

Christianity

Or...How do you define truth?



The School of Athens
Raphael, 1610-1611

<https://www.wikiart.org/>

Session 1: Our Historical Landscape: What is Truth?

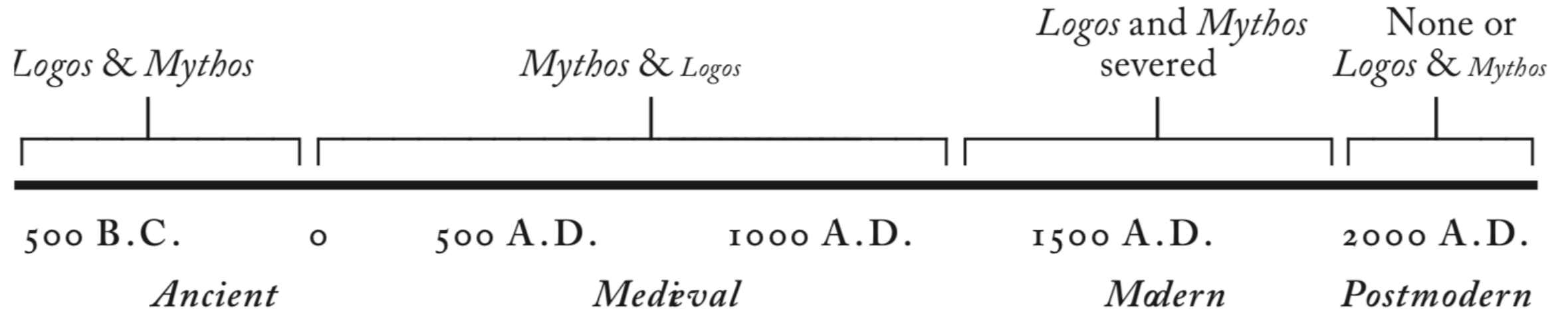
Session 2: Creation

Session 3: Evolution: Hindrance or Help?

Session 4: Creation care: Redemption of the Land

Session 5: The Future Landscape: Redeeming Truth

Simplified Timeline of “How Do You Find Truth?”



Logos = Greek word for reason, plan, or rational principle

Mythos = Greek word for story having significant truth or meaning

Ancient Period (~400 BC – 400 AD)



The School of Athens
Raphael, 1610-1611
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Plato and Aristotle

- Center of Raphael's painting



Jesus on the topic...

- John 14: 5-7



The Incredulity of Saint Thomas

Caravaggio, 1601-1602

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Caravaggio -
_The_Incredulity_of_Saint_Thomas.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Caravaggio_-_The_Incredulity_of_Saint_Thomas.jpg)

Paul on “worldly knowledge”

- 1 Corinthians 3: 18-23
- Colossians 2:8

Tertullian (160-225 AD)



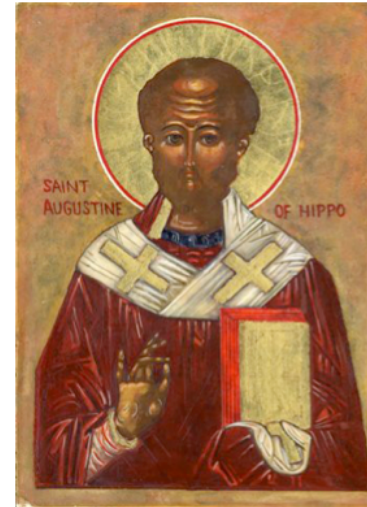
“Now pray tell me, what wisdom is there in this hankering after conjectural speculations?

...philosophers; of those, I mean, who persist in applying their studies to a vain purpose, since they indulge a stupid curiosity on natural objects.”

“What, indeed, has Athens to do with Jerusalem?
What concord is there between the Academy and the Church.”

Medieval Period (~400 AD -~1400 AD)

Saint Augustine (354-430 AD)



“Even a non-Christian knows something about the earth...of the years and the seasons, about the kinds of animals, shrubs, stones, and so forth, and this knowledge he holds to as being certain from reason and experience. Now it is a disgraceful and dangerous thing for an infidel to hear a Christian talking nonsense on these topics; and we should take all means to prevent such an embarrassing situation...”

