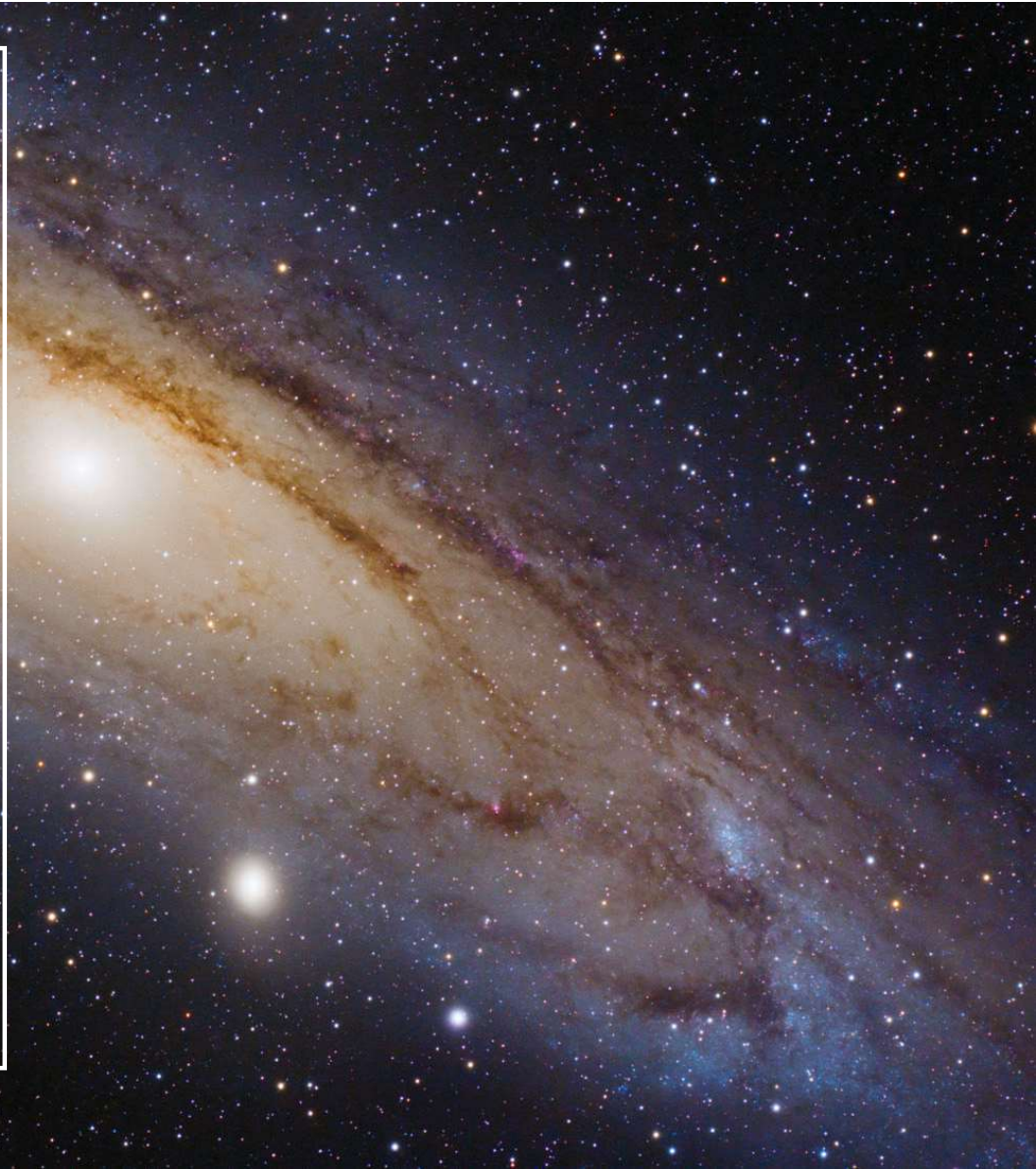
- ST: Vol 2: God, Creation, 65.





# Omnipresent

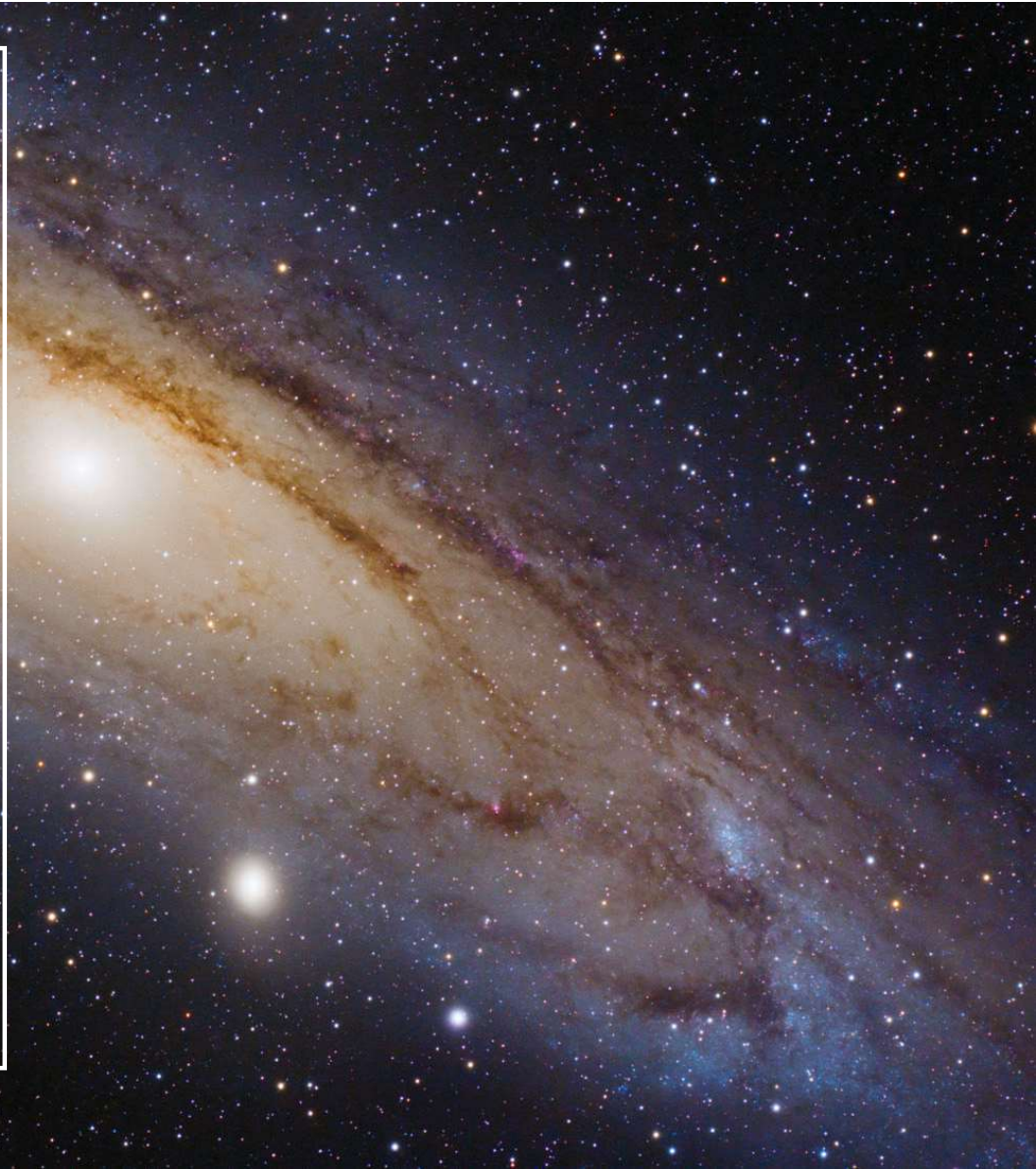
- “Technically speaking omnipresence is not an attribute of God, but rather it flows from his attributes. Omnipresence results from His relation to His creation, like transcendence and immanence. If there is no creation, then there is nothing else to which God can be present. However, since God is infinite in Himself, His omnipresence does express a certain characteristic of God that becomes manifest when there is a creation to which He can be everywhere present.”
  - ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.





