

God and Creation -4
'Ehyeh (אֶהְיֶה) and Metaphysics

**The “Problem” of Evil and Suffering in the Presence of an
All-knowing, All-good, All-loving, and All-powerful God (58):
Job 38: God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)**

<http://www.fbcweb.org/sermons.html>

Philosophical/Theological/Doctrinal & Spiritual Edification

Bible Doctrines

Eschatology	There is no one like God, Isa 46:1-10.
Thanatology	
Ecclesiology	
Israelology	✓ He is totally transcendent to anything in creation.
Dispensationalism	
Doxology	
Hodology	✓ Thus, the need for all of these doctrines.
Soteriology	
Hamartiology	
Natural Law	✓ The believer who does not learn about God from His Word will psychologically project onto God his own characteristics.
Anthropology	
Angelology	
Pneumatology	✓ For negative believers, God is not worth the effort it takes to understand Him.
Christology	
Paterology	
Trinitarianism	
Cosmology	
Theology Proper	
Bibliology	
Prolegomena:	
P.R. - 32	
Hermeneutics	
Linguistics	
Epistemology	
Metaphysics -3	
Reality -Logic 32, Truth 32	

Stage 3 -
Metaphysical understanding of Reality conveyed by the Bible verses.

Metaphysical (Refined) Christian-Level 3:

- True understanding of Ultimate Reality God's Word, 'Ehyeh, Esse, Exod. 3:14; Acts 17:28; Matt. 6; Col. 1:17.
- Understands God on a metaphysical level. God is not just another Entity in the universe that got things going.
- Lives in great awe of 'Ehyeh.

Stage 2-
Systematic understanding of Bible verses

Doctrinal Maturing Believer- Level 2:

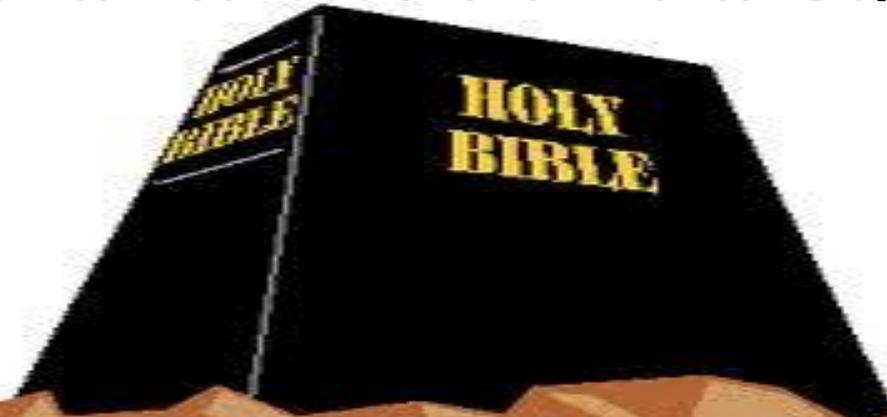
- Believer moves into stability in life as they take in more Bible doctrine.
- Understands language of anthropopathisms and anthropomorphisms, but still has not broken through to 'Ehyeh.
- Less psychological projections on God.

Stage 1-
Isolated understanding of Bible verses

Baby Bible believer - Level 1 -

- Baby view of God : Projections of many of own psychological states on God. The more messed up a believer is the most messed up view of God he will have.

Philosophical Foundations for Biblical Objectivity



Biblical Objectivity

Biblical Objectivity

5- Hermeneutics – how do we understand that which is?

4- Linguistics – how is that which is communicated?

3- Epistemology – how do I know that which is?

2- Metaphysics – what is that which is? (3)

1- Reality – that which is (Logic 32, Truth 32)

PR 32

Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

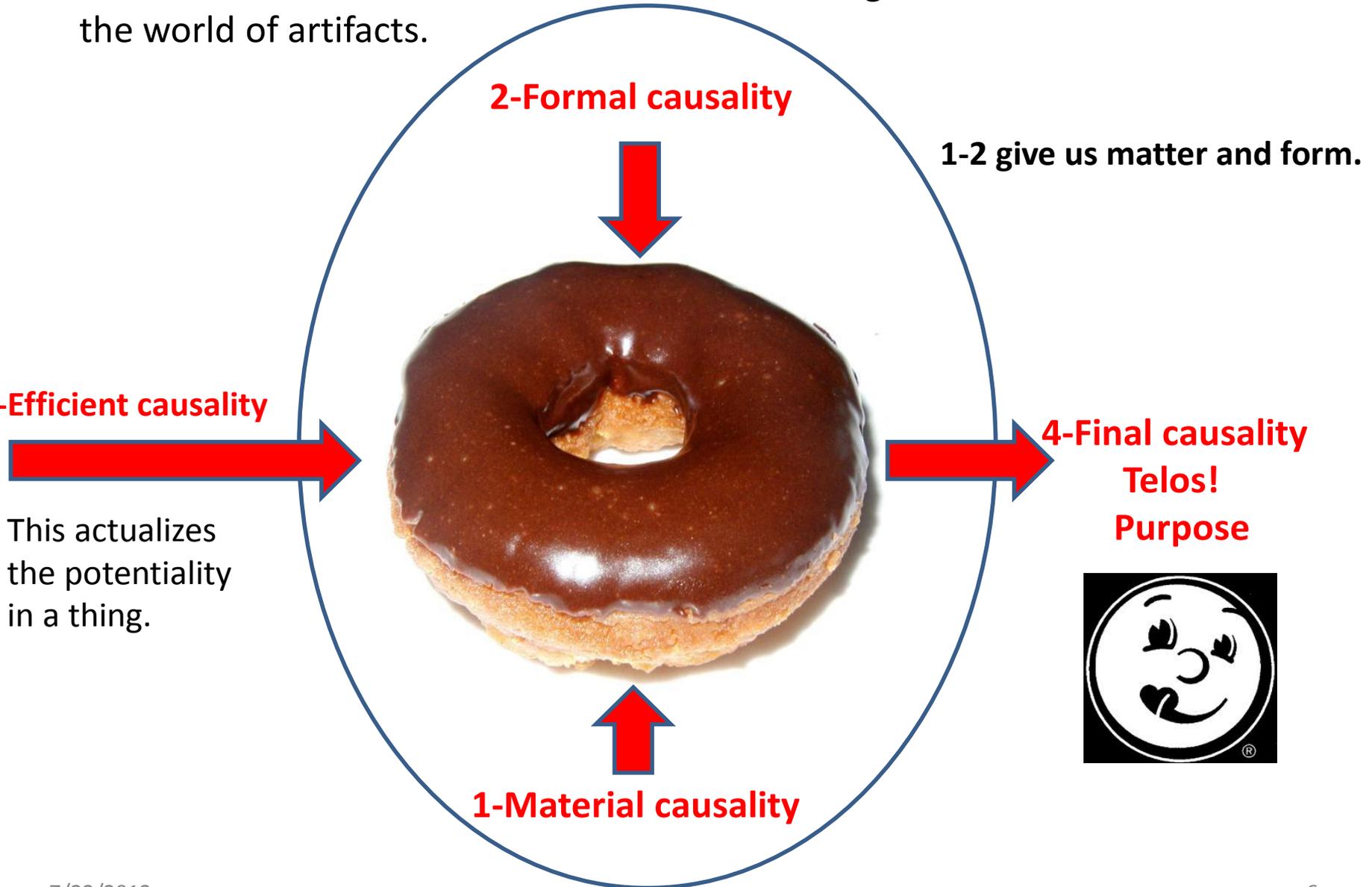
1. Metaphysics is the study of reality from the standpoint of it being reality. This is known as “being *qua* being.” It is the study of the whole natural world of change available to human experience.
2. Metaphysics is the foundational science for all others, because all other particular sciences presuppose their particular subject matter *as already existing*.

Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

3. Metaphysics is the study of the world—using reason alone—of finite and changing reality.
4. We must have an explicit systematic account to avoid certain deep and widespread modern philosophical errors.
5. It is impossible to overstate the importance of these four causes of things/beings. One must know the four causes to know what something is. Metaphysics = what is that which is.

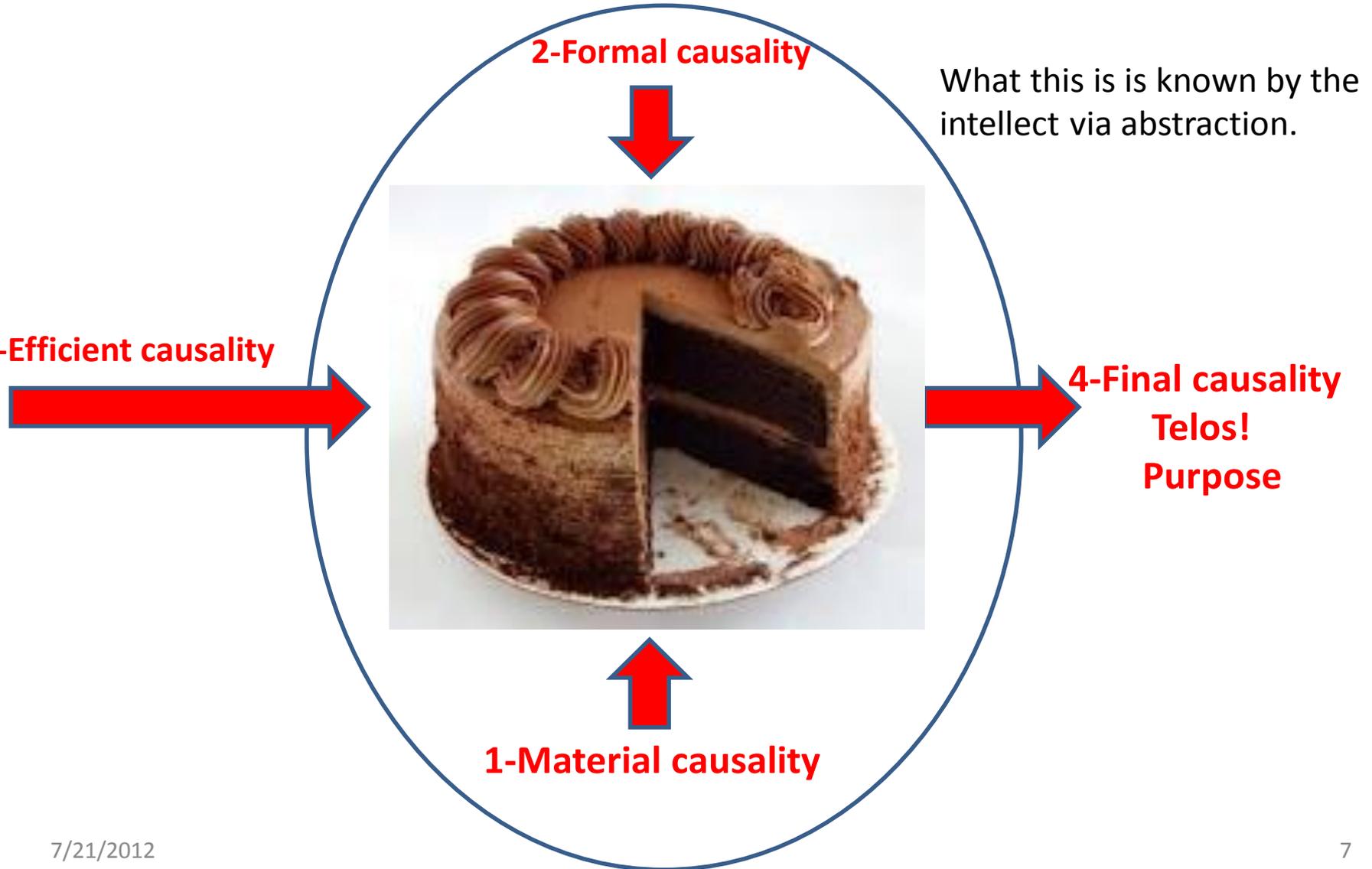
Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

