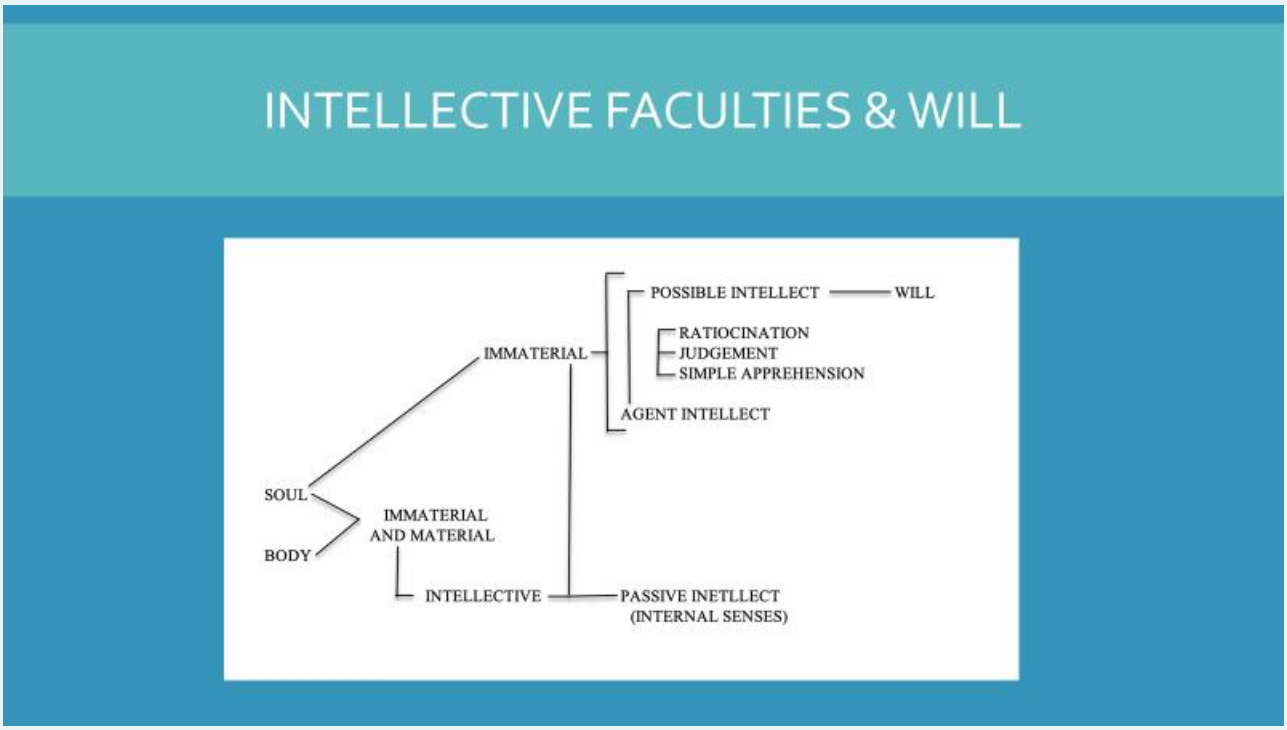
Class Outline



I. The Will

A. Its object - true good

1 Truth is the adequation between the intellect and the thing. The truth lies in that interior understanding which is in the possible intellect. The object of the intellect is truth.

2 Knowing truth is essential to grasping the true good.

3 The object of the will is the true good. The true good is that which all things desire – existence, physical good (that which is proper to its nature), moral goods (capacity to grasp God's intention).

B. The faculty of the will

1 It is a rational appetite, or intellective appetite. Like the appetites follow the senses, the will follows the intellect.

2 Like the possible intellect, it is immaterial. The will is moved by apprehension, reason and judgment, or the possible intellect. The good which is grasped by the possible intellect is an act of judgement.

3 The will is moved by the possible intellect which presents the object of the will under the notion of or aspect of the good. Ideally, the understood good moves the will.
4 The will, when weak, is moved by the lower faculties, the appetites, and passions.
5 The intellect can know when the will has chosen right or wrong. The intellect knows the object that the will wills, but one can judge or choose otherwise.

C. Freewill and the choice of evil

1 Freedom, with respect to the will, refers to the power or capacity of the will to choose. Choice is its nature. This is different from other faculties.
2 Modernly, freewill is often defined in terms of lack of exterior coercion. But this does not define the intrinsic power for choice. The will has the capacity to incline toward a good or not, and so it has the capacity for self-determination.
3 If something that is grasped as good, then the will chooses a particular good because it contains some good that it wants. With every choice, we are aiming at something that we regard as good.
4 So how can choosing evil be reconciled?
    a. One does not choose evil per se. One does not will the evil for itself. The will can incline to something insofar as it is evil, so one wills the evil in a certain respect. This is willing it under the notion of the good.
    b. When an object is presented by the possible intellect to the will, the intellect may judge it as good even though it's evil.
    c. When choosing an evil, the intellect and will undergo a change; they become disordered.

D. The will and its effect on the passions

1 The appetites obey the will
    a. The will can move the imagination & other faculties which affect the passions.
    b. The strength of the act of the will affects the lower appetites.
    c. One can choose to direct the passions.

2 Since the will has the quality of freedom:
    a. It can choose not to incline itself toward the object of passion.
    b. It can choose to move the intellect away from the object of the passion.
    c. It moves the intellect to make a judgment contrary to what it presented.
        - Then it moves it to reformulate the image thereby changing the passion.

3 Free choice is more prompt that passions

a. Man is moved more easily & promptly by choice than by passion.
b. We tend to be more inclined to do something if we have chosen it than if in passion

Notes

Introduction to the Science of Mental Health, Chapter 7: The Will, pages 104-126

Diagram: Ontological Structure of Man, p. 799 Ripperger, Fr. Chad. *Introduction to the Science of Mental Health*. Sensus Traditionis Press, 2013

References

Patrick DiVietri, PhD. "Philosophy/Theology Applied to Psychology." *Course*. Manasses, 2015.

Ripperger, Fr. Chad. *Introduction to the Science of Mental Health*. Sensus Traditionis Press, 2013.

Instructor:

Jeanne-Marie Ganucheau, MSW, LCSW