

Supplemental images and narrative to
Is Your God Big Enough? Close Enough? You Enough?
Jesus and the Three Faces of God



IS ANYBODY REALLY THERE?

(pages 149-164)



***TWELVE REASONS WHY CHRISTIANS BELIEVE SOMEBODY
IS THERE WHEN WE PRAY***

1. CHRISTIANITY IS INHERENTLY THEISTIC

Theism is the belief in a divine being or beings, a god or gods. This is the personal or Intimate Face of God—God beside us that Jesus revealed for Christians.

Remember that Christianity is also inherently nontheistic, as well as mystically non-dual. This means that another Face of God is transpersonal or Being Itself. I have called this the Infinite Face of God—God Beyond Us.

In theism where God is the Other, the question is, “What kind of Other or a being is God?” We access the Other in and through the worldview we have. The Other is shaped and interpreted by that stage of development. Here are the six stages I outline and a generalized image of what God as Other might seem like in the Christian journey in each level of the spiral of life.



The Kind of God We Have Is Determined by the Stage of our Worldview



1. TRIBAL STAGE GOD

The tribal stage God is like an enchanted wizard. He magically intervenes in the world, answering prayers, controlling the weather and all the other nature spirits. The strength of this view is that God is not separate from creation but is directly involved in all things.

The weakness, seen from later stages, is that God becomes a fantasy that does not correspond to what we are learning about reality.



2. WARRIOR STAGE GOD

The warrior God is fighting other tribes or “pagan” groups for control, defeating sin and the devil.

THE NEXT THREE STAGES, TRADITIONAL, MODERN, AND POSTMODERN, ARE THE PRIMARY STAGES IN AMERICAN CULTURE, FORMING THE BASIS FOR OUR CULTURAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS.





3. TRADITIONAL STAGE GOD

In the traditional stage we leave behind the God who looks like Zeus “up there” in the heavens and move to superational theism. This is the traditional mixture you get by melding a 2nd person personal God with a 3rd person infinite impersonal God. You then get a really, really Big Person who lives up there in the sky somewhere and behaves with anger, love, jealousy, and all other human emotions. This God sends thunderbolts in the form of

sickness, bad weather, and accidents down to earth to punish and reward. Or beneficent love telegrams in the form of getting what we want



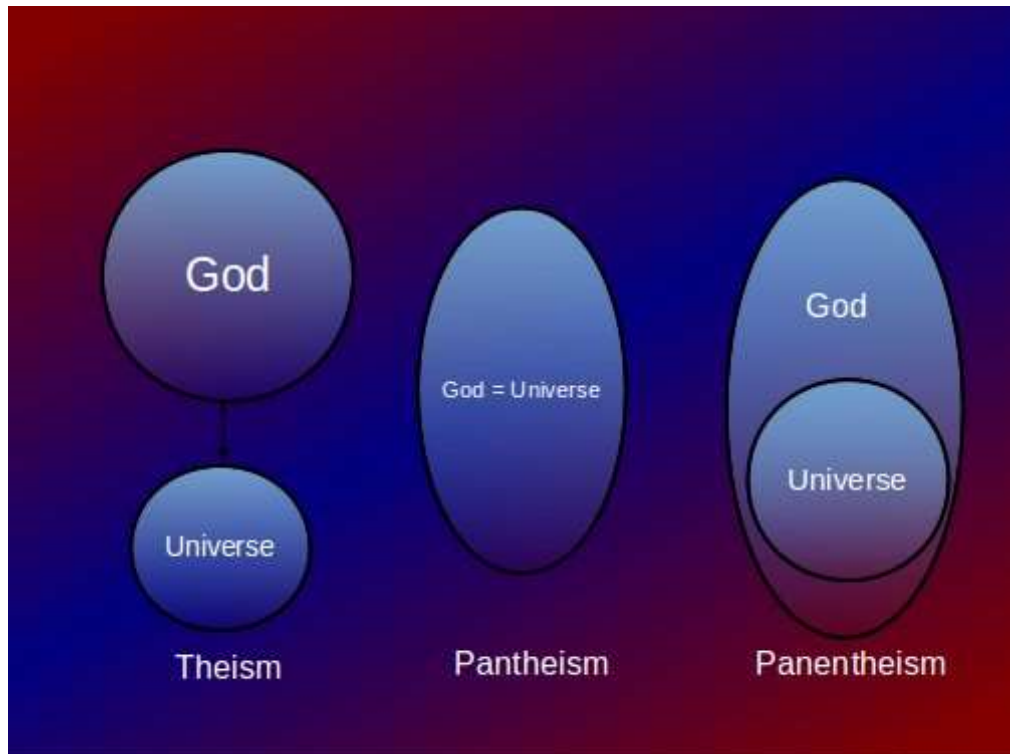
4. MODERN STAGE GOD

In the modern stage God gets increasingly difficult to find. This is because the modern stage so loves science that it sometimes thinks if God can't be found through the microscope or a telescope, God must not be there.



