A circular portrait of Immanuel Kant, an elderly man with white hair, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat, set against a dark background.

# *Immanuel Kant:*

## *Discovering the Powers and the Limits of Reason*

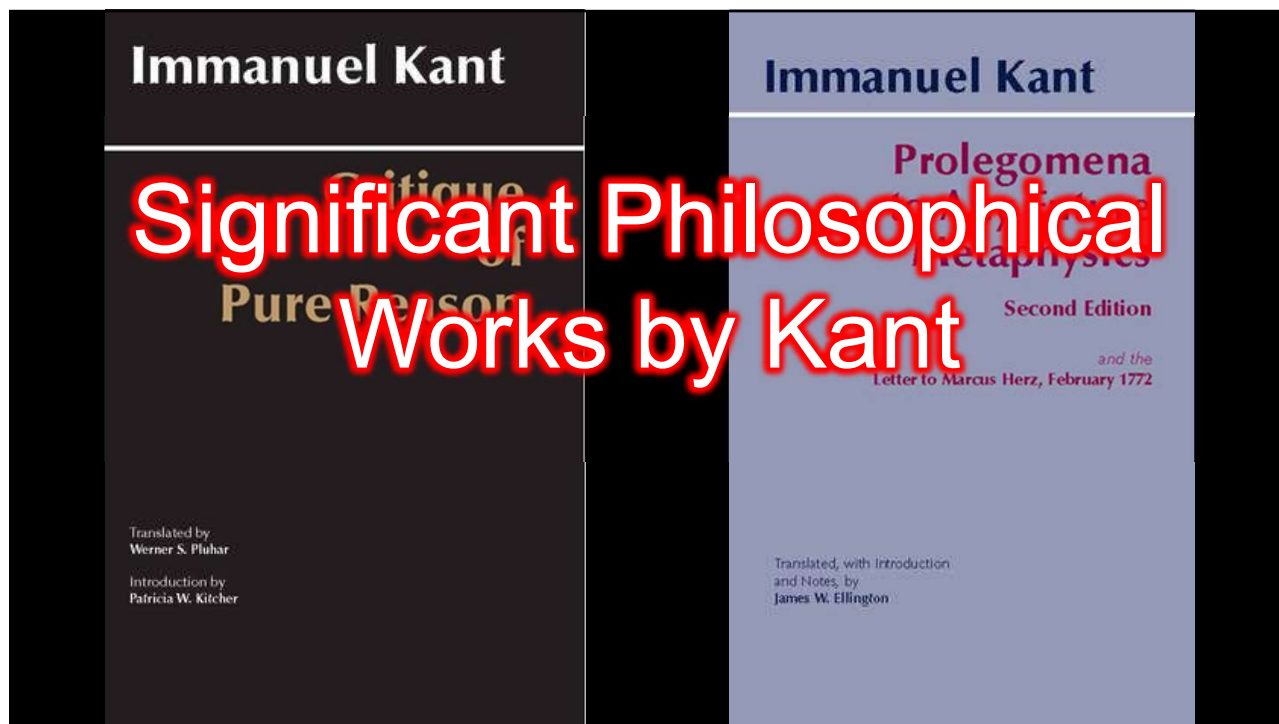
- *born in Königsberg, East Prussia, April 22, 1724*
- *attended the University of Königsberg and later taught there*



- *born in Königsberg, East Prussia, April 22, 1724*
- *attended the University of Königsberg and later taught there*
- *lectured on metaphysics, logic, ethics, aesthetics, philosophical theology, mathematics, physics, geography, and anthropology*

- *made significant contributions in philosophy and science*
- *philosophical impact is so significant that the history of modern philosophy is sometimes divided into "pre-Kantian" and "post-Kantian" periods*
- *died February 12, 1804*

## **Significant Philosophical Works by Kant**



*One major influence on earlier stages of Kant's philosophy was Christian Wolff.*