# Omnipresent

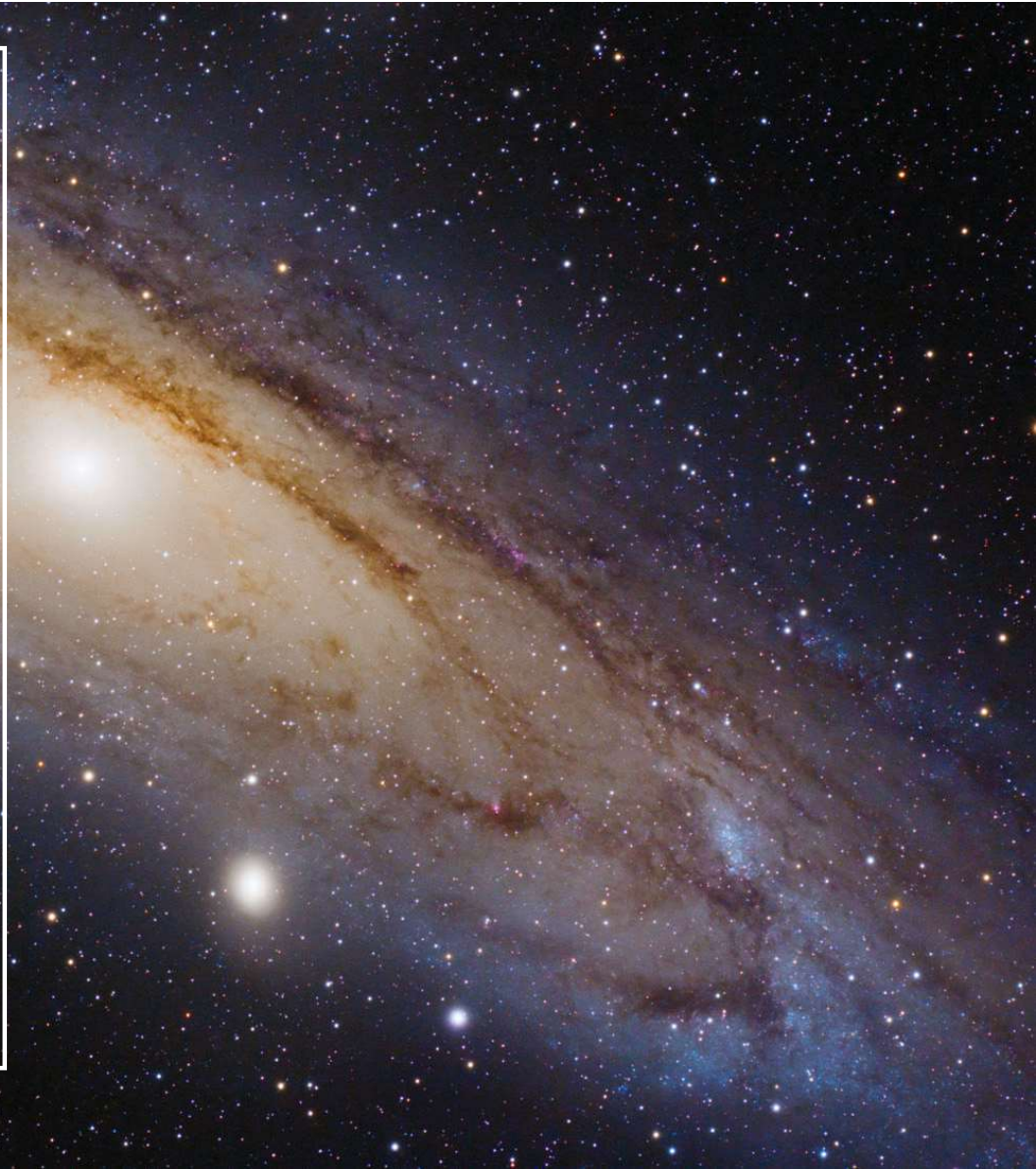
- “Omnipresence is part of the classical cluster of God’s characteristics that distinguishes the God of orthodox theology from the contemporary unorthodox views such as pantheism and process theology.”
  - ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.





# Omnipresent

- “Literally, omnipresence means that God is everywhere present at once (omni=everywhere + present). Negatively stated, there is nowhere that God is absent. The “ubiquitous” is sometimes used interchangeably with omnipresence; the root meaning of “ubiquity” is from the Latin *ubique*, meaning ‘everywhere.’”
  - ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.

