

## Descartes' Proof of God's Existence in Meditation Three

*Formal Reality:* The kind of reality possessed by an existing entity. In other words, our ordinary concept of reality.

*Objective Reality:* The kind of reality that attaches to something by virtue of its being the object of an idea.

1. There is at least as much reality in the cause as in the effect (p. 28).
2. As regards ideas, there must be at least as much formal reality in the cause of the idea as there is objective reality in the idea (p. 28).
3. Ideas can be caused by other ideas, but there can be no infinite regress, so there must be a first idea the cause of which contains as much formal reality as there is objective reality in the last idea in the chain (p. 28).
4. I have in my mind the idea of an all perfect God, which means that this God as the object of my idea of God contains infinite objective reality (pp. 30-33).
5. Since I possess only finite formal reality, I cannot be the cause of my idea of an infinitely perfect God (pp. 33-34). Derived from 3 and 4.
6. Therefore, since only God can contain infinite formal reality, God must exist in order for me to have the idea of an infinitely perfect God (p. 34). Derived from 3. and 5.
7. Since deception is an imperfection, an infinitely perfect God cannot be a deceiver (p. 35).