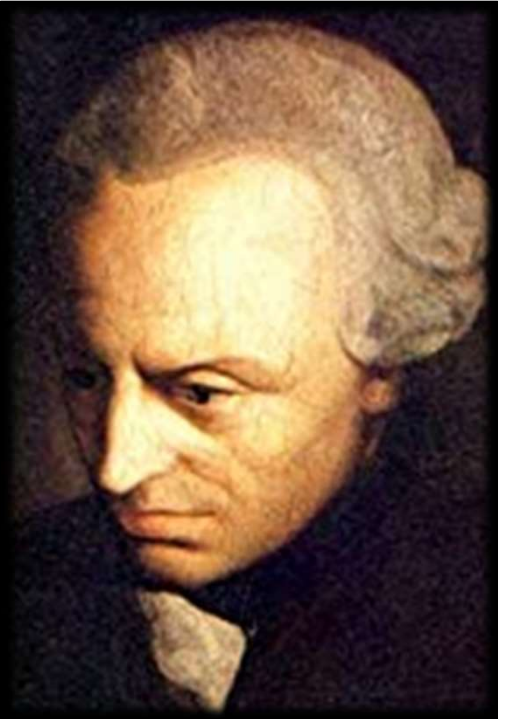


*While immersed in the system of Wolff, Kant's thinking was overturned and he embarked in a new direction because of his reading of Hume.*