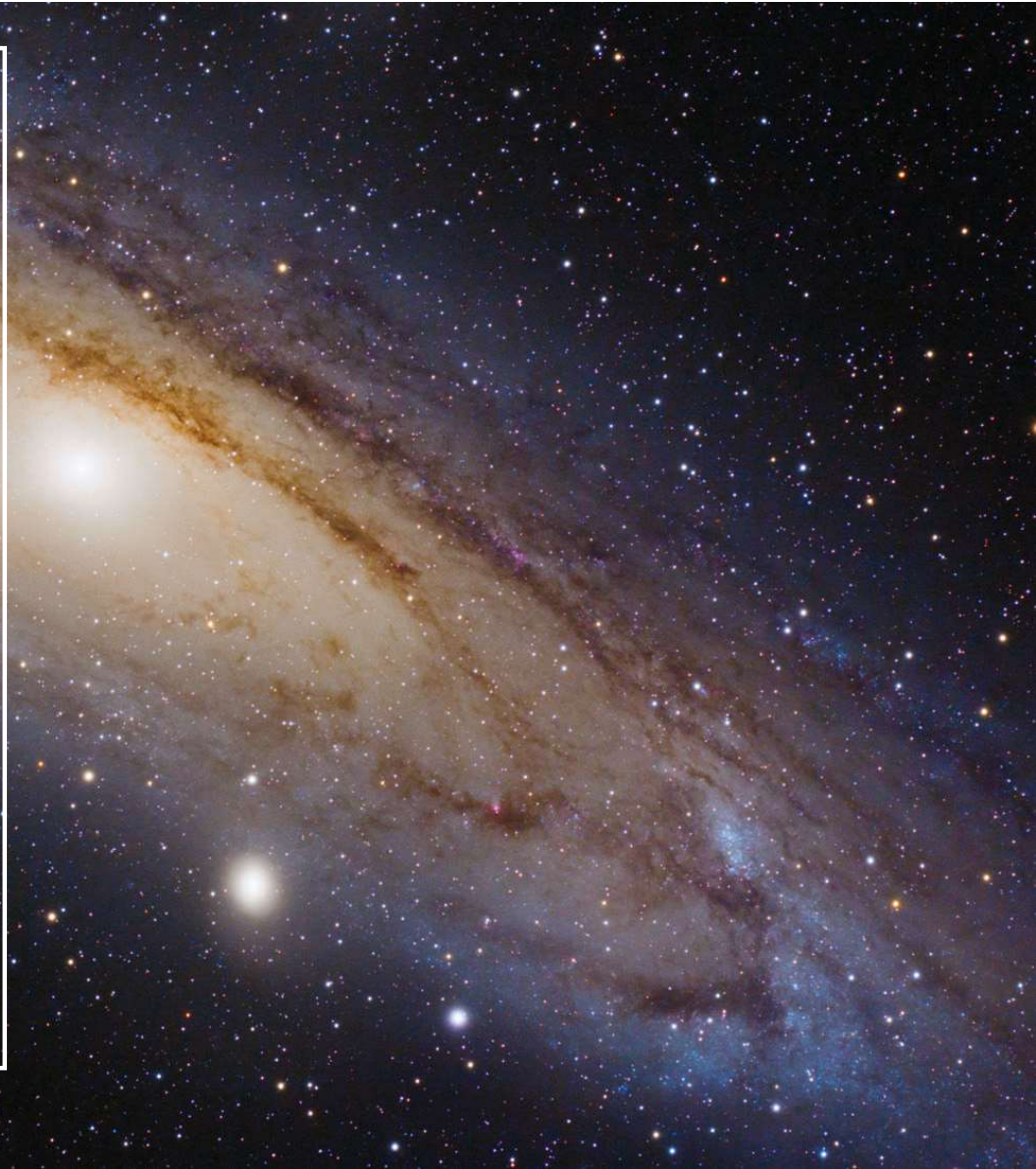




# Omnipresent

- “It is helpful to see what omnipresence does not mean. It does not mean that God *is* creation; this is pantheism. In theism God *made* the world; in pantheism God *is* the world. Nor does omnipresence mean that God is *in* creation, which is panentheism. As we have seen in previous chapters, God is not in space (He is nonspatial); nor is He in time (he is nontempora). Neither is God in matter, since he is immaterial—pure spirit.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.

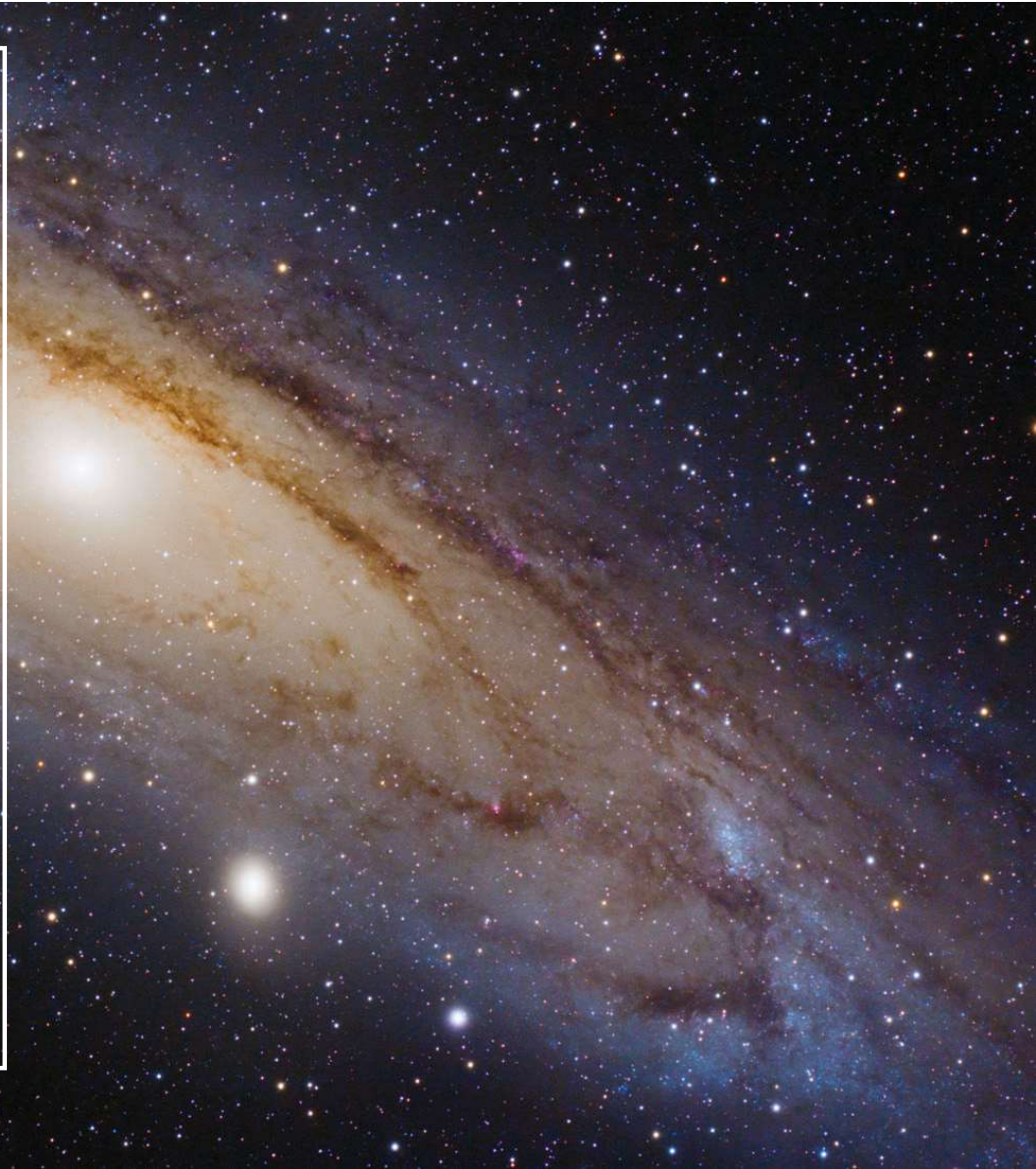




# Omnipresent

- “What, then, does omnipresence mean? It means that *all of God is everywhere at once*. As the indivisible Being, God does not have *one part here and another part there*, for He has no parts. God is *present to* but not *part of* creation. God is *everywhere*, but He is not *any thing*. He is *at every point in space*, but He is not *spatial*. He is *at every point in space*, but He is not *of any point in space*.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.

