

But how little does Paley seem to think of this when he reasons of his Maker as if he were a man, and dares to bind up the *great first cause* in the links of a single disjunctive proposition. God, as far as regards the interests of man, must be benevolent, malignant, or indifferent. This is the fundamental proposition of his moral system. But by what right can man set limits to the moral condition of the Almighty?—the creator of a million worlds, each bound to the others, by never changing laws; and perhaps also of a million intellectual systems, each connected with our own by mysterious relations, conceived in his mind and pre-ordained in his will, yet not revealed to us. In vain we try to comprehend even a single attribute of God; we know him only as he has thought good to reveal himself, by the law written in the heart—by the laws of the material world—and by the declarations of his word. He may, and does, consult his glory in countless ways we know not of. And is it not the height of arrogance in any creature like ourselves, to limit, even in thought, the workings of his power, and to confine the operation of his attributes to such channels only as our language can define and our souls can comprehend?

In the history of moral reasoning, there is not to be found a fundamental proposition more faulty in its principles or more dangerous in its application, than the one just considered. Is it not notorious, that scoffing men, reasoning on like grounds and with like fallacy, have impugned the benevolence of God—have profanely dared to entangle the *great first cause* in a dilemma; pretending to prove, from the misery and desolation they saw around