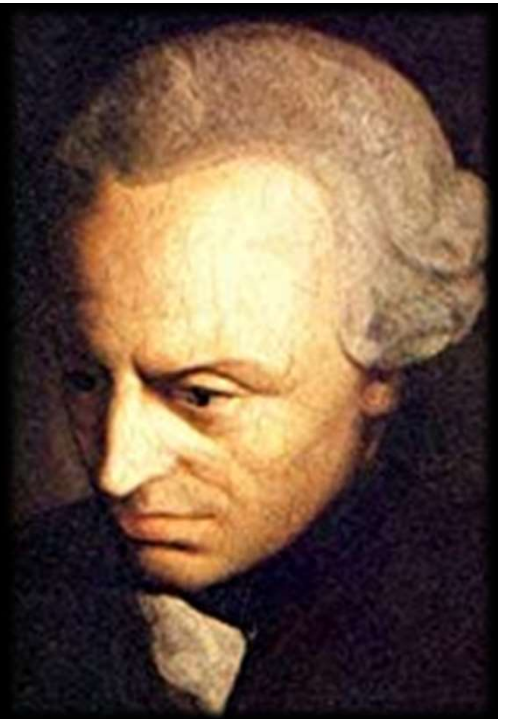


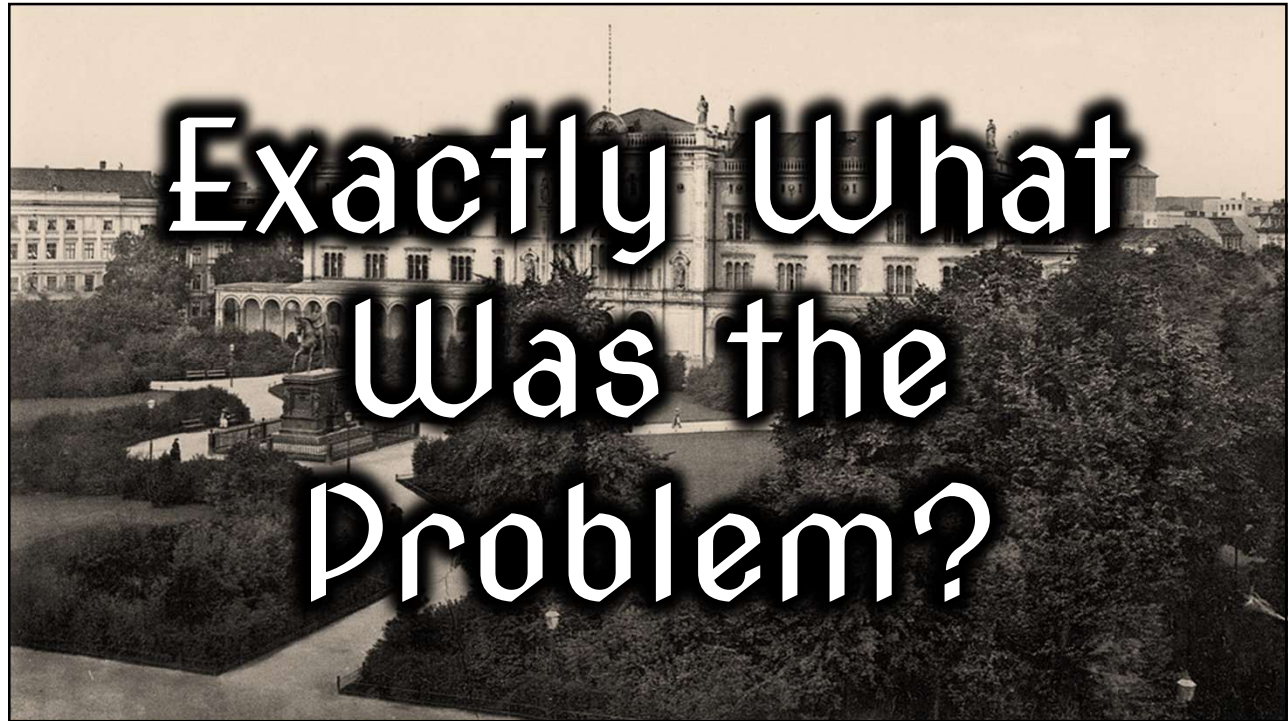
*"I openly confess my recollection of David Hume was the very thing which many years ago first **interrupted my dogmatic slumber** and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy a quite new direction."*

[Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, ed. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), 8]



*Kant embarked on the task of resolving the tensions between his earlier rationalism and the insights of empiricism.*





*The philosophers of the day  
(the Rationalists and the  
Empiricists) distinguished  
two kinds of truths*



Truths of Reason	Truths of Fact
a. Hume referred to them as relations of ideas.	a. Hume referred to them as matters of fact.
b. logical truths (i.e., established by the logical law of non-contradiction)	b. experiential truths (i.e., not established by the logical law of non-contradiction)
c. necessary and universal	c. contingent and probable
d. known " <i>a priori</i> "	d. known " <i>a posteriori</i> "
e. The predicate is contained in the subject. (Bachelors are unmarried.)	e. The predicate is not contained in the subject. (My dog is brown.)
f. Kant labeled these "analytic propositions or judgments."	f. Kant labeled these "synthetic propositions or judgments."
g. e.g., mathematical truths	g. e.g., scientific truths

- *The Rationalists, including Kant, held that even scientific truths (e.g., causality, time, space) could ultimately be reduced to logical truths.*
- *However, because of the devastating critique of Hume, Kant was convinced that reason could not establish even these scientific truths.*
- *Since they served as the foundation for the natural sciences, Kant took Hume's philosophy as a threat to the very survival of science itself.*

*Kant set out to develop a new understanding of knowledge that would undergird science and steer a course between:*

the dogmatism of  
the rationalists

and

the skepticism of  
the empiricists [i.e., Hume]

*while retaining the insights of each.*



***"There can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience. ... But though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it arises out of experience."***

[*Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press), 41]