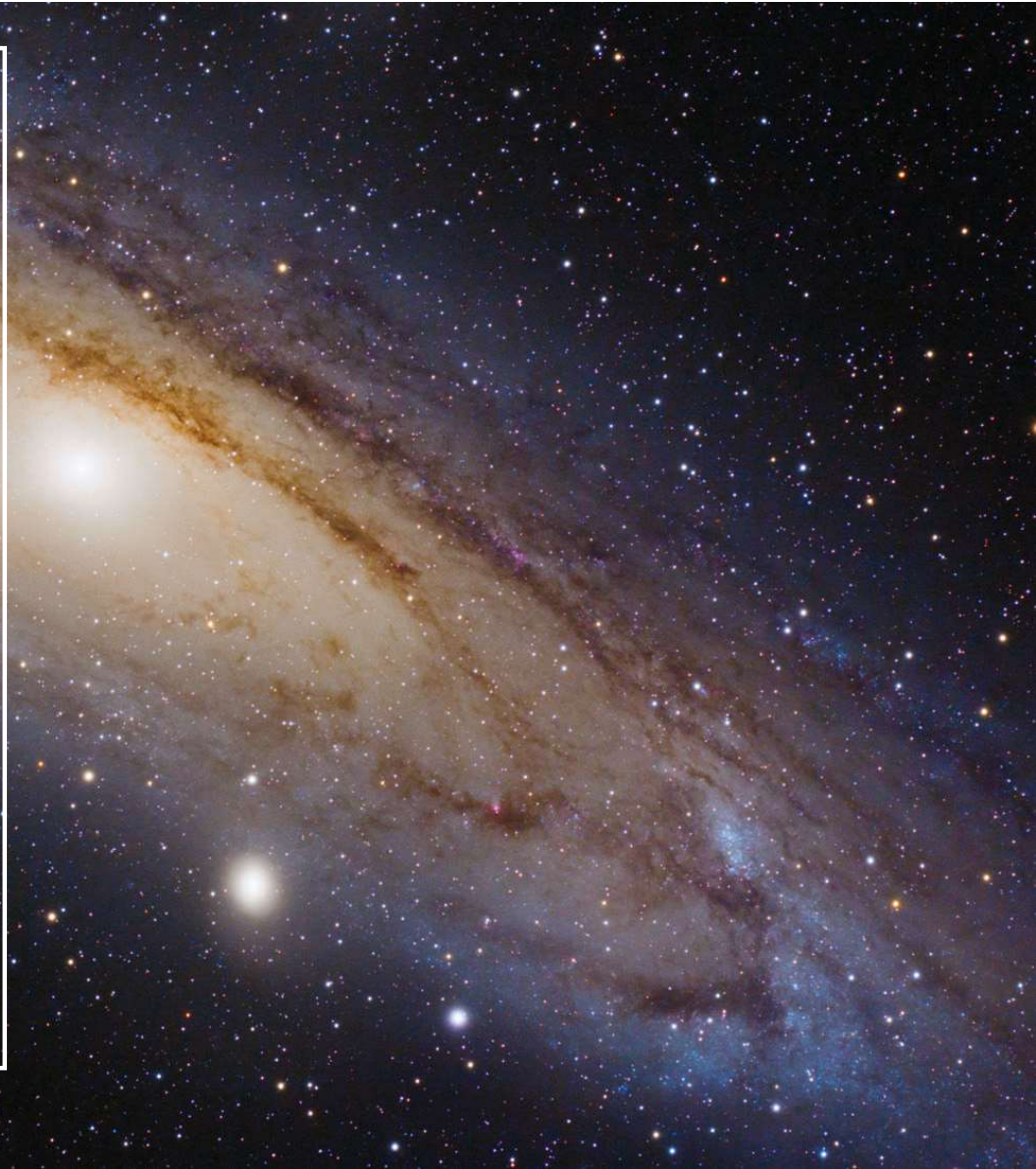




# Omnipresent

- “There is, of course, a sense in which God is “in” the universe but not “of” it: He is “in” it (better yet, it is in God), as its *Cause*. However, He is not part of the *effect*. All of *God is everywhere*, yet *no part of God is anywhere*, since He has no parts.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.

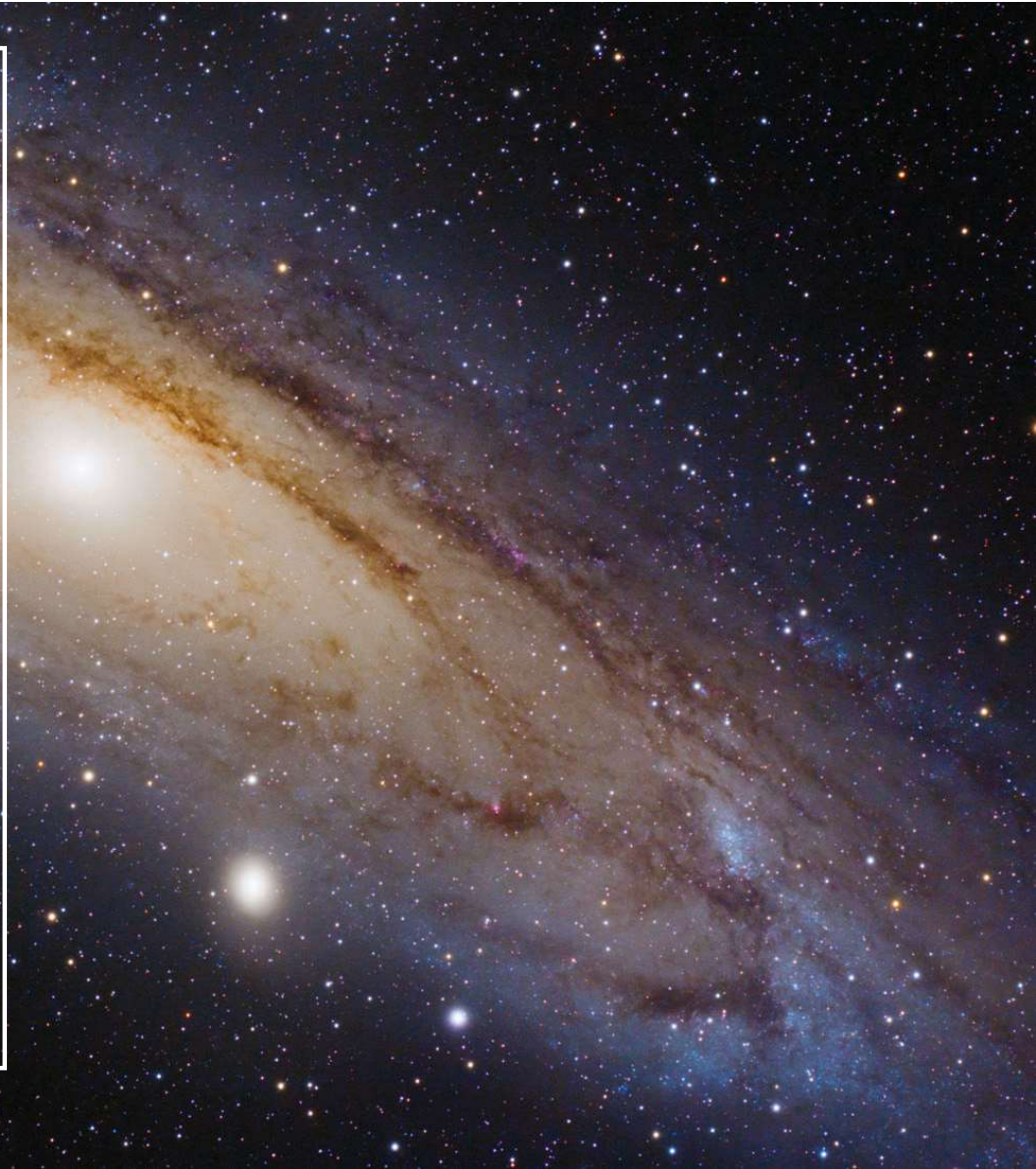




# Omnipresent

- “Some illustrations of omnipresence are good, and some are not. For instance, God is not present to the whole universe the way air fills the room, since some molecules are in one place in the room while others are in another. All of God is everywhere.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.

