

The Problem of Knowing the "Super-Natural" (Part 1)

By Dr. Greg Bahnsen

The Christian faith as defined by Biblical revelation teaches a number of things which are not restricted to the realm of man's temporal experience - things about an invisible God, His triune nature, the origin of the universe, the regularity of the created order, angels, miracles, the afterlife, etc. These are precisely the sort of claims which unbelievers most often find objectionable.

The objection is that such claims are about *transcendent* matters - things which go beyond day-to-day human experience. The triune Creator exists beyond the temporal order; the afterlife is not part of our ordinary observations in this world, etc. If the unbeliever is accustomed to thinking that people can only know things based upon, and pertaining to, the "here-and-now," then the Christian's claims about the transcendent are an intellectual reproach.

The Reproach of the Transcendent

Those who are not Christians will often assume that the natural world is all there is, in which case nobody can know things about the "super-natural" (whatever surpasses the limits of nature). In philosophical circles, discussions and debates about questions like these fall within the area of study known as "meta-physics." As you might expect, this division of philosophical investigation is usually a hotbed of controversy between conflicting schools of thought. More recently, the entire enterprise of metaphysics has in itself become a hotbed of controversy.

Over the last two centuries a mindset has developed which is hostile toward any philosophical claim which is metaphysical in character. It is clear to most students that antipathy to the Christian faith has been the primary and motivating factor in such attacks. Nevertheless, such criticism has been *generalized* into a pervasive antagonism toward any claims which are similarly "metaphysical." This anti-metaphysical attitude has been one of the crucial ingredients which have molded culture and history over the last two hundred years. It has altered common views regarding man and ethics, it has generated a radical reformulation of religious beliefs, and it has significantly affected perspectives ranging from politics to pedagogy. Consequently a very large number of the skeptical questions or challenges directed against the Christian faith are either rooted in, or colored by, this negative spirit with respect to metaphysics.

Defining the Metaphysical

Before we can elaborate on the anti-metaphysical arguments which are commonly heard today, it would help to understand better what is meant by "metaphysics." This is a technical word that is rarely used outside of academic circles; it will not even be part of the vocabulary of most Christians. Nevertheless, the conception of metaphysics and the reaction to it which can be found in academic circles will definitely touch and have an impact the life of the believer - either in terms of the popular attacks on the faith which he or she must answer, or even in terms of the way in which the Christian religion is portrayed and presented in the pulpit.

It is often said that metaphysics is the study of "being." It might be more illuminating if we wrote that metaphysics studies "being" - that is, questions about existence ("to be, or not to be"). Metaphysics asks, *what is it* to exist? And, what *sorts* of things do exist? Thus the metaphysician is interested to know about fundamental *distinctions* (i.e., the basic classes of things that exist) and important *similarities* (i.e., the essential nature of the members of these classes). He seeks the *ultimate causes or explanations* for the existence and nature of things. He wants to understand the limits of possible reality, the modes of existing, and the interrelations of existing things.

It should be obvious, then, if only in an elementary way, that Christianity propounds a number of definite metaphysical claims.

Fundamental Distinctions

The Scripture teaches us that "there is one God, the Father, by whom are all things...and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things" (I Cor. 8:6). All things, of all sorts, were created by Him (John 1:3; Col. 1:16). But He is before all things, and by means of Him all things hold together or cohere (John 1:1; Col. 1:17). He carries along or upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3). Therefore, to exist is to be divine or created. In God we live and move and have our being (Act 17:28). He, however, has life in Himself (John 5:26; Ex. 3:14). The living and true God gives the distinguishable unity or common natures to things (Gen. 2:19), categorizing things by placing His interpretation on them (e.g., Gen. 1:5, 8, 10, 17; 2:9). It is He who also makes things to differ from each other (I Cor. 4:7; Ex. 11:7; Rom. 9:21; I Cor. 12:4-6; 15:38-41). Similarity and distinction, then, result from His creative and providential work. Both the existence and nature of things find their explanation in Him - whether casual (Eph. 1:11) or teleological (Eph. 1:11). God is the source of all possibility (Isa. 43:10; 44:6; 65:11) and thus sets the limits of possible reality by His own will and decree.