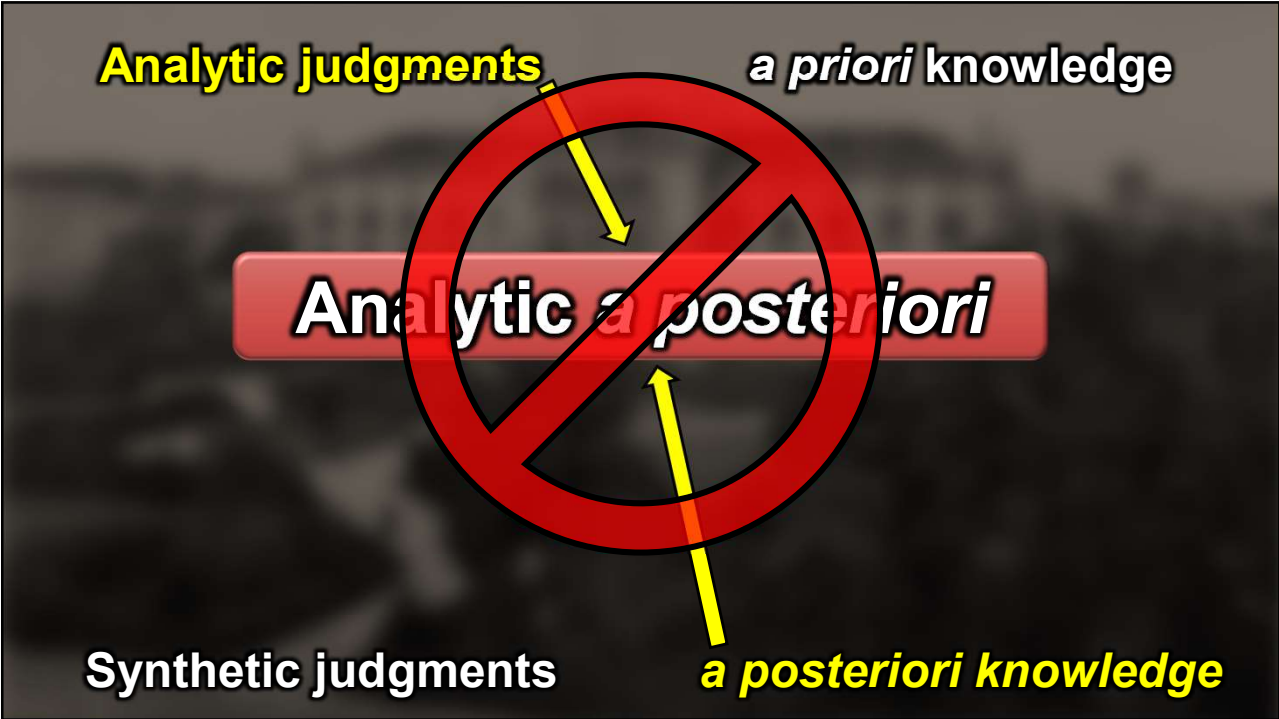
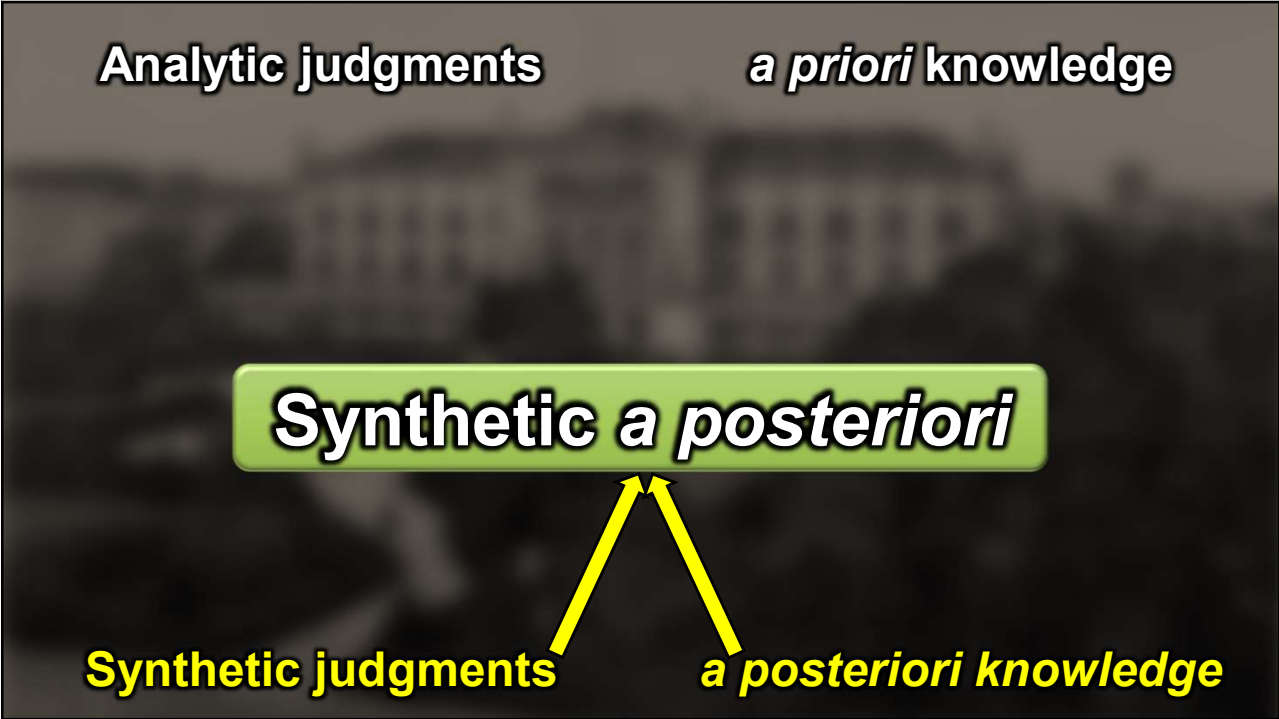
**Analytic judgments**