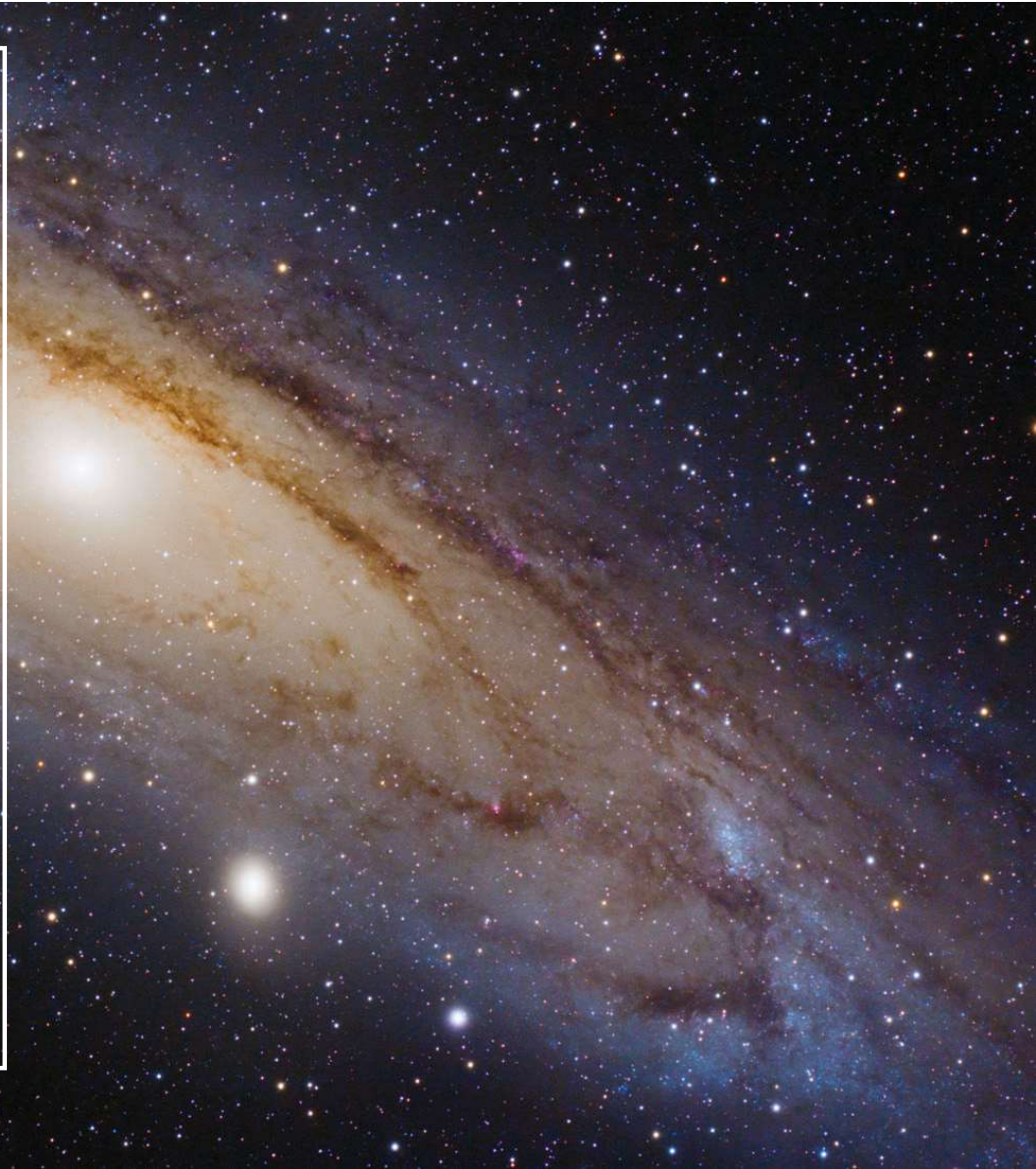




# Omnipresent

- “A better illustration is that God is “in” or present to the whole universe the way a mind is in its brain, or the manner in which beauty is present in a work of art, or that thought is in a sentence. In each case, the one is present to and penetrates the whole without a part of it being in a part of the other.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 169-170.

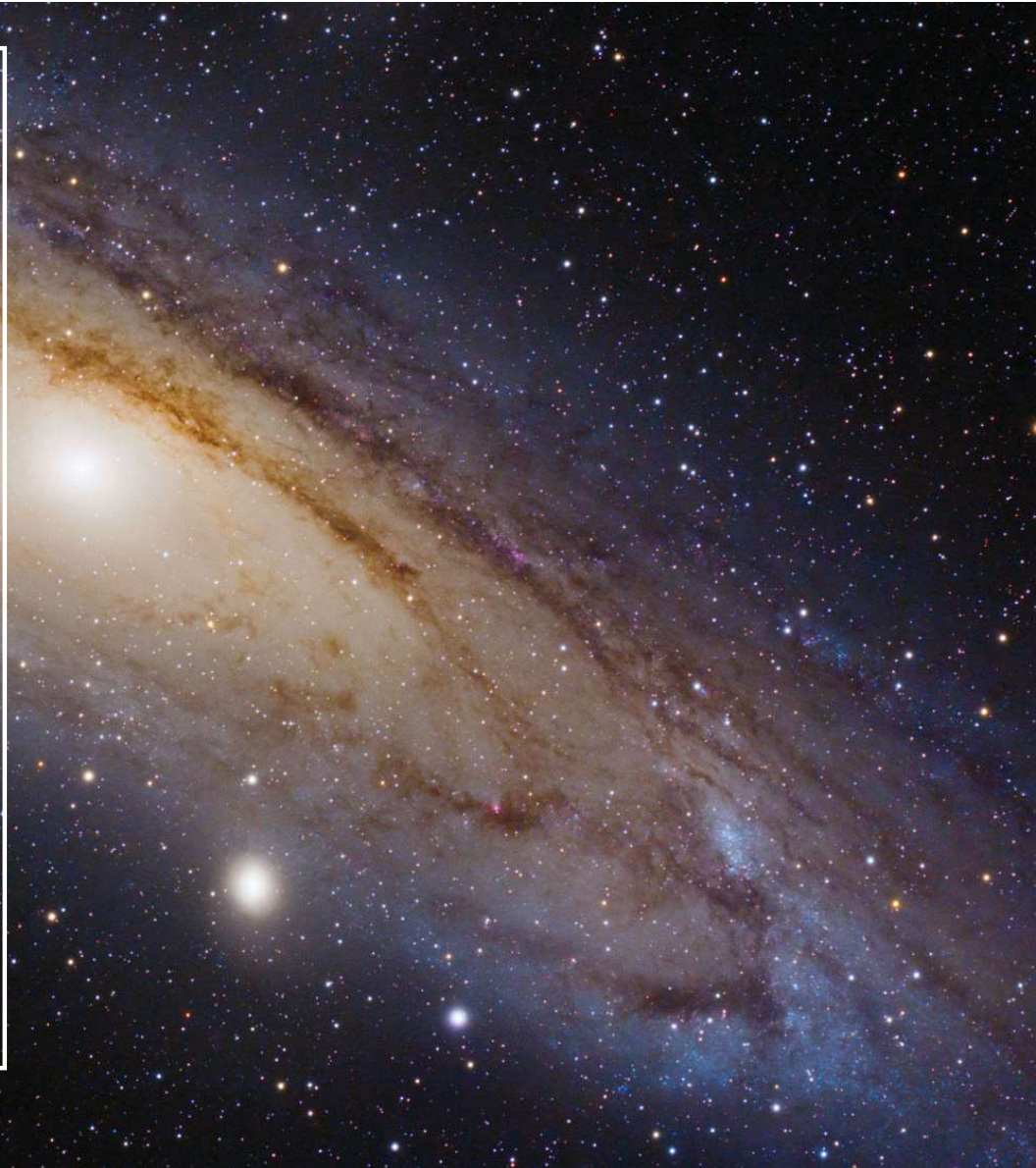




# Omnipresence follows from Current Causality

- “As just noted, God is the Cause and Sustainer of all being, and the Cause of all being is present in all created beings as the current and sustaining Cause. What is present in all created beings is omnipresent, for there is no finite being anywhere of which God is not its current sustaining Cause. Therefore, God is everywhere present.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 171.

