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## The Platonic Tradition, Part II

From: Diogenes Allen and Eric O. Springstead, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*, WJK, 2009. pp.45-53.

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1. Why were 'popularizing' philosophers like the Cynics and Stoics more relevant to the needs of most people than 'academic' philosophers? How did academic philosophers 'devastate' the views of the popularizers, and what was the usual consequence of their doing so?
2. How did Augustine's thought foreshadow that of Descartes? What was distinct or different about the way refuting skepticism played a role in each man's philosophy?
3. What key modifications did Middle Platonism make to the worldview of Plato's *Timaeus* to account for the role of a so-called 'Supreme Mind'? What role did Aristotle's thought play in this modification?
4. What role did the *logos* play in the thought of Philo of Alexandria, and how was he able to identify the *logos* with certain themes or concepts found in the Jewish scriptures?

5. According to Allen, what is the significance of the identification of the Jesus with the *logos* in the gospel of John?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Which of Plato's dialogues were emphasized by Plotinus, and why? Which were ignored by him, and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Briefly explain how Aristotle's doctrine of potentiality and actuality plays a role in Plotinus' notion of unity between the Supreme Mind and the Forms.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What are Plotinus' three 'hypostases'? Briefly define each and explain the relationship between the three.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Why, according to Plotinus' ontology, is there no level of being below the physical? Why does Plotinus' ontology imply that matter –devoid of form or shape- is evil?