***a priori* knowledge**

**Analytic *a priori***

**Synthetic judgments**

***a posteriori* knowledge**



**Analytic judgments**

**a priori knowledge**

*A synthetic a priori judgment would give necessity and universality on the one hand while not merely being a "true by definition" judgment on the other.*

**Synthetic a priori**

**Synthetic judgments**

**a posteriori knowledge**

**Analytic judgments**

**a priori knowledge**

*Kant thinks a priori judgments are possible because the categories of, for example, time, space, and causality, are supplied by the mind which arranges (i.e., is imposed upon) the data of experience.*

**Synthetic a priori**

**Synthetic judgments**

**a posteriori knowledge**

**Analytic judgments**

**a priori knowledge**

*The raw "uninterpreted" data of experience enter the mind via sensory experience.*

*The mind "shapes" these data according to the mind's categories of, for example, time, space, and causality.*

**Synthetic a priori**

**Synthetic judgments**

**a posteriori knowledge**

**Analytic judgments**

**a priori knowledge**

*Kant called this raw "uninterpreted" data of experience the "noumenal" realm.*

*This realm is the "thing-in-itself" (Ding an sich).*

**Synthetic a priori**

**Synthetic judgments**

**a posteriori knowledge**

**Analytic judgments**

**a priori knowledge**

*Kant called this data with the categories imposed upon it by the mind the phenomenal realm.*

*This realm is the "thing-to-me."*

**Synthetic a priori**

**Synthetic judgments**

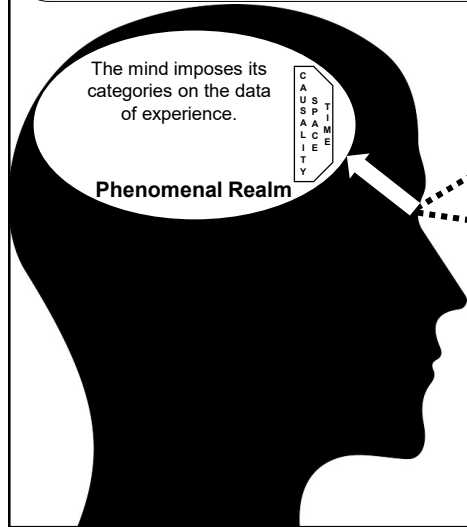
**a posteriori knowledge**

*The upshot of Kant's philosophy was that it was not possible for one to objectively know the physical world in itself, but that one knows the physical world only as it appears to him.*