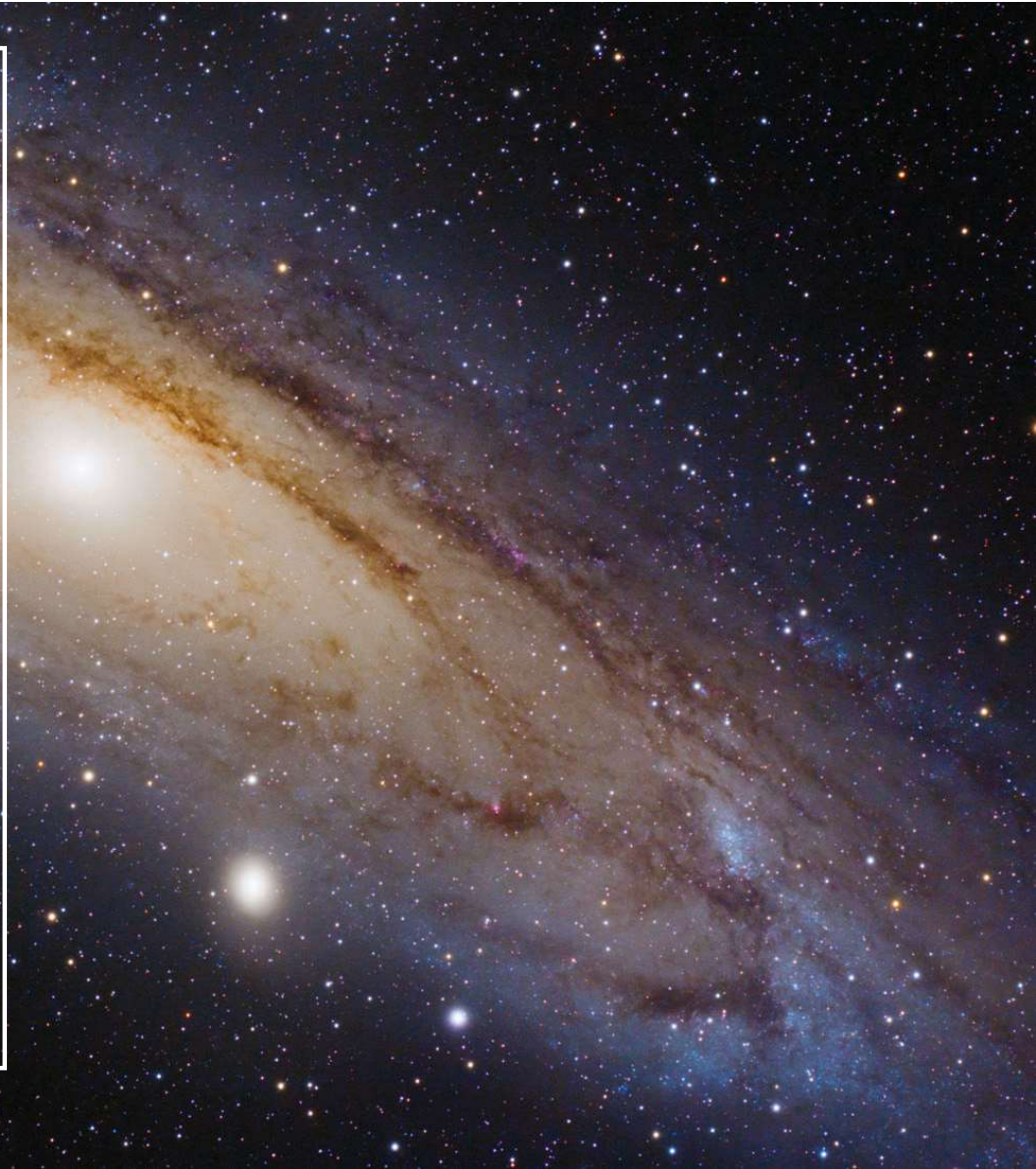




# Omnipresence follows from Infinity

- “God is infinite or without limits in His Being, and what is without limits in its Being is not limited to a give place. What is not limited to a given place is everywhere; hence, it follows that God is everywhere. If there were some place God was not, then He would be limited as to where He is. But God is not limited in any way.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 171.

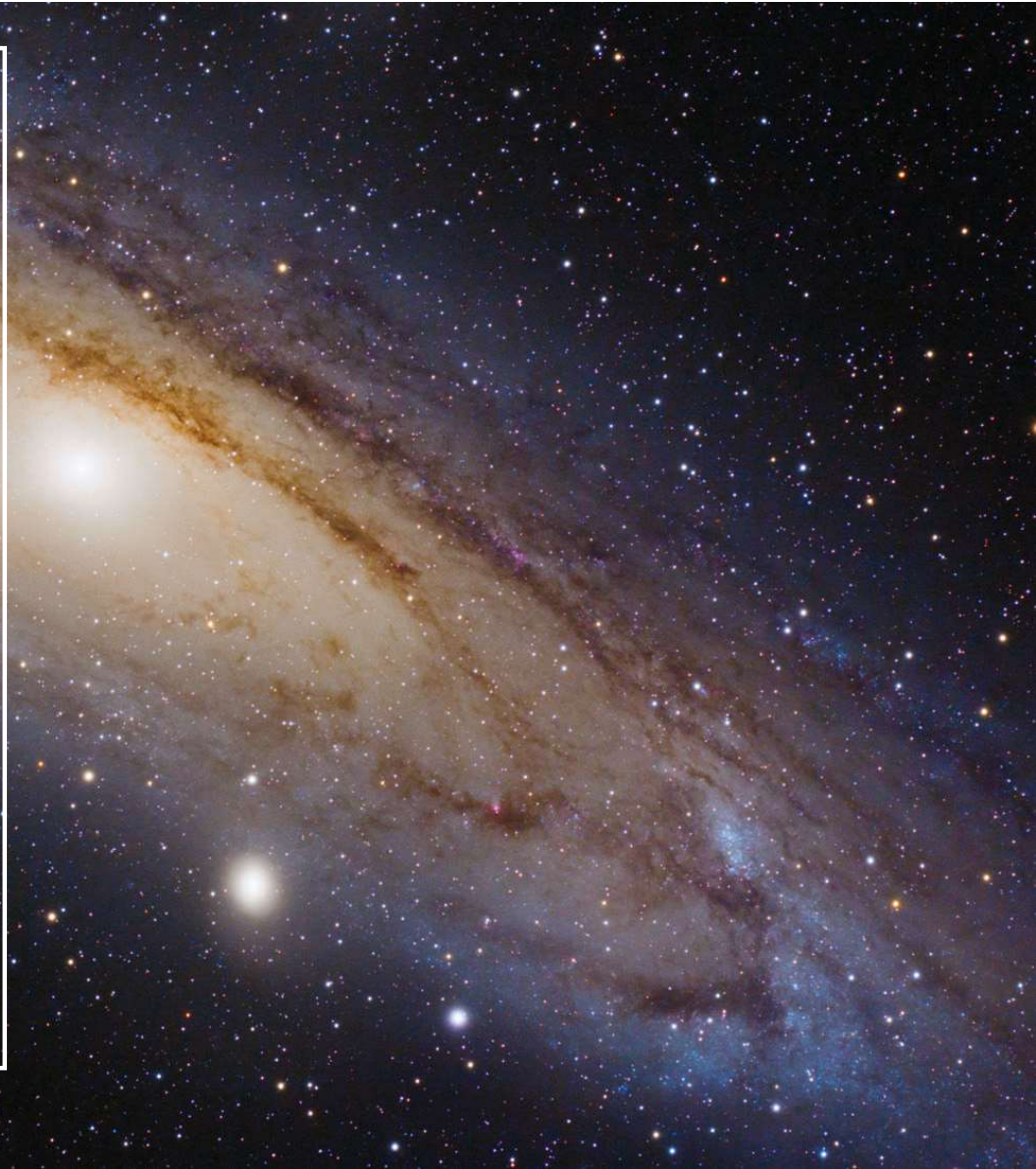




# Omnipresence follows from Simplicity

- “God is the simple being who is without any parts. What has no parts cannot be partly anywhere. Furthermore, what has no parts cannot be finite, and what has parts cannot be infinite, since one more part could always be added. As we have seen, it is impossible to have one more than an infinite. Thus, a being who has no parts must be an infinite being, and an infinite being must be everywhere. It follows that all of God is everywhere.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 171-172.