5. POSTMODERN STAGE GOD

The modern and postmodern stages tend to reject theism (there is a God) and even pantheism (God is Everything). They have often given up prayer in favor of meditation or contemplation because the idea of a personal God to whom one prays seems like the traditional religion they have rejected. This brings us to panentheism. This is God in and beyond everything—the Infinite Face of God beyond us, all around us, and within us. We are in God and God is in us. No more God I talk to!



Prayer becomes a problem.

Meditation is the answer:



Or, if you sneak in a prayer or two:



6. INTEGRAL STAGE GOD

NOW YOU CAN TAKE THE SACK OFF YOUR HEAD IN THE INTEGRAL STAGE BECAUSE YOU HAVE NOW INTEGRATED THE INFINITE FACE OF GOD AND THE INNER FACE OF GOD WITH THE INTIMATE FACE OF GOD.

***IT WARMS THE HEART TO PRAY AGAIN
AND IT MAKES SENSE TO THE INTEGRATED MIND.***

This is because we have moved beyond panentheism to an integrally-informed altitude which can be called *integral mystical theism*. Integral stage mystical theism, along with mystical nonduality, manifests in the Infinite, Intimate and Inner Faces of God/She and is particularly compatible with evolving, transrational Christianity. This is:



God Beyond Us



God Beside Us



God Being Us



2. The second reason that Christians believe that somebody is really there when we pray is Jesus' profound prayer life.



Many see Jesus as a profound teacher who lived a breakthrough life. However, these same people often also see Jesus as deluded when he prayed!

3. Jesus also taught his friends to pray



He taught his friends to talk to God and to him in the future in a personal way—and they did (Matt. 6:9, John 14:14, Acts 9:6. 10-14, 1 Cor.1:1-2, 2 Cor. 12:8, 2 Thess. 2:16-17).

4. The resurrection is a spiritual reality to those who access it in higher consciousness

I side with the Apostle Paul who understood and knew the resurrection of Jesus as a continuing awakened consciousness experience and not usually perceived in the manifest physical realm. (1 Cor. 15:50 f.) Would Christianity have come about without the experiences of the first Christians with the risen Jesus? It seems highly unlikely.

Road to Emmaus by Janet Gerloff



On the road to Emmaus, two friends of Jesus at first did not recognize Jesus as he traveled with them. As they ate together their consciousness was opened, and they saw Jesus in his spiritual form beyond time and space.

Jesus' energy body field, his spiritual body, continues to be with us today.

5. The first friends of Jesus prayed to him and to God.

The New Testament is full of prayers to Jesus, “Lord,” and “Father.” People prayed both individually and in communities where altered-state experiences were common. These experiences were the vital center of their actions of love and courage in the world. Here are some of them.



Stephen, while being stoned, saw Jesus and prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” (Acts 7)

Paul fell to the ground and heard the voice of Jesus speaking to him. (Acts 9)



Jesus appeared to Ananias in a vision and spoke to him. (Acts 9:10-11)





Peter “fell into a **trance**”
filled with images
and the voice of Jesus.
(Acts 10:10)

While praying in the Temple
Paul “fell into a **trance** and
saw Jesus” speaking.
(Acts 22:17)



A trance may allow one to see or sense the
subtle energetic body of another person.

Paul's "thorn
in the flesh."

Three times I talked to Jesus about my thorn in
the flesh. He said, 'My grace is sufficient for you.
2 Cor. 12:8

The resurrection meant
they could continue to
be friends.





Julian of Norwich (1342–1416) received a series of sixteen visions of Christ on the cross. After that, she transcribed what she had seen in the short version of *Revelations of Divine Love*. She spent the next twenty years contemplating those visions, eventually writing a long version of the same volume and becoming the first woman to write a book in the English language



Francis of Assisi spent nearly a year in prison and began receiving visions from God. He heard Jesus on the crucifix say to him, “Francis, repair my church.” Consequently, he abandoned his life of luxury and became a devotee of the faith, his reputation spreading all over the Christian world.