A Comprehensive Metaphysic

"Metaphysics" can also be seen as an attempt to express the *entire scheme* of reality - of all existing things. The metaphysician must resolve conflicting accounts about the true nature of the world (over against mere appearances), and he does so in terms of an ultimate conceptual framework. Metaphysics tries to make sense of the world *as a whole* by articulating and applying a set of central, regulating, organizing, distinctive paradigms. These principles govern or guide the way in which a person interrelates and interprets the different parts of his life and experience. Everyone uses some such system of ultimate generalities about reality, evaluative criteria, and structuring relationships. We could not think or make sense of anything without some coherent view of the general nature and structure of reality.

Instead of dealing with simply one distinguishable department of study or one limited area of human experience (e.g., biology, history, astronomy), metaphysics is *comprehensive* - concerned with, and relevant to, the whole world. For this reason one's metaphysical views will affect every other inquiry in which he engages, illumine a a wide range of subjects, and form the "first principles" for other intellectual disciplines.

The Christian Metaphysic

The Christian faith comprises a metaphysical system on this account also. Scripture teaches that all things are of God, through God, and unto God (Rom. 11:36). We must think His thoughts after Him (Prov. 22:17-21; John 8:31-32). In this way we can understand and interpret the world as a whole. The Word of God gives us light (Ps. 119:130), and Christ Himself is the life-giving light of men (John 1:4), in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). Hence we can discern the true nature of reality in terms of Christ's word: *in Thy light we see light* (Ps. 36:9).

The Bible sets forth a definite metaphysical scheme. It begins with God who is a personal, infinitely perfect, pure spirit (Ex. 15:11; Mal. 2:10; John 4:24). The triune God (2 Cor. 13:14) is unique in His nature and works (Ps. 86:9), self-existent (Ex. 3:14; John 5:26; Gal. 4:8-9), eternal (Ps. 90:2), immutable (Mal. 3:6), and omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10). Everything else that exists has been created out of nothing (Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3), whether the material world (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11), the realm of spirits (Ps. 148:2, 5), or man. Man was created as the image of God (Gen. 1:27), a being who exhibits both a material and immaterial character (Matt. 10:28), surviving bodily death (Eccl. 12:7; Rom. 2:7) with personal awareness of God (2 Cor. 5:8), and awaiting bodily resurrection (I Cor. 6:14; 15:42-44).

In creation God made all things according to His unsearchable wisdom (Ps. 104:24; Isa. 40:28), assigning all things their definite characters (Isa. 40:26; 46:9-10). God also determines all things by His wisdom (Eph. 1:11) - preserving (Neh. 9:6), governing (Ps. 103:19), and predetermining the nature and course of all things, thus being able to work miracles (Ps. 72:18). The decree by which God providentially ordains historical events is eternal, effectual, unconditional, unchangeable, and comprehensive (e.g., Isa. 46:10; Acts 2:23; Eph. 3:9-11).

These truths are paradigmatic for the believer; they are ultimate principles of objective reality, to be distinguished from the delusions set forth in contrary views of the world. What the unbelieving world sees as wisdom is actually foolish (I Cor. 1:18-25). Since the minds of the unbelieving are blinded (2 Cor. 4:4), they err according to the faith described above, thus having only a "knowledge falsely so-called" (I Tim. 6:20-21). For instance, resting in the appearance of total regularity, an unbelieving metaphysic does not teach that Christ will come again to intervene in the cosmic process to judge men and determine their eternal destinies (cf. 2 Peter 3:3-7).

Distinguishing Appearance from Reality

Therefore, the Bible distinguishes appearance from reality, and it provides an ultimate conceptual framework that makes sense of the world as whole. The Biblical metaphysic affects our outlook and conclusions regarding every field of study or endeavor, and it serves as the only foundation for all disciplines from science to ethics (Prov. 1:7; Matt. 7:24-27).

Ultimate Questions

So then, "metaphysics" studies such questions or issues as the nature of existence, the sorts of things that exist, the classes of existent things, limits of possibility, the ultimate scheme of things, reality versus appearance, and the comprehensive conceptual framework used to make sense of the world as a whole. It is not hard to understand, then, how the term "metaphysics" has come to connote the study of that which is "beyond the physical realm." Simple eyeball inspection of isolated and particular situations in the physical world cannot answer metaphysical questions like those just enumerated. An individual's limited personal experience cannot warrant a comprehensive framework encompassing every sort of existent there may be. Empirical experience merely gives us an appearance of things; empirical experience cannot *in itself* correct illusions or get us beyond appearance to any world or realm of reality lying beyond. Nor can it determine the limits of the possible. A particular experience of the physical world does not deal with the world as whole. Nor does the nature of existence manifest itself in simple sense perception of any physical object or set of them.