# Omnipotent

- “Literally, omnipotence means that God has unlimited power (omni=all; potent=powerful) . . . omnipotent means that God can do whatever is possible to do. Or, God can do what is not impossible to do. His power is unlimited and uninhibited by anything else.”
  - ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 158-159.





# Omnipotent

- “Negatively, omnipotence *does not* mean the God can do what is contradictory. The scriptures affirm that God cannot contradict His nature. He cannot force freedom. He works persuasively, not coercively.”
  - ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 158-159.



# Omnipotent

- “Further, omnipotence does not mean that God must do all that He can do: It simply means that He has the power to do whatever is possible, even if He chooses, not to do some things. God is free not to use his omnipotence whenever He desires; that is, God is free to limit the *use* of His power, but He is not free to limit the *extent* of His power. God must know all that He knows, but God does not have to do all He can do.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 158-159.





# Omnipotence follows from Pure Actuality

- “As shown earlier, God has no potentiality; only pure actuality. What has no potentiality has no limits at all, since potential is what limits a being. Thus, it follows that God has no limits of any kind. He is unlimited in His power. (That is, He is unlimited in His power according to His nature, which He cannot violate).”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 160-161.



# Omnipotence follows from Infinity

- “God is infinite in His being. God possesses power, as is indicated by his might acts. However, as we have seen, whatever God “has” that he *is*, for He is absolutely one. So whatever applies to Him applies to him whole being rather than just part of it. Hence, if God is infinite and powerful, then He must be infinitely powerful.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 161.





# Omnipotence follows from Simplicity

- “God is also a simple being. Since God has power, God *is* power, purely and simply. Whatever is power, purely and simply, is infinitely powerful, for only what *has* power is limited—it is limited to the power it has. What *is* power itself is not limited in power. God’s power is unlimited.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 161.



# Omnipotence solves the Problem of Evil

- The classic statement of the problem of evil is as follows:
  1. An all-good God would defeat evil
  2. An all-powerful God can defeat evil
  3. But evil is not defeated
  4. Hence, there can be no such God.





# Omnipotence solves the Problem of Evil

- However, this argument overlooks an important factor implied in omnipotence, which can be restated this way:
  1. An all-good God would defeat evil.
  2. An all-powerful God can defeat evil.
  3. But evil is not God can defeat evil.
  4. But evil is not yet defeated.



# Omnipotence solves the Problem of Evil

- Hence, evil will yet be defeated. It is a fact that an all-good, all-powerful God assures us that this will happen. In short, since God is both all-good and all-powerful, evil will be defeated.





# Omnipotence solves the Problem of Evil

- To put it another way, since God is all-good. He has the *desire* to defeat evil. Since He is all-powerful, He has the *ability* to defeat evil. Whoever has both the desire and ability to defeat evil *will* defeat it.



# Omnipotence Provides Assurance that God Will Keep His Word

- Omnipotence also provides us with assurance that God will keep his word, whether it is made in predications about the future or promises to us in the present. For example, an all-knowing God can predict the future, but only an all-powerful God can perform what He predicts. Likewise, an all-loving God can promise salvation, but only an all-powerful God can accomplish what He has promised. In short, God's predictions and promises are no better than His power to perform them. Without all power, God cannot keep all predictions and promises He makes. God is all power, and He is all good."

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 161-162.

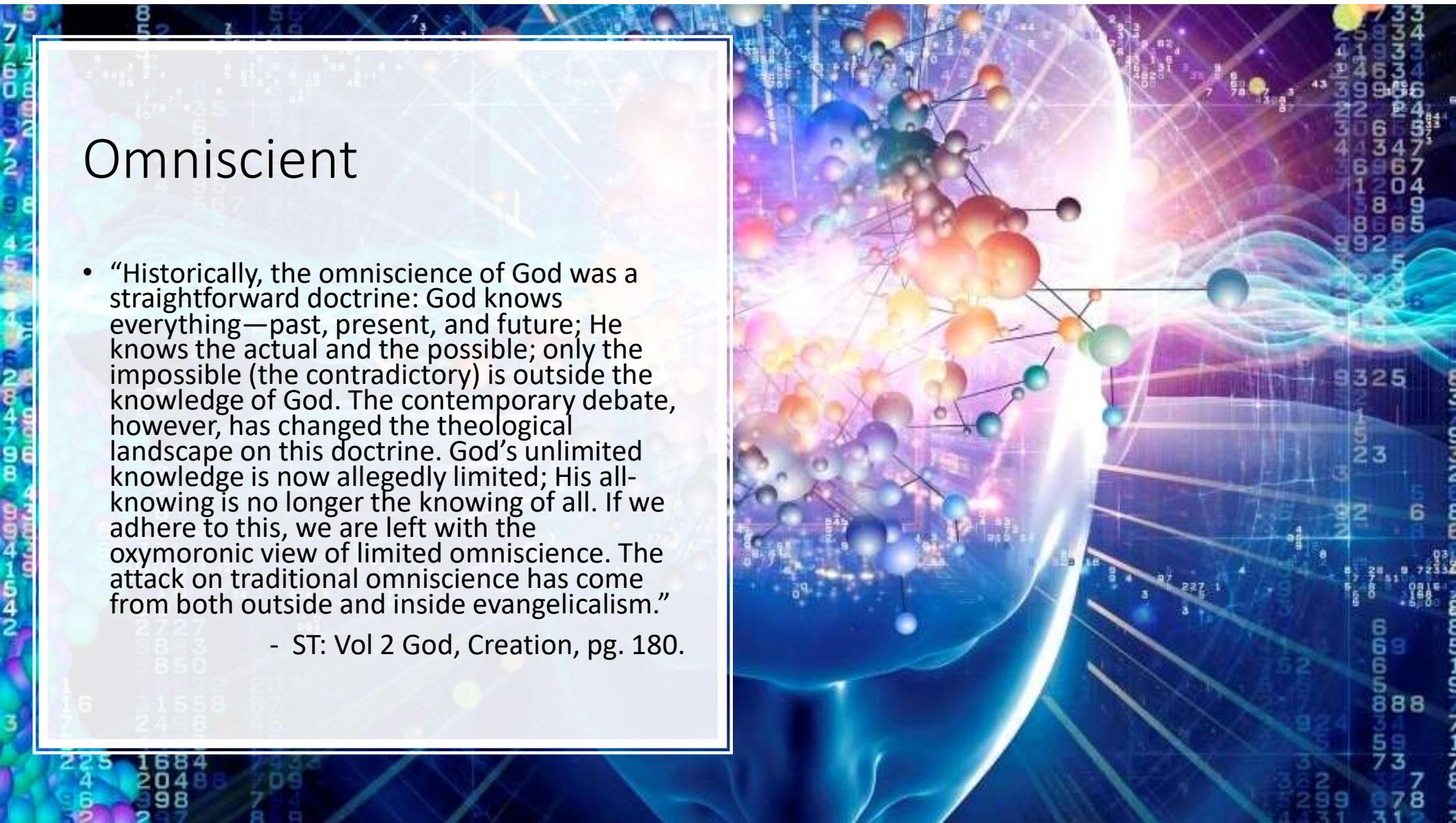




# Omniscient

- “Historically, the omniscience of God was a straightforward doctrine: God knows everything—past, present, and future; He knows the actual and the possible; only the impossible (the contradictory) is outside the knowledge of God. The contemporary debate, however, has changed the theological landscape on this doctrine. God’s unlimited knowledge is now allegedly limited; His all-knowing is no longer the knowing of all. If we adhere to this, we are left with the oxymoronic view of limited omniscience. The attack on traditional omniscience has come from both outside and inside evangelicalism.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 180.