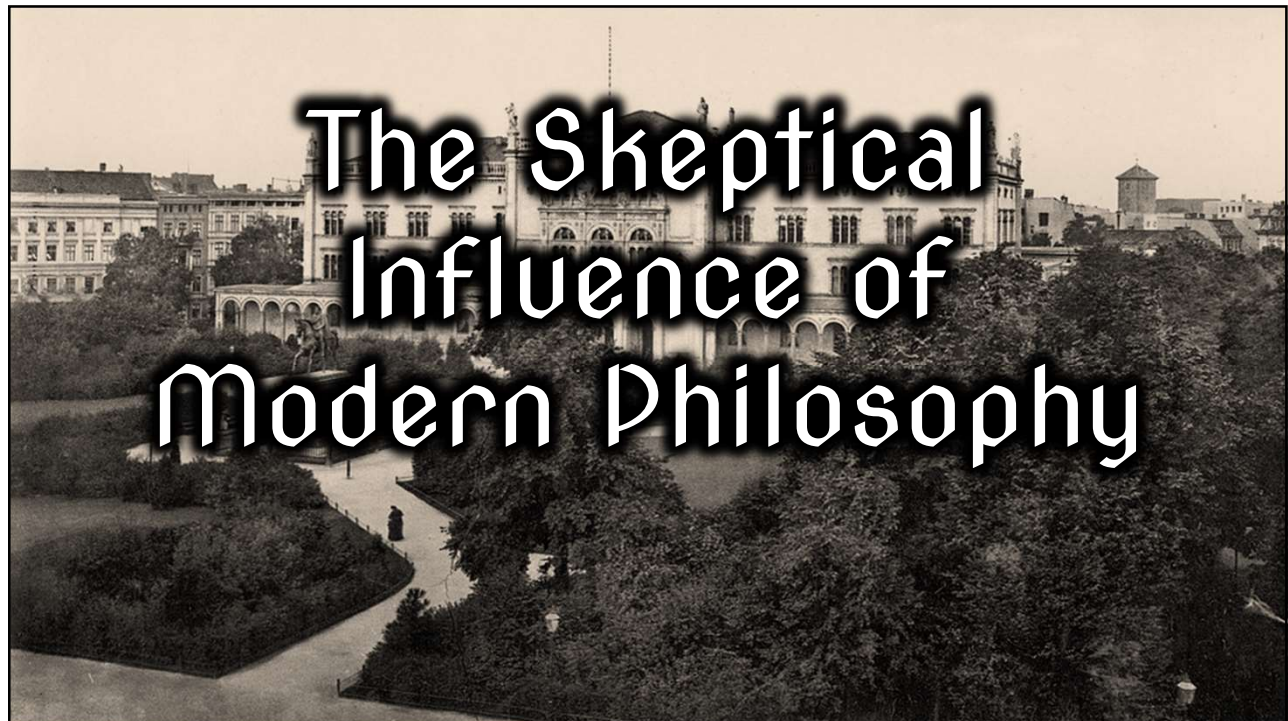
*The implication of Kant's philosophy has manifested in remarkable ways even down to today.*