7. Research findings of mystical paranormal phenomena



The six children at Medjugorje seeing a vision of Mary and hearing her speak have been much studied and researched. Since 1981, in a small village called Medjugorje, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mary has been appearing and giving messages to these six children.

These visions continue today in their adulthood.



Thousands of reported Near Death Experiences of the Tunnel of Light.

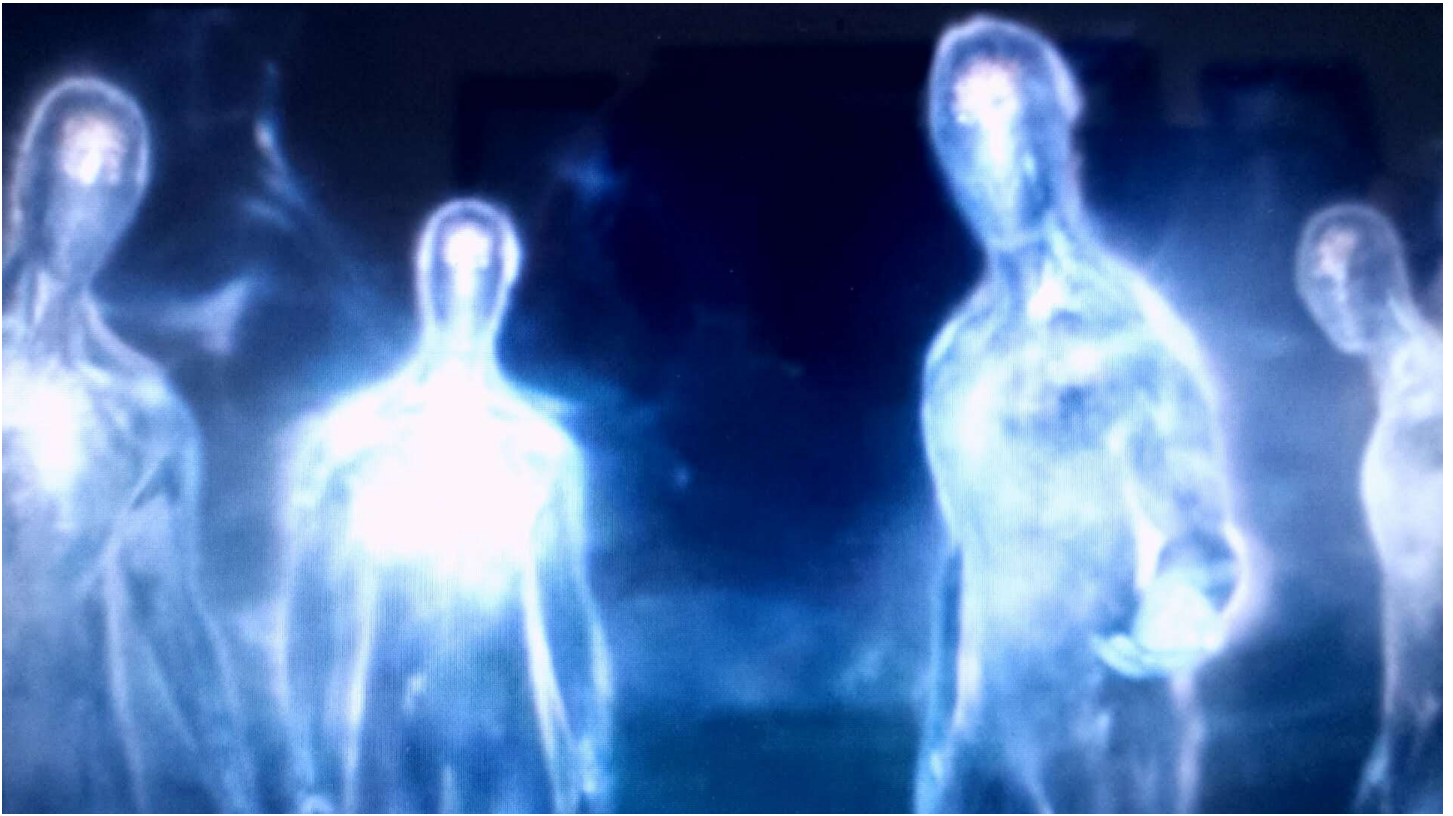


Hundreds of reported and studied out of body experiences during surgery.