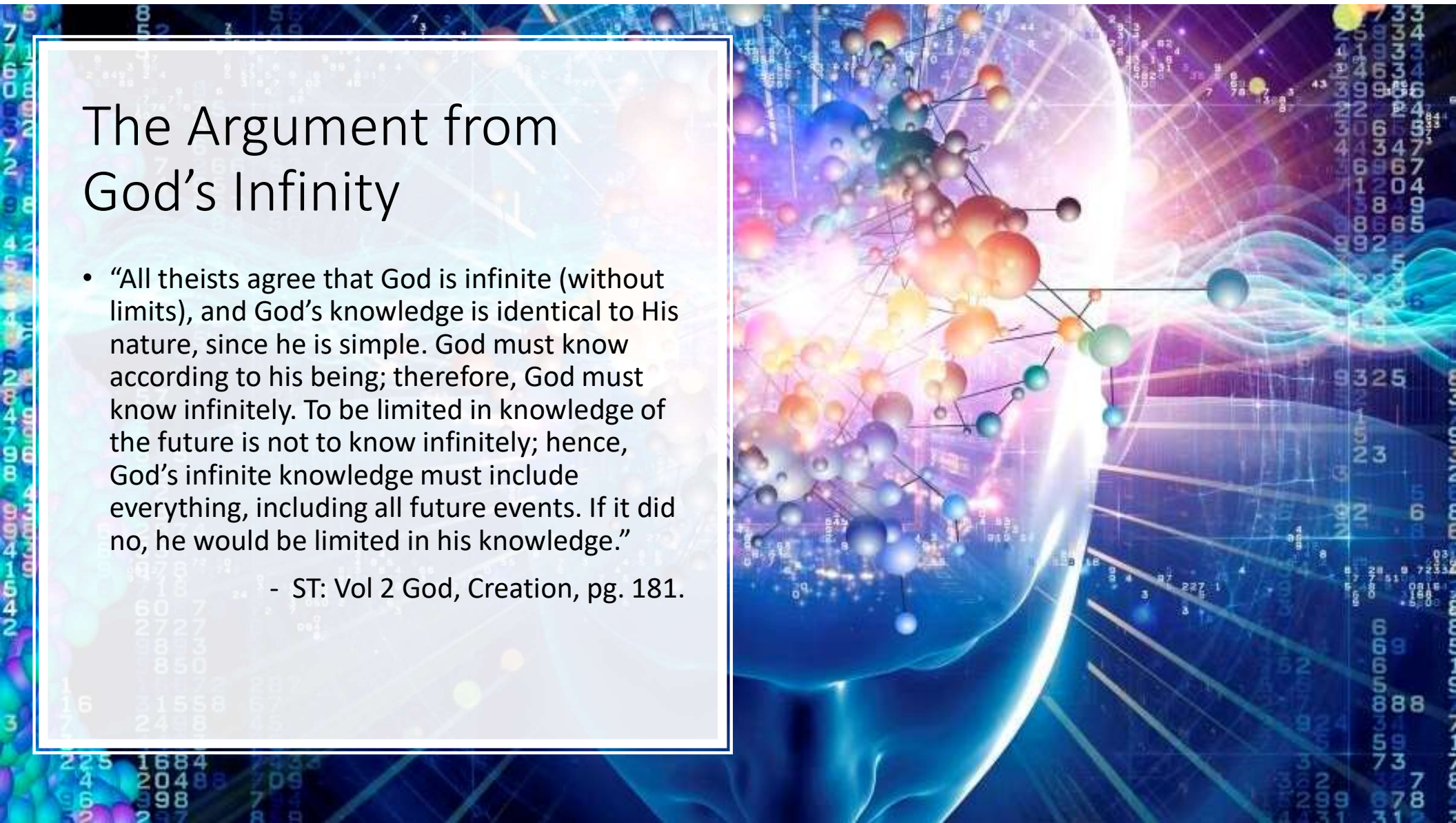




# The Argument from God's Infinity

- “All theists agree that God is infinite (without limits), and God’s knowledge is identical to His nature, since he is simple. God must know according to his being; therefore, God must know infinitely. To be limited in knowledge of the future is not to know infinitely; hence, God’s infinite knowledge must include everything, including all future events. If it did no, he would be limited in his knowledge.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 181.





# The Argument from God's Causality

- “All effects preexist in their efficient cause, since a cause cannot produce what it does not possess--it cannot give what it hasn't got to give. God is the first cause of all that exists or will exist; thus, the future (including all of its free actions) preexists in God. Therefore, by knowing Himself, God knows all future free actions. God knows Himself infallibly and eternally; consequently, God has infallible and eternal knowledge of all free actions that will ever occur.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 182.





# The Argument from God's Necessity

- “In addition, all theists agree that God is a necessary being. A necessary being has no possibility of not existing, and what has no possibility of not existing is pure existence. Pure existence (or pure actuality) has no potential, and since potentiality is a limitation in being, a being of pure actuality has no limitations. God's knowledge is identical to his being, therefore, God's knowledge must be without any limitation-that is, it is infinite.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 182.





# The Argument from Nature of Reality

- “Reality includes both the actual and the possible. Only the impossible is not real, and God’s knowledge extends to all that is real; if it did not, then He would not be all-knowing, since there would be something that He did not know. But if God knows the possible as well as the actual, then God must know the future, since the future is possible, not impossible. If it were impossible, then it would never happen. Thus, God must know all that will be actualized in the future, including all future free acts.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 182.





# The Argument from God's Eternality

- “God is the eternal being: his knowledge of the world is from eternity. An eternal being knows eternally, and eternal knowing is not limited by time. Thus, God’s knowledge is not limited by time: He knows the future with the same eternal glance by which he knows the past and present. As a result, there is no problem with foreseeing future events before they occur, God simply sees them in his eternal present.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 182.





# The Argument from God's Perfection

- “God is an absolutely perfect being; hence, His knowledge, being identical with his being, must be absolutely perfect too. As the absolutely perfect being, God must know himself perfectly, and to know himself perfectly means to know not only his own nature but to know all possible ways others can participate in the perfections of that nature. This means that God’s perfect knowledge includes all the ways creatures can and will participate in God’s perfections. Nothing, then, in the future free acts of humanity can be unknown to God from eternity. If it were, then God’s knowledge of himself would not be perfect.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg. 182.



# Omnibenevolent

- “If ‘love’ is defined as ‘willing the good of its objects,’ then for all practical purposes ‘love’ and ‘goodness’ can be treated synonymously. Literally, the word *omnibenevolence* means ‘all-good’. Biblically, the basic Hebrew term for ‘love’ (*chesed*) used of God means ‘goodness,’ ‘affection,’ ‘good-will,’ ‘loving-kindness’ or ‘tender loving-kindness.’ The Greek word *agape* used of God’s love means ‘benevolence,’ a self-less ‘sacrificial’ love. Theologically, God’s omnibenevolence refers to His infinite or unlimited goodness.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg., 367.





# Simplicity Implies Omnibenevolence

- “Again, love is of the essence of God, and God is simple in His essence; that is, He is indivisible, having no parts. Thus, God cannot be partly anything: whatever a simple being is, it is wholly and completely. Hence, God must be wholly and completely love.”

- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg., 367.



# Necessity Implies Omnibenevolence

- “God’s necessity implies that he is all-loving, for a necessary being is what it is necessarily. God is love; therefore, God necessarily is love—He cannot not love. God by His very nature must love.”  
- ST: Vol 2 God, Creation, pg., 367.

