Kant’s objections to the Ontological Argument
Worksheet 1

Source

**Objection 1:** Saying ‘God doesn’t exist’ isn’t self-contradictory.

If in an identical judgement I reject the predicate and retain the subject, there arises a contradiction, and hence I say that the former belongs to the latter necessarily. But if I reject the subject as well as the predicate, there is no contradiction, because there is nothing left that could be contradicted. To posit a triangle and yet to reject its three angles is contradictory; but there is no contradiction at all in rejecting the triangle along with its three angles. The same applies to the concept of an absolutely necessary being. Remove its existence, and you remove the thing itself, with all its predicates, so that a contradiction becomes impossible.


**Objection 2:** Existence isn’t a predicate.

Being is evidently not a real predicate, that is, a concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the positing of a thing, and of certain determinations in themselves. Logically, it is merely the copula of a judgement. The proposition, God is omnipotent, contains two concepts, each having its object, namely, God and omnipotence. The small word *is* is not an additional predicate, but only serves to posit the predicate in relation to the subject. If, then, I take the subject (God) with all its predicates … and say, God is, or, There is a God, I do not add a new predicate to the concept of God, but only posit the subject in itself with all its predicates…

_ibid_, p. 504

Analysis

1. Summarise Kant’s first objection.

2. Summarise Kant’s second objection.