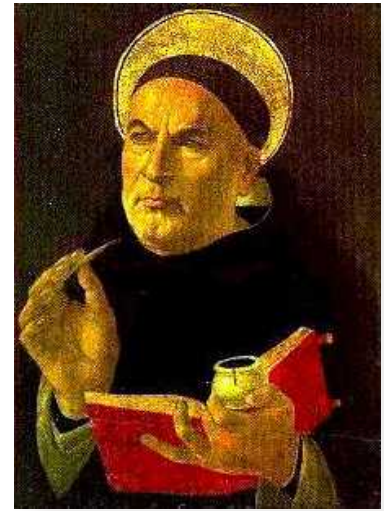
Augustine, Literal Commentary on Genesis

Medieval Period (~400 AD -~1400 AD)

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Religion [*religio*] 'is the chief of the moral virtues'.

Internal acts of religion take precedence of the others and belong to religion essentially while its external acts are secondary, and subordinate to the internal acts.



Modern Period (~1400 AD - ~1940)

- Birth of “Science”

Table 1. Representative 16th-18th Century “scientists” and their contributions.

INDIVIDUAL	LIFE	<i>LOGOS</i> CONTRIBUTIONS	<i>MYTHOS</i> CONTRIBUTIONS
Nicolaus Copernicus	1473-1543	Astronomy, Mathematics	Canon law
Francis Bacon	1561-1626	Philosophy, Scientific method	Deductive arguments for God
Johannes Kepler	1571-1630	Astronomy	The Soul
Galileo Galilei	1564-1642	Astronomy, physics	Science and the Bible
Rene Descartes	1596-1650	Mathematics	Innate sense of God, Existence of God
Blaise Pascal	1623-1662	Physics, Geometry	Grace, Free Will
Robert Boyle	1627-1691	Chemistry	Miracles, Existence of God
John Locke	1632-1704	Medicine	Reason and Faith
John Ray	1627-1705	Zoology, Botany,	Natural theology
Isaac Newton	1642-1726	Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics	Miracles and Prophecy
William Paley	1743-1805	Biology	Natural theology

Postmodern Period (~1940-Present)

- Shift in “Science”
- Science = Technology

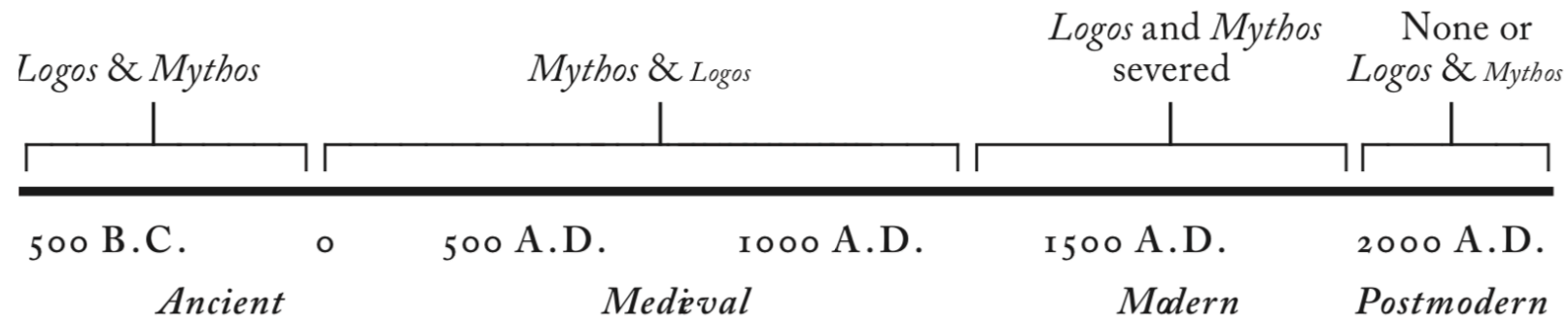
Science and Christianity?

“...those with more than a passing familiarity with both science and religion have little time for the conflict thesis.”

Historian Peter Harrison, 2010

“Science and religion, with their distinctive approaches to understanding reality, can enter into an intense dialogue fruitful for both.”

Pope Francis, 2015



Small Group Questions

1. Christians today have various “mindsets” when it comes to science and faith. For instance, C.S. Lewis yearned for the thinking of the medieval period, whereas U.S. National Institutes of Health Director Francis Collins has a perspective of the typical scientist during the modern period. During which historical era (ancient, medieval, modern, or postmodern) would you say best typifies your mindset?

2. Considering the ideas of Paul and St. Augustine, can all of their ideas be coalesced and consolidated into one “truth?”