6. Review of the 4 causes. These causes exist throughout the natural world and the world of artifacts.



Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

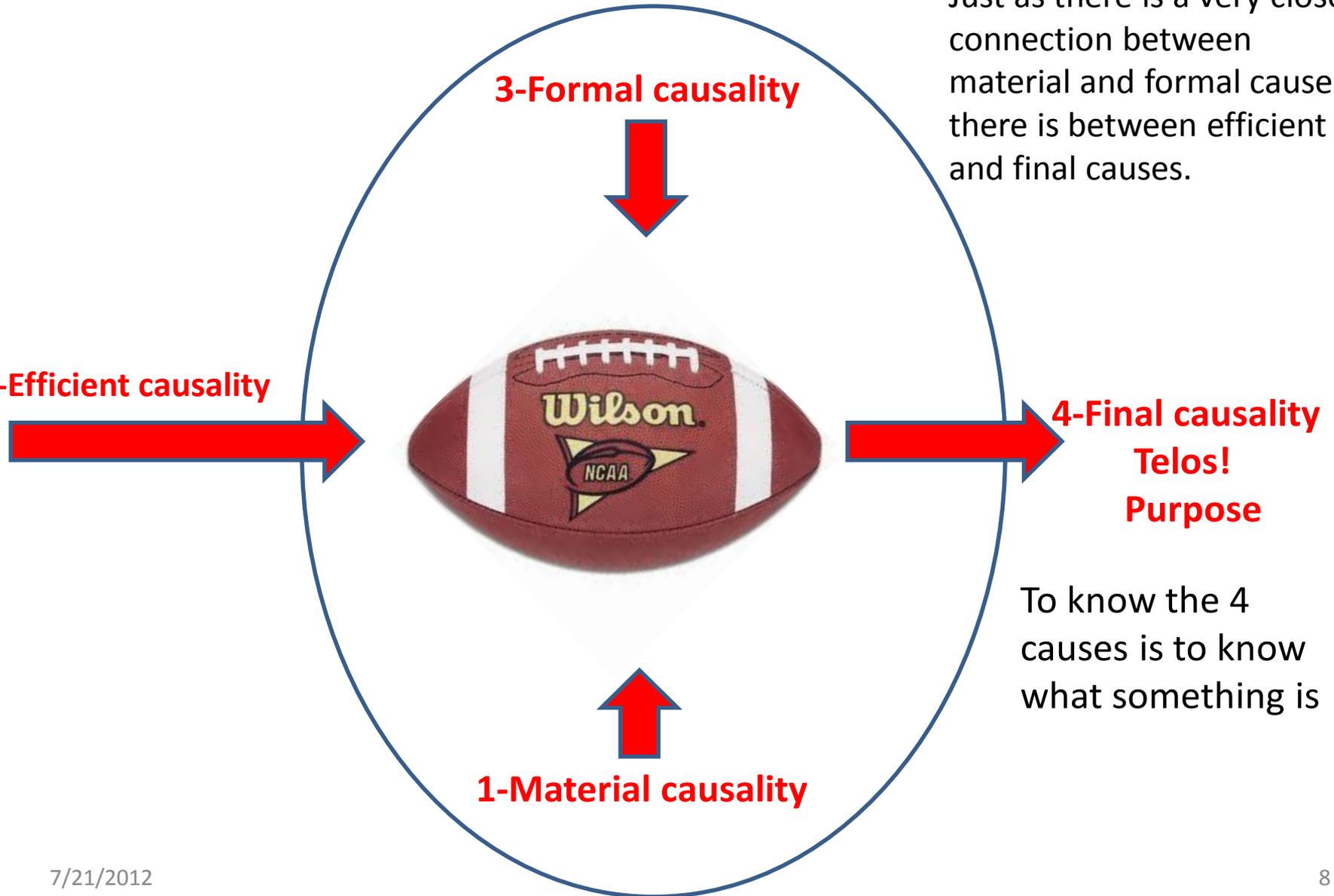
6. Review of the 4 causes. These philosophical subtleties are built in common sense, but implications go far beyond the obvious.



Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

6. Review of the 4 causes.

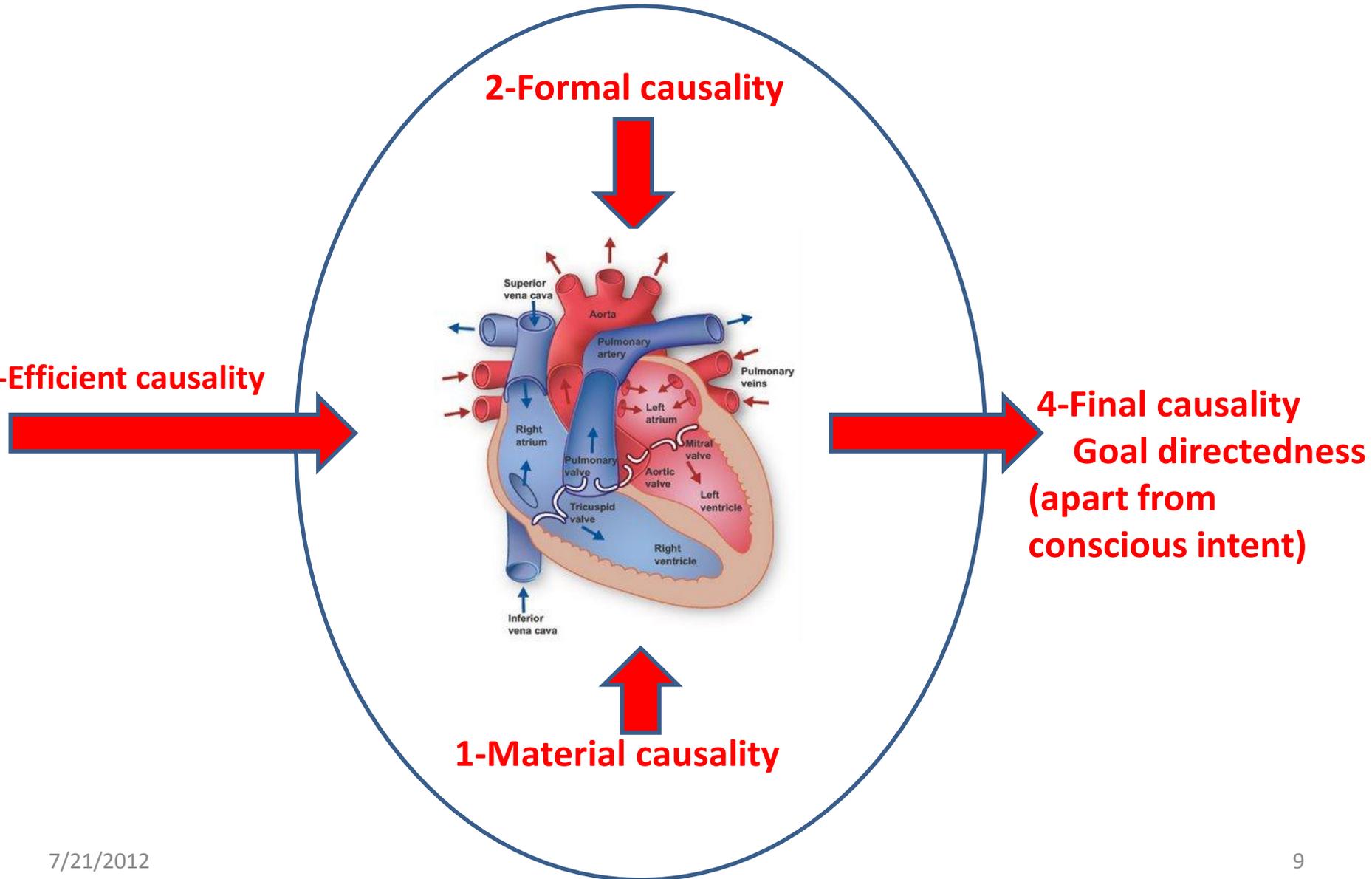
Just as there is a very close connection between material and formal causes, there is between efficient and final causes.