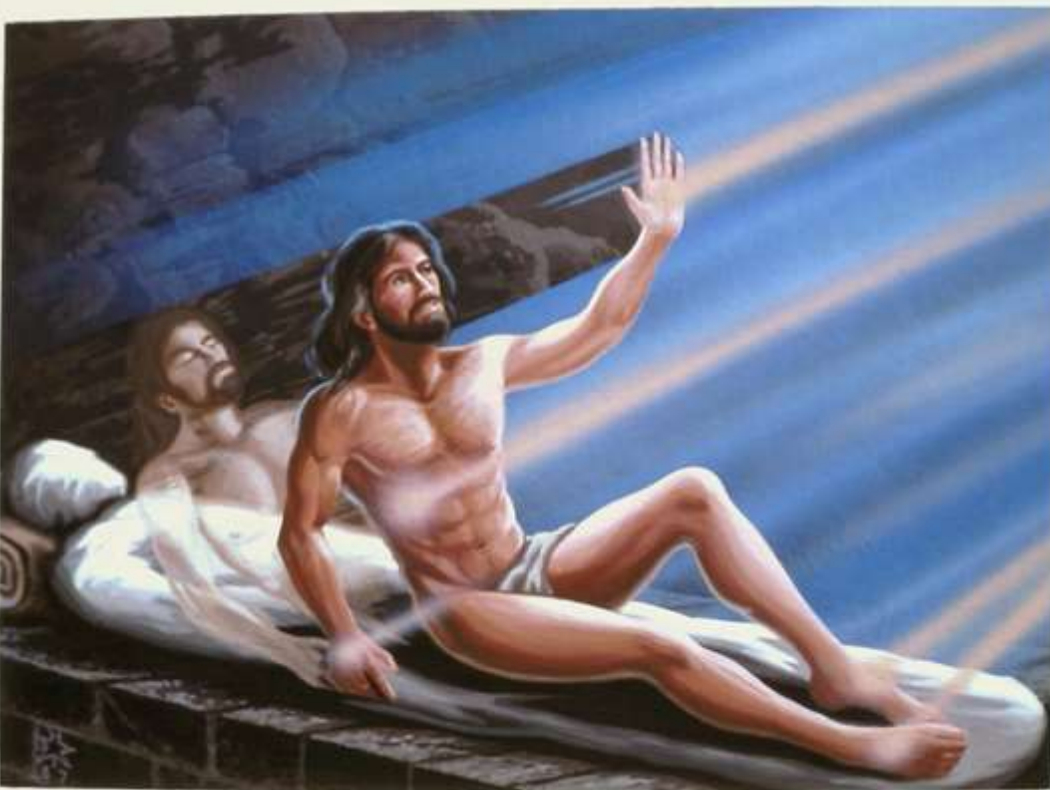
Thousands of reported out of body experiences.







8. The resurrection of Jesus as After Death Communication



Research by Stanislav Grof and others “strongly suggests that once particular spiritual realities have been enacted, they become potentially accessible to the entire human species.”

Once the first Christians experienced the **After Death Communication** of Jesus, this became widely available. Visions of and communication with Jesus is the most widely experienced ADC in history.

9. The scientific method points to the reasonableness of being a mystic.

A dynamic rationale for being predisposed to the post-metaphysical ontological reality of nonphysical entities or beings is found in the scientific process. Ken Wilber promotes the idea that it's reasonable to be a mystic. By "reasonable" he means the scientific process applied not only to the physical world but to the non-physical world as well. One version of that process is:

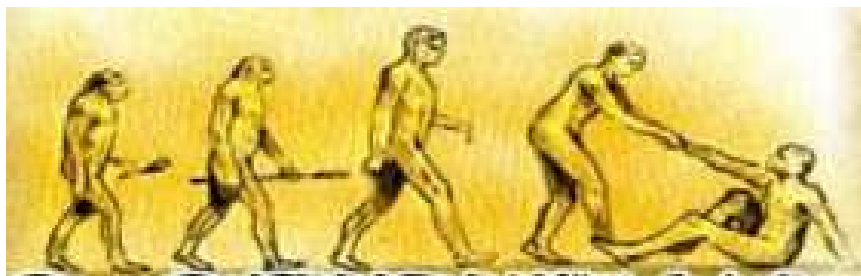
1. EXPERIMENT—do this spiritual practice.
2. EXPERIENCE—see what happens, what you experience.
3. EVALUATE—assess what happens with others who have done the same experiment.
4. EVIDENCE—conclude with others there is evidence that this experience is rooted in reality or not.



