Editorial preface

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Accepted: 2 March 2021 / Published online: 17 March 2021
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In the first article, Luke Tenninga argues that the “no greater goods” objection to Schellenberg’s Divine Hiddenness argument against theism fails. The core of the objection is that because there can be no greater good than a personal relationship with God, it makes no sense to think that God would allow nonresistant nonbelief for the sake of greater goods. Tenninga argues that there are no good reasons for thinking that the “no greater goods” responses fail in principle. He presents scenarios designed to show that one’s life-value might be greater if one temporarily lacks a conscious relationship with God than if one always has such a relationship.

In the next essay, Ryan Kulesa defends a counterfactual analysis of divine atemporal causation. The author argues that, while general counterfactual analyses of causation face problems with late preemption and trumping preemption, no such problem of preemption arise for the counterfactual analysis of divine atemporal causation that he proposes. His analysis of timeless counterfactual divine causation is supplemented by a definition of what it means for God to allow an event to happen.

We turn next to John Rushby’s discussion of Anselm’s ontological argument. The author uses the mechanized verification software system called PVS (Physical Verification System) to confirm that all of the formulations of the argument are trivial variants of an argument that is, itself, trivial in the following sense: it is just one step of modus ponens plus one application of a simple modal axiom. If we gain any information here, it is information—for those unfamiliar with PVS—that PVS is capable of producing sensible results.

While it is commonplace for theists to offer gratitude to God for the gift of creation itself, Marcus William Hunt argues that such gratitude is metaphysically impossible. This is because God as our benefactor cannot be benefited by our gratitude. Since God is not in need of any benefit, the desire to benefit God makes no sense. If *someone* cannot be benefited, then he or she cannot be a fitting target of propositional gratitude. He argues that if God is blessed then God has every benefit it is possible to have. Hence God cannot be benefited. We might wonder if there is a sense in which the way God is benefited by expressions of gratitude is fundamentally different than expressions of gratitude to a human “someone.”

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In the final article in this issue, William W. Young III argues that Augustine's concept of eternity as a-temporality leads to famous problems of God's relation to the world and to problems of ethical responsibility. These problems can be relieved by using a concept of eternity derived from Boethius. On his view, eternity transcends time and yet includes it. As Young puts it, Boethius's inclusive view of eternity shows how we can reconcile the "pursuit of eternal wisdom with a commitment to ethical responsibility within the temporal flow of the world."

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