To know the 4 causes is to know what something is

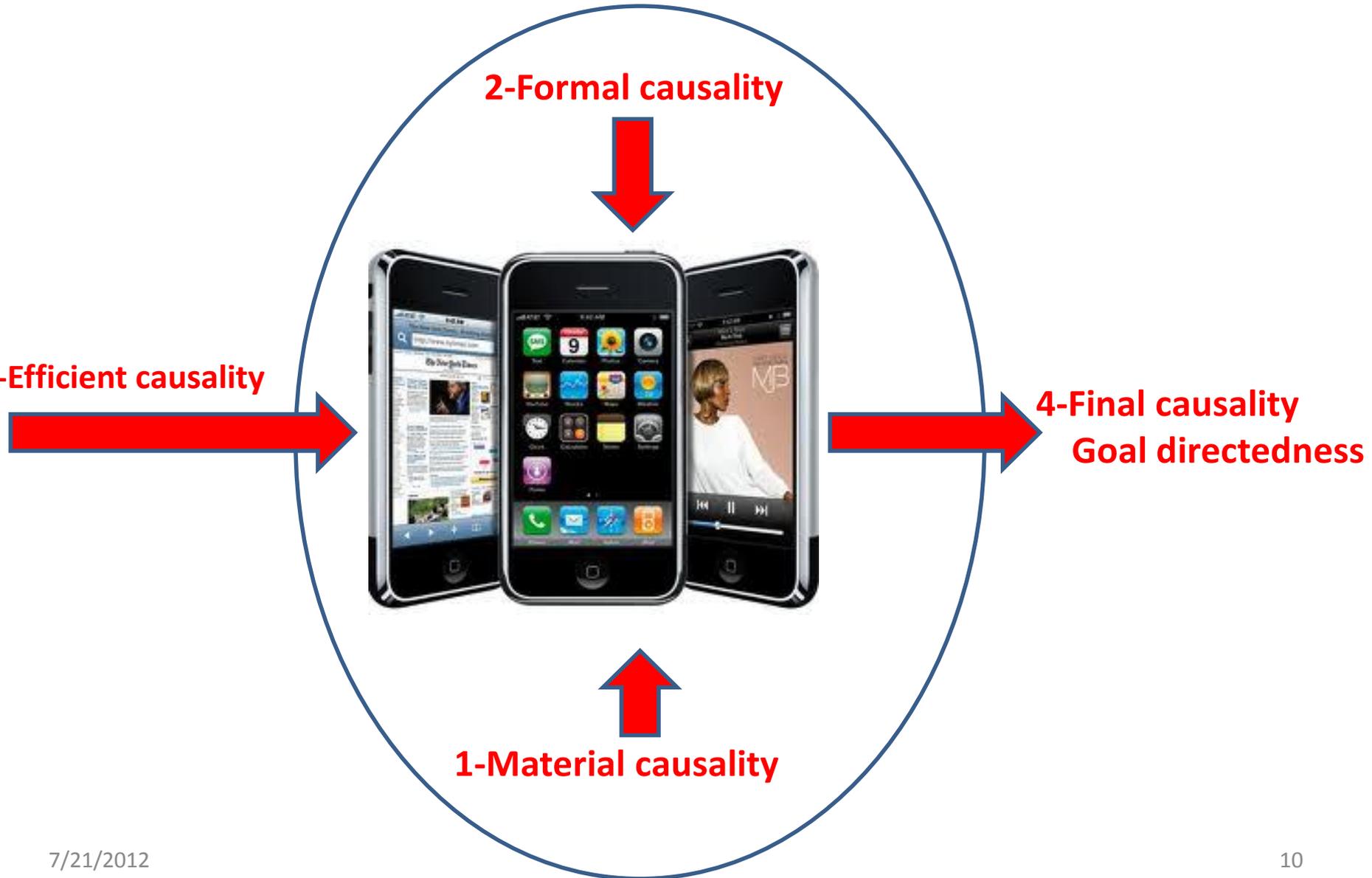
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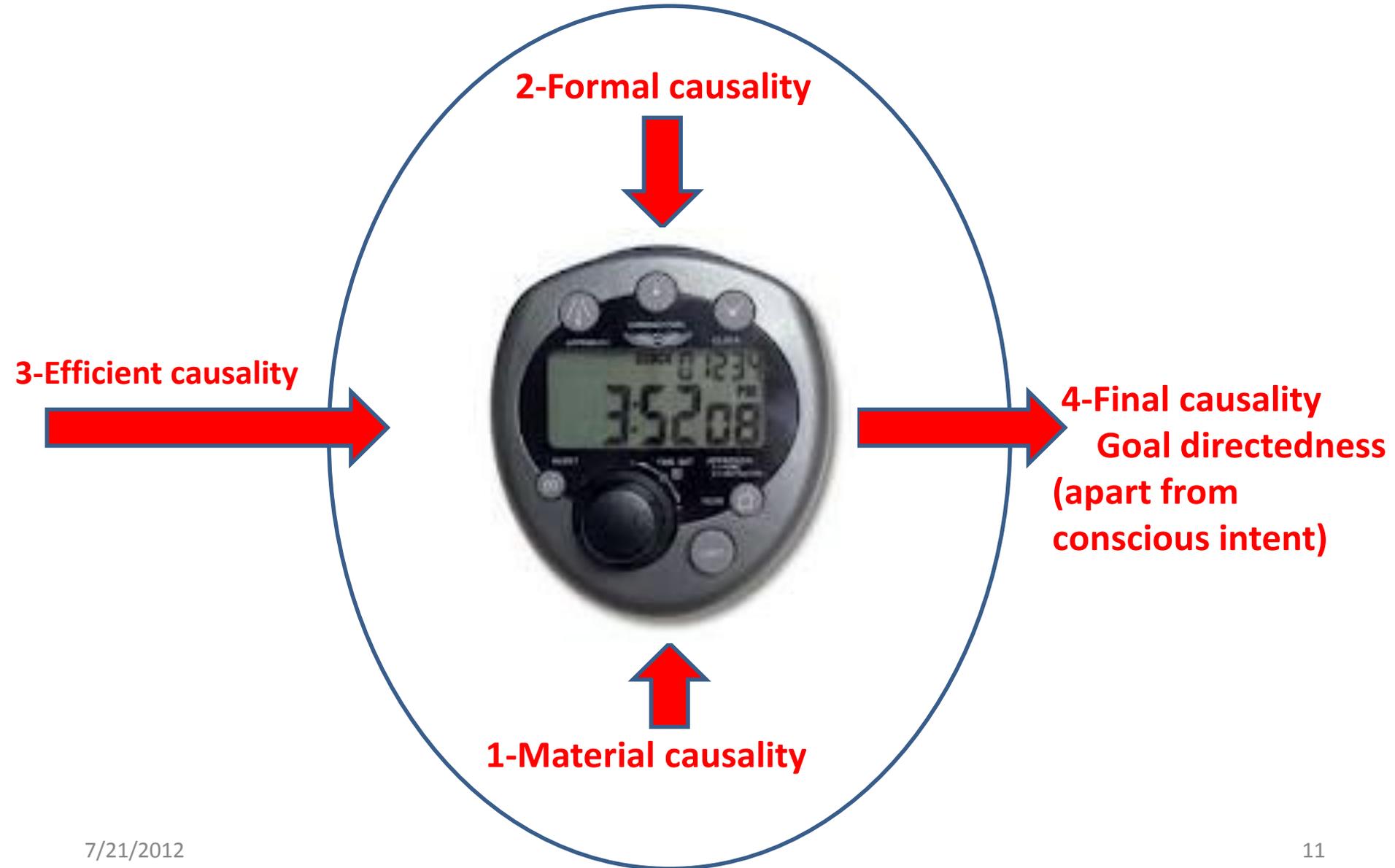
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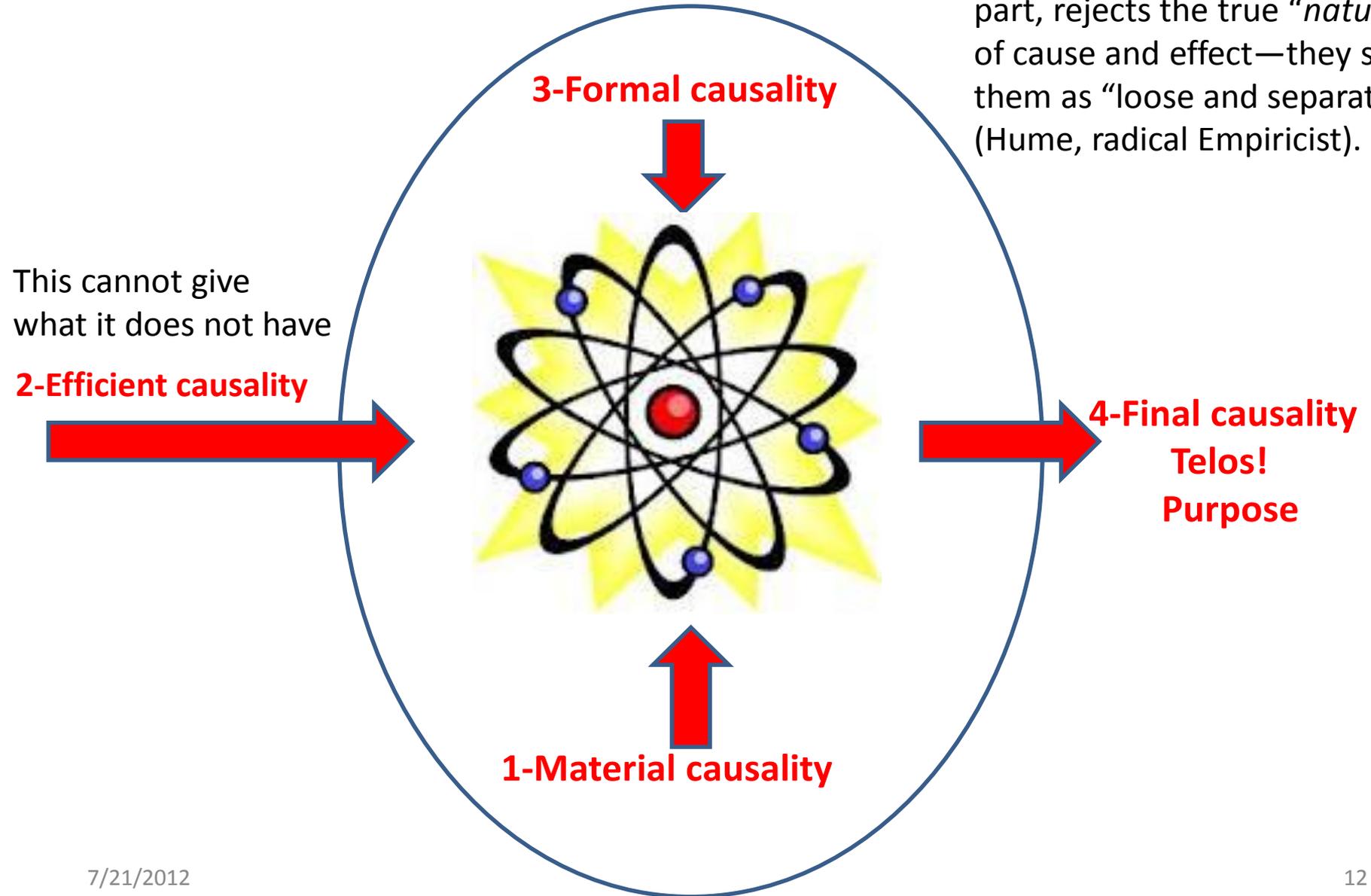
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Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