Suprasensible Reality

Consequently, metaphysics eventually studies non-sensuous or *suprasensible* reality. In the nature of the case the metaphysician examines issues transcending physical nature or matters removed from particular sense experiences. And yet the results of metaphysics are alleged to give us intelligible and informative statements about reality. That is, metaphysics makes claims which have substantive content, but which are not fully dependent on or restricted to empirical experience (observation, sensation).

For that reason the means by which metaphysical claims are intellectually supported is not limited to natural observation and scientific experimentation. Herein lies the offense of metaphysics to the modern mind.^[1] Metaphysics presumes to tell us something about the objective world which we do not directly perceive in ordinary experience and which cannot be verified through the methods of natural science.

Of course, antipathy to metaphysics is even more pronounced in the case of Christianity because its claims about the entire scheme of things include declarations about the existence and character of God, the origin and nature of the world, as well as the nature and destiny of man. Such teachings do not stem from direct, eyeball experience of the physical world, but transcend particular sensations and derive from divine revelation. They are not verified empirically in a point by point fashion. Scripture makes absolute pronouncements about the nature of the real world as a whole. Biblical doctrine presents truths which are not circumscribed or limited by personal experience and which are not qualified or relativized by an individual's own way of looking at things. Such authoritarian claims about such difficult and wide-ranging matters are offensive to the skeptical mood and religious prejudices of the present day. The modern age has a contrary spirit regarding philosophical (especially religious) claims which speak of anything super-natural, anything "beyond the physical," anything metaphysical.

[1] Antony Flew writes: "Not surprisingly, many critics have argued that the achievement of some at least of these [metaphysical] aims is in principle impossible. Thus, it has been held that the human mind has no means of discovering facts outside the realm of sense experience.... Another criticism is that since no conceivable experience could enable us to decide between, for example, the statements that reality consists of only one substance (monism) or of infinitely many (monadology), neither serves any purpose in the economy of our thought about the world, and they are alike neither true nor false but meaningless" ("metaphysics" in *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, rev. 2nd ed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984, pp. 229-230).

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The Problem of Knowing the "Super-Natural" (Part 2)

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Pure Motives?

It would be profitable to pause and reflect upon an insightful comment by a recent writer in the area of philosophical metaphysics. W. H. Walsh has written, "It must be allowed that the reaction against [metaphysics] has been ... so violent indeed as to suggest that the issues involved in the controversy must be something more than academic."[\[1\]](#) Precisely. The issues are indeed more than academic. They are a matter of life and death - eternal life and death. Christ said, "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send" (John 17:3). However, if the unbeliever can stand on the claim that such a God *cannot be known* because nothing transcending the physical (nothing "metaphysical") can be known, then the issue of eternal destiny is not raised. Accordingly, men may think and do as they please, without distracting questions about their nature and destiny.

Men will, as it were, build a roof over their heads in hopes of keeping out any distressing revelation from a transcendent God. The anti-metaphysical perspective of the modern age functions as just such a protective ideological roof for the unbeliever.

The fact is that one cannot avoid metaphysical commitments. The very denial of the possibility of knowledge transcending experience is *in itself* a metaphysical judgment. Thus the question is not *whether* one should have metaphysical beliefs, but it comes down to the question of *which kind* of

metaphysic one should affirm. In considering that question remember the candid observation of Friedrich Nietzsche:

What provokes one to look at all philosophers half suspiciously, half mockingly, is ... [that] they all pose as if they had discovered and reached their real opinions through self-development of a cold, pure, divinely unconcerned dialectic...; while at bottom it is an assumption, a hunch, indeed a kind of "inspiration" - most often a desire of the heart that has been filtered and made abstract - that they defend with reasons they have sought after the fact. They are all advocates [paid lawyers] who resent that name, and for the most part even wily spokesmen for their prejudices which they baptize "truths".... Gradually it has become clear to me what every great philosophy so far has been: namely, the personal confession of its author and a kind of involuntary and unconscious memoir; also that the moral (or immoral) intentions in every philosophy constituted the real germ of life from which the whole plant had grown.[\[2\]](#)

The apostle Paul teaches us that all unbelievers (including Nietzsche) "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18); they attempt to hide the truth about God from themselves due to their immoral lives. "The carnal mind is enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7) and "minds earthly things" (Phil. 3:18-19). Those who are enemies in their minds due to evil works (Col. 1:21), and are foolish in their reasoning (Rom. 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 1:20), are led in particular to an anti-biblical metaphysic (e.g., "The fool has said in his heart there is no God," Ps. 10:4) - disguised as an anti-metaphysical posture in general.