## Immanuel Kant's Theory of Knowledge Transcendental Idealism (Critical Idealism)

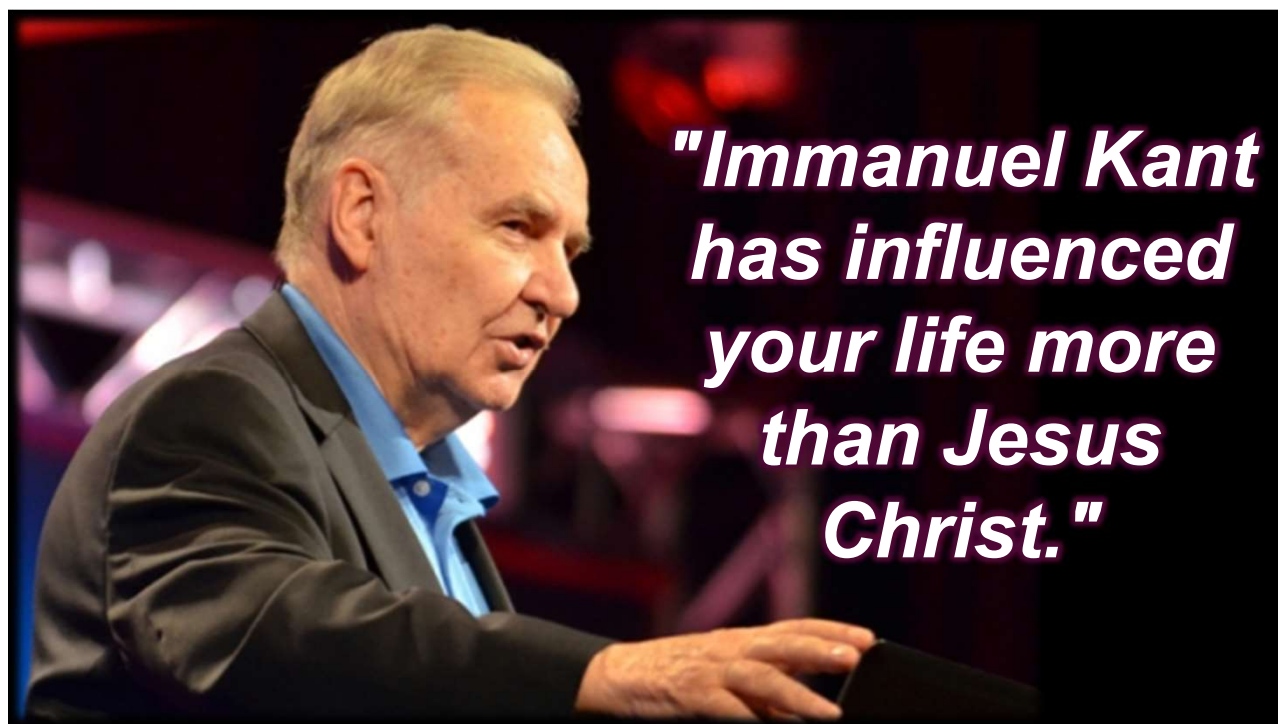
*We cannot know reality in itself, but only as it is to us. Our minds impose or organize the raw data of experience according to the categories of space, time, and causality. Thus, space, time, and causality are not true of the thing in itself (Noumenal Realm) but are only true of the thing to us (Phenomenal Realm). This enables us to have certainty of things like causality since we never experience reality otherwise except according to the categories that our minds impose upon experience.*



**Noumenal Realm**  
**External Reality**  
**"Thing-in-itself"**  
**"Ding an sich"**







<p>☞ <b>Scientism</b> ☞ All of reality is physical. (e.g., Richard Dawkins)</p>	
<p>☞ <b>Spiritism</b> ☞ All of reality is spiritual. (e.g., New Age)</p>	
<p>☞ <b>Christian Fideism</b> ☞ Reason is largely irrelevant to the Christian life.</p>	
<p>☞ <b>Christian Liberalism</b> ☞ Christian doctrines should be modified to accommodate science.</p>	
<p>☞ <b>Christian Fundamentalism</b> ☞ Science should be modified to accommodate Christian "doctrines."</p>	
<p>☞ <b>Postmodernism</b> ☞ Truth is relative.</p>	