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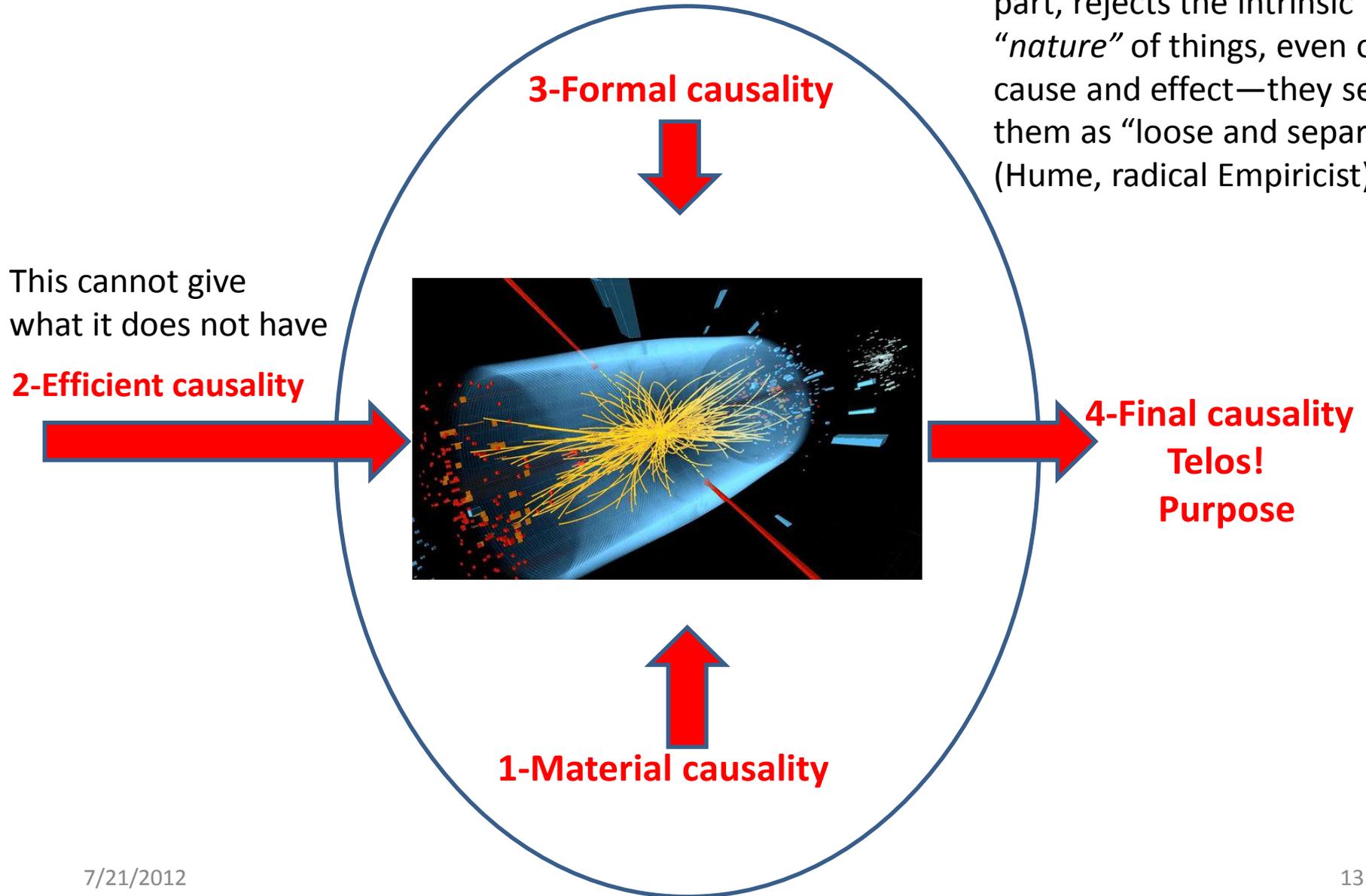
Modern science, for the most part, rejects the true “*nature*” of cause and effect—they see them as “loose and separate” (Hume, radical Empiricist).



Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

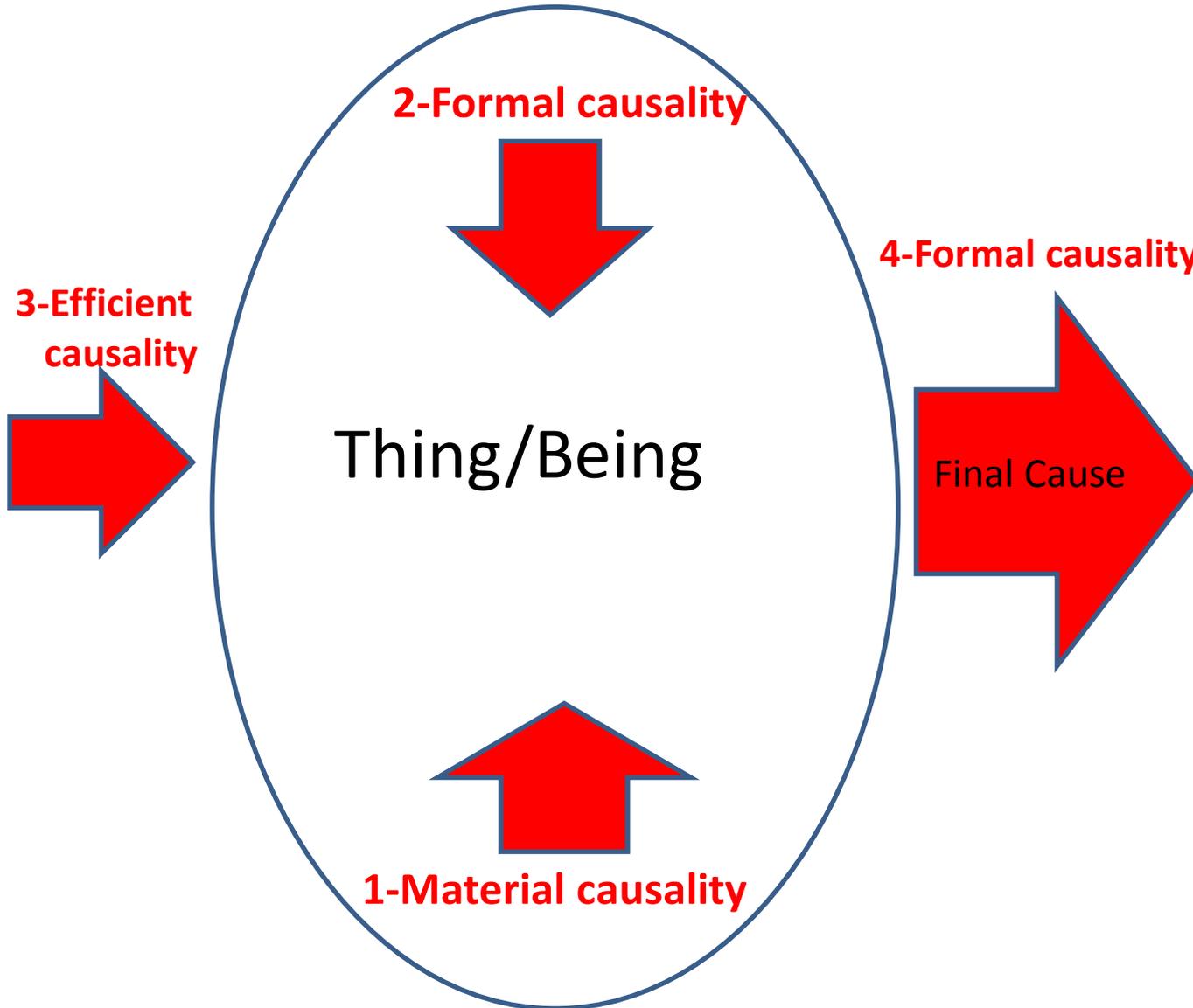
6. Review of the 4 causes.

Modern science, for the most part, rejects the intrinsic “*nature*” of things, even of cause and effect—they see them as “loose and separate” (Hume, radical Empiricist).



Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

6. Review of the 4 causes.



- ✓ The final cause is the cause of all causes.
- ✓ None of the other causes make sense apart from final cause.
- ✓ Yet, modern philosophers, scientists, and intellectuals in general *claim* to not believe in final causality—even though they cannot do their work apart from it.

Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

7. In contrast to teachings of the New Atheism, there is no conflict between science and religion. The conflict is between two philosophical worldviews: the teleological approach (Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas) and the modern mechanical vision of Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, and Hume, according to which physical reality is comprised of nothing more than purposeless, meaningless particles in motion—all just random, luck.
 - What are the ramifications if design is allowed?

Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

8. The mechanical view of nature is *demonstrably false* and utterly incompatible with the very existence of morality, rationality, science, and reality.

Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

9. We now live an era known as Aristotle's revenge as it is increasingly being discovered how human thought and acts, cause and effect, and empirical sciences of physics and biology cannot be described coherently without reference to purpose or goal-directedness. Measuring something does not tell you what it is.