The Case Against Metaphysics

The most common philosophical reason advanced by unbelievers, from Kant to the Logical Positivists of our century, for antagonism to metaphysical claims is quite simply the allegation that "pure reason" apart from sense experience cannot itself provide us with factual knowledge. Metaphysical statements speak of a suprasensible reality which is not directly experienced or verified by natural science; it might be said quite baldly, then, that metaphysics is a kind of "news from nowhere." Those antagonistic to metaphysics argue that all informative or factual statements about the objective world must be derived empirically (based on experience, observation, sensation), and therefore human knowledge cannot transcend particular, physical experience or the appearance of the senses.

According to Kant, metaphysical discussions trade in purely verbal definitions and their logical implications; hence they are arbitrary, suspended in the sky, and result in irresolvable disagreements. Metaphysical statements have no real significance. By nature, human knowledge is dependent on the senses, and thus reasoning can never take one to conclusions that apply *outside* the empirical realm.

Logical Positivism

The Logical Positivists intensified Kant's criticism. For them metaphysical claims were not simply empty definitions without significance (without existential referents), they were quite literally *meaningless*. Because metaphysical claims could not be brought to the critical test of sense experience, they were concluded to be senseless.

So then, opponents of metaphysics (and thereby of the theology of the Bible) view metaphysical reasoning as conflicting with empirical science as the one and only way to acquire knowledge. Whereas the scientist arrives at contingent truths about the way things appear to our senses, the metaphysician aims at absolute or necessary truths about the reality which somehow lies behind those appearances. A gulf is posited between the truths of empirical fact (arrived at on the basis of information from the senses) and truths of speculative reason (which could only be arbitrary verbal conventions or organizing concepts that are inapplicable outside the sphere of experience). In that case, according to modern dogma, all meaningful and informative statements about the world were judged to be empirical in nature.

The case against metaphysical claims, then, can be summarized in this fashion:

1. there cannot be a non-empirical source of knowledge or information about reality, and
2. it is illegitimate to draw inferences from what is experienced by the senses to what must lie outside of experience.

In short, we can only know as factually significant what we can experience directly with our senses - which nullifies the meaningfulness of metaphysical claims and the possibility of metaphysical knowledge.

Double Standards and Begging the Question

We can begin our response by considering (2) above. We should first ask why it is that metaphysicians (and theologians) should not reason from what is known in sense experience to something lying beyond sensation. After all, isn't this precisely what empirical scientists do from day to day? They continually reason from the seen to the unseen (e.g., talking of subatomic particles, computing gravitational forces, warning against radiation simply on the basis of its effects, prescribing medicine for an unseen infection on the basis of an observed fever, etc.) It certainly appears capricious for those with anti-metaphysical leanings to prohibit the theologian from doing what is allowed to the scientist! Such an inconsistency betrays a mind that has been made up in advance against certain kinds of conclusions about reality. Everybody should be expected to play by the same rules.

Moreover, it is important to notice that (2) above is not really relevant to making a case against biblical metaphysics. Christianity does not view its metaphysical (theological, supernatural) claims as unguided or arbitrary attempts to reason from the seen world to the unseen world - unwarranted projections from nature to what lies beyond it. In the first place, the Christian claims that God created this world to reflect His glory and to be a constant testimony to Him and His character. God also created man as His own image, determined the way in which man would think and learn about the world, and coordinated man's mind and the objective world so that man would unavoidably know the supernatural Creator through the conduit of the created realm.

God Himself intended and made it unavoidable that man would learn about the Creator from the world around him. This amounts to God coming to man through the temporal and empirical order, not man groping toward God. This amounts to saying that the natural world is not in itself random and without a clue as to its ultimate meaning, leaving man to arbitrary speculation and metaphysical projections.

