

Christian Reformed philosopher wins Templeton Prize

by [Chris Herlinger](#) in the [May 24, 2017](#) issue

Alvin Plantinga, 84, a pioneering advocate for theism as a serious philosophical position within academic circles, has been named the winner of the 2017 Templeton Prize.

Heather Templeton Dill, president of the John Templeton Foundation, said in a statement, “Alvin Plantinga recognized that not only did religious belief not conflict with serious philosophical work, but that it could make crucial contributions to addressing perennial problems in philosophy.”

The Templeton Prize, worth about \$1.4 million, is one of the world’s largest awarded to an individual and “honors a living person who has made an exceptional contribution to affirming life’s spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery, or practical works.” Previous winners have included Mother Teresa and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Plantinga, a member of the Christian Reformed Church, taught at the University of Notre Dame for 18 years until retiring in 2010.

His landmark 1974 book *God, Freedom, and Evil* is now “almost universally recognized as having laid to rest the logical problem of evil against theism,” the foundation noted, by arguing that “in a world with free creatures, God cannot determine their behavior, so even an omnipotent God might not be able to create a world where all creatures will always freely choose to do good.”

Plantinga said in a statement, “I hope the news of the prize will encourage young philosophers, especially those who bring Christian and theistic perspectives to bear on their work, towards greater creativity, integrity, and boldness.” —Religion News Service