Metaphysics-3 (The 4 causes of things)

10. Aristotle had more of an 'Ehyeh view of nature and science than many modern Christians. There is a return to Aristotelian metaphysics by some secular scientists because of the need for some type of pre-existing actuality to take something from potentiality to actuality. This is exactly what we have in 'Ehyeh metaphysics—the Pure Actuality behind all existence.
11. The Bible teaches that all creation not only depends upon God for its beginning, but for its continuing existence (John 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Heb 1:3; Exod. 3:14).

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and metaphysics)

Job 38

1. Job 38:4-15. What is your view of God and creation (Job 38:4-15, 31-33)? What is your metaphysics with reference to God and beings? The three options.
 - a. Occasionalism. This view is that God alone is the Cause of everything that happens so that there are no true secondary causes in nature. E.g., one billiard ball which makes contact with another during a game of pool does not in any way cause the other to move. Rather, God causes the second ball to move on the “occasion” when the first makes contact with it.
 - This view leads to pantheism.
 - If God does it all, it is hard to see why there is nature at all (cf., George Berkley and idealism, “to be is to be perceived”).

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and metaphysics)

- b. Mere Conservationism. This holds that while God maintains natural objects in their causal powers in existence in every moment, they alone are the immediate causes of their effects. For example, the one billiard ball really does cause the other one to move and God has nothing to do with it other than keeping the ball in its causal powers and being. God does not in any direct way cause the second ball to go in motion.
 - This view veers in the direction of deism.
 - In this view natural objects can operate and bring about effects apart from God's immediate action. Not a stretch to go from this to no need for God at all.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and metaphysics)

- c. Concurrentism. A middle ground position which holds on the one hand (contrary to occasionalism) that natural objects are true causes, but on the other hand contrary to mere conservationism, that God not only maintains natural objects in their causal powers and being, but also cooperates in immediately causing their effects. On this view, the one billiard ball really causes the other one to move but only together with God who acts as a concurrent cause.
 - a. This is the correct view as per act and potency.
 - b. This is the correct view of Ehyeh and nature.
 - c. This also explains God's sovereignty in the natural and human realm. God activates the free choices of man.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and metaphysics)

2. In order to understand and appreciate God and His activity in Job, the Bible, and throughout reality, we must understand the nature of God, 'Ehyeh. The vast majority of Christians have a false view of God.
 - ❖ Simplicity (Exod. 3:14; cf., Deut. 32:4; Mal. 3:6; 1 John 4:8).
 - The goodness and perfection of God (metaphysical claims).
 - The timelessness of God (Augustine * Einstein vs. Newton).
 - The omnipotence of God.
 - The omniscience of God (problem with analytic philosophy).
 - The omnipresence of God (it means what it says).
 - The immutability of God (denied by most Christians).
 - The holiness of God (rejected by most people).
 - The impassibility of God (denied by most Christians).
 - The love of God (misunderstood by most Christians).
 - The justice of God (ignored by most people).
 - The infinity of God (not even thought about by most).
 - ❖ The Trinity. God is three-personed (misunderstood by most).
 - ❖ The incarnation (misunderstood by most Christians).
 - ❖ The nature of the will of God (Christian confusion abounds).

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

3. The foundation for understanding God's nature (and Ultimate Reality) is 'Ehyeh-asher-'Ehyeh (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה), Exodus 3:14. Start anywhere else and you will start with a mixture of error. One cannot start with analytical philosophy to discover the nature of God.
4. 'Ehyeh not only is the proper foundation for apprehending and building the attributes of God, is the also the foundation for metaphysics, which is also known as philosophy of nature, the study of potentiality and actuality.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

5. The name God, 'Ehyeh, opens up the world of God as Pure Actuality; He has no potentiality; He is simple.
6. All of the other attributes of God depend upon God as Pure Act for their truth and coherence. You can take any attribute of God and trace it back to 'Ehyeh to see if it holds, cf. doctrine of the immutability of God.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

7. It is divine simplicity that not only grounds the other attributes of God, they illuminate them. It enables us to understand what immutability, omnipresence, infinity, and justice really mean.
8. The name 'Ehyeh removes all limitations and imperfections from God and makes Him transcendent. He is not like us metaphysically. He is radically different from all of creation.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

9. 'Ehyeh points to the fact that God as Pure Actuality is Being; He does not participate in Being; He does not have a being, He is being Himself.
10. Furthermore, as simple 'Ehyeh does not have goodness; He is goodness Himself. He does not have intelligence; He is intelligence Himself. He is identical to all of His attributes.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

11. What we call God's goodness, being, intelligence and so forth are really just the same thing: God Himself considered from different points of view. He is radically unlike anything in the created world. He is not a being alongside others, not even a grand and remote being among other beings. Rather, He is existence upon which all beings depend upon their existence.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

12. 'Ehyeh is the Qal imperfect first person form of the verb *hayah*: "I will be," and indicates pure actuality, pure existence, pure being. He is not composed of any parts. He is Simple. In the present tense: "I am the Is-ing One," that is "the One Who Always is," "Esse," "'Ehyeh."
 - a. The word signifies "to be.": *ipsum esse*. But what is it to be?
 - b. In answering this most difficult of all metaphysical questions, we must distinguish between the meaning of two words which are both different and yet intimately related: *ens* or "being," and *esse* or "to be."

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

- c. To the question: What is being? the correct answer is: Being is that which is or exists. Although the being of God is an infinite and boundless ocean of substance (*esse*), “to be” is something else and much harder to grasp because it lies more deeply hidden in the metaphysical structure of reality.
- d. The word “being” as a noun, designates some substance; the word “to be”—or *esse*—is a verb, because it designates an act.
- e. To understand this is also to reach beyond the level of essence, the deeper level of existence.

God and Creation-4 ('Ehyeh and Metaphysics)

- f. The metaphysical order is reverse in the order of knowing reality with the third act of the mind. In the metaphysical order it is the act of existing that comes before the substance.
- g. “To be” is the fundamental fact by virtue of which a certain being actually is, or exists.