Moreover, given the intellectually corrupting effects of man's fall into sin and rebellion against God, man's mind has not been left to know God on the basis of man's own unaided experience and interpretation of the world. God has undertaken to make Himself known to man by means of verbal revelation - using words (chosen by God) which are exactly appropriate for the mind of man (created by God) to come to correct conclusions about His Creator, Judge and Redeemer.

Christian theology is not the result of a self-sufficient exploration of, and argument from man's unaided and brute empirical experience, to a god lying beyond and behind experience. Rather the Christian affirms, on the basis of Scripture's declaration, that our theological tenets rest on the *self-revelation* of the transcendent Creator. Theology does not work from man to God, but from God to man (via infallible, verbal revelation; cf. 2 Peter 1:21).

Therefore, the anti-metaphysical polemic - already seen to be arbitrary and inconsistent - begs the main question. If God as portrayed in the Bible does indeed exist, then there is no reason to preclude the possibility that man who lives in the realm of "nature" can gain a knowledge of the "supernatural." God created and controls all things, according to the Biblical account. Given that perspective, God could certainly bring it about that man learns the truth about Him through both the created order and a set of divinely inspired messages. When the unbeliever contends that

nothing in man's temporal, limited, natural experience can provide knowledge of the metaphysical or supernatural, he is simply taking a roundabout way of saying that the Biblical account of a God who makes Himself clearly known in the created order and Scripture is mistaken.

This begging of the question is sometimes veiled from the unbeliever by his tendency to recast the nature of theological truth as man-centered and rooted initially in human, empirical experience. However, the very point in contention between the believer and unbeliever comes down to the claim that Christian teaching is rooted in God's self-disclosure of the truth as found in the world around us and in the written word. There is no reason to think that theology would be intellectually required to be built upon the foundation of human sense experience, unless someone were presupposing in advance that all knowledge must ultimately derive from empirical procedures. But that is the very question at hand. The anti-metaphysical polemic is not a supporting reason for rejecting Christianity; it is simply a rewording of that rejection itself.

[1] *Metaphysics* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1963), p. 12.

[2] *Beyond Good and Evil*, "On the Prejudice of Philosophers," trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), pp. 12, 13.

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The Problem of Knowing the "Super-Natural" (Part 3)

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Philosophical Self-deception

We are brought, then, to number (1) above, the first and foundational step in the case against metaphysics. What are we to make of the assertion that "all significant knowledge about the objective world is empirical in nature"? The most obvious and philosophically significant reply would be that if the preceding statement were true, then - on the basis of its claim - we could *never know* that it were true. Why? Simply because the statement in question is *not itself* known as the result of empirical testing and experience. Therefore, according to its own strict standards, the statement could not amount to significant knowledge about the objective world. It simply reflects the subjective (perhaps meaningless!) bias of the one who pronounces it. Hence the anti-metaphysician not only has his own preconceived conclusions (presuppositions), but it turns out that he cannot live according to them (cf. Romans 2:1). On the basis of his own assumptions he *refutes himself* (cf. 2 Timothy 2:25). As Paul put it about those who suppress the truth of God in unrighteousness: "They became futile in their speculations" (Romans 1:21)!

There are other difficulties with the position expressed by (1) as well. We can easily see that it amounts to a presupposition for the unbeliever. What rational basis or evidence is there for the position that all knowledge must be empirical in nature? That is not a conclusion supported by other reasoning, and the premise does not admit of empirical verification since it deals with what is universally or necessarily the case (not a historical or contingent truth). Moreover, the statement itself precludes any other type of verification or support other than empirical warrants or evidence. Thus the anti-metaphysical opponent of the Christian faith holds to this dogma in a presuppositional fashion - as something which controls inquiry, rather than being the result of

inquiry. However that anti-metaphysical presupposition has certain devastating results. Notice that if all knowledge must be empirical in nature, then the uniformity of nature cannot be known to be true. And without the knowledge and assurance that the future will be like the past (e.g., if salt dissolved in water on Wednesday, it will do likewise and not explode in water on Friday) we could not draw empirical generalizations and projections - in which case the whole enterprise of natural science would immediately be undermined. Scientists could not arrive at even one dependable, rationally warranted conclusion about future chemical interactions, the rotation of the earth, the stability of a bridge, the medicinal effects of a drug, or anything else. Each and every premise that entered into their reasoning about a particular situation at a particular time and in a particular place would need to be individually confirmed in an empirical fashion. Nothing experienced in the past could become a basis for expectations about how things might happen at present or in the future. Without certain beliefs about the nature of reality and history - beliefs which are supra-empirical in character - the process of empirical learning and reasoning would become impossible.

At this point we can press even harder, arguing that if one presupposes that all knowledge must be empirical in nature, then not only has he undermined science and refuted himself, but he has actually scuttled all argumentation and reasoning. To engage in the evaluation of arguments is to recognize and utilize propositions, criteria, logical relations and rules, etc. However, such things as these (propositions, relations, rules) are not empirical entities which can be discovered by one of the five senses. Accordingly, according to the dogma of empiricism, it would not make sense to speak of such things - not make sense, for instance, to speak of validity and invalidity in an argument, nor even to talk about premises and conclusions. All you would have would be one contingent electro-chemical event in the physical brain of a scholar followed contingently by another.

If these events are thought to follow a pattern, we must (again) note that on empirical grounds, one does not have a warrant for speaking of such a "pattern"; only particular events are experienced or observed. Moreover, even if there were a pattern within the electro-chemical events of one's brain, it would be accidental and not a matter of attending to the rules of logic. Indeed, the "rules of logic" would at best be personal imperatives expressed as the subjective preference of one person to another. In such a case there is no point to argument and reasoning at all. An electro-chemical event in the brain cannot meaningfully be said to be "valid" or "invalid."

Naturalism versus Supernaturalism as Worldviews

Enough has now been said to make it clear what kind of situation we have when an unbeliever argues against the Christian's claim to knowledge about the "super-natural" - when the unbeliever takes an anti-metaphysical stand against the faith. The believer holds, on the basis of infallible revelation from the transcendent Creator, certain things about unseen reality (e.g., the existence of God, providence, life after death, etc.). Knowledge of such matters is not problematic within the worldview of the Christian: God knows all things, having created everything according to His own wise counsel and determining the individual natures of each thing; further He created man as His own image, capable of thinking His thoughts after Him on the basis of revelation, both general (in nature) and special (in Scripture). Thus man has the rational and spiritual capability to learn and understand truths about reality which transcend his temporal, empirical experience - truths which are disclosed by his Creator. It is evident that the Christian defends the *possibility* of metaphysical knowledge, therefore, by appealing to certain metaphysical truths about God, man, and the world. He reasons presuppositionally, arguing on the basis of *the very metaphysical premises* which the unbeliever claims are *impossible* to know in virtue of their metaphysical nature.

However, the anti-metaphysical unbeliever has his own metaphysical commitments to which he is presuppositionally committed and to which he appeals in his arguments (e.g., only sensible individuals or particulars exist). His materialistic, naturalistic, atheism is taken as a final truth about reality, universally characterizing the nature of existence, directing us how to distinguish appearance from reality, and resting on intellectual considerations which take us beyond simple observation or sense experience. The this-worldly outlook of the unbeliever is *just as much* a metaphysical opinion as the "other-worldly" viewpoint he attributes to the Christian.

What is glaringly obvious, then, is that the unbeliever rests upon and appeals to a metaphysical position in order to prove that there can be no metaphysical position known to be true! He ironically and inconsistently holds that nobody can know metaphysical truths, and yet he himself has enough metaphysical knowledge to declare that Christianity is wrong!

It turns out that two full-fledged presuppositional philosophies stand over against one another when the anti-metaphysician argues with the Christian. The metaphysical claims of Christianity are based on God's self-revelation. Moreover, they are consistent with the assumptions of science, logical reasoning, and the intelligibility of human experience. On the other hand, the unbeliever who claims metaphysical knowledge is impossible reasons on the basis of presuppositions which are arbitrarily applied, self-refuting, unable to pass their own strict requirements, and which undermine science and argumentation - indeed undermine the usefulness of those very empirical procedures which are made the foundation of all knowledge!

This is simply to say that the anti-metaphysical position has as its outcome the total abrogation, not simply of metaphysical knowledge, but of all knowledge whatsoever. In order to argue against the faith, the unbeliever must commit intellectual suicide - destroying the very reasoning which he would feign to use against the truth of God! This is too high a personal and philosophical price to pay for prejudices and presuppositions which one hopes can form a roof to protect him from the revelation of God.