However, *scientism* hinders seeing the reality of the mystical. Scientism is an overvaluing of science compared to other kinds of knowing. It is one thing to celebrate science for its achievements and remarkable ability to explain a wide variety of phenomena in the natural world. But scientism claims there is nothing knowable outside the scope of science. Once you accept that science is the only source of human knowledge, you have adopted a philosophical position (scientism) that cannot be verified or falsified by science itself. This is, of course, unscientific!

10. "By their fruits you will know them"

The authenticity of cocreated spiritual events is further confirmed by the degree to which they produce selfless love and healing integration in one's life and in the world. This test for Jesus was framed in his words, "By their fruits you shall know them" (Matt. 7:16).



This is part of the next evolutionary step!

The lives of millions of unrecognized saints testify to loving service that comes from knowing the presence of God.



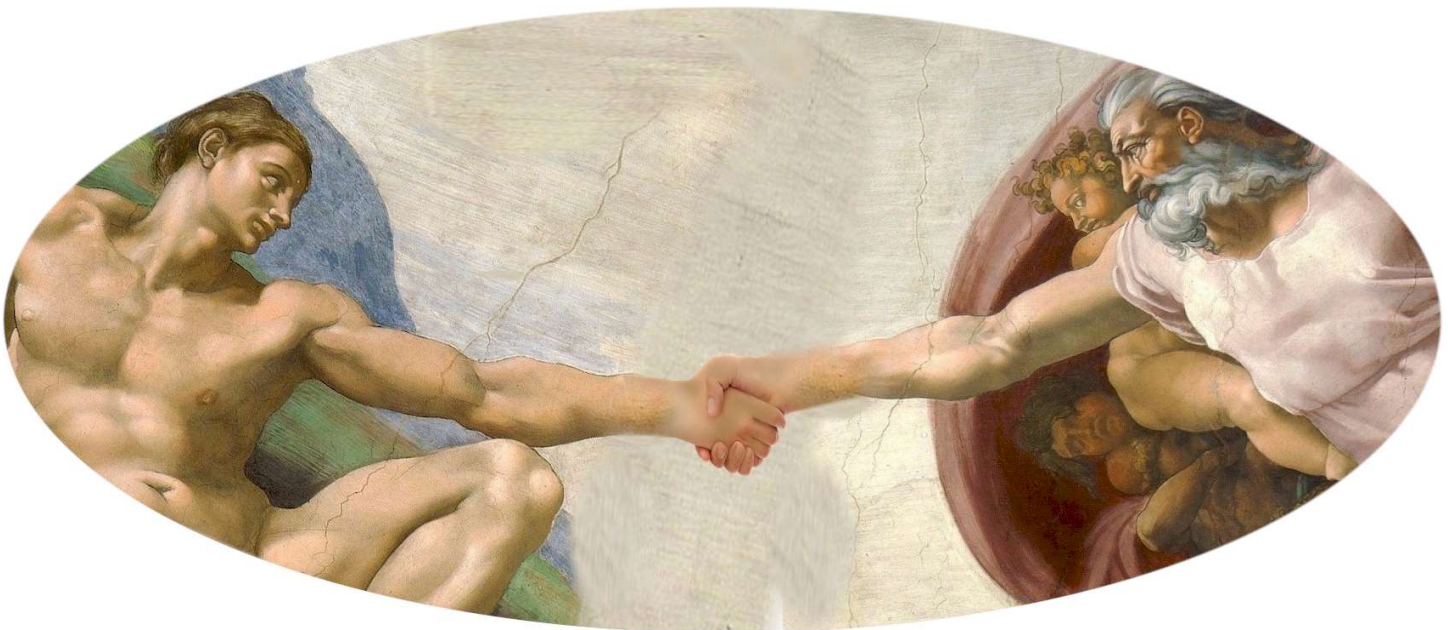
Mother Teresa happens to be one we know quite a lot about.

Mother Teresa (1910–1997) had a secret life of mystical experiences with Jesus. It would be difficult to understand her work without these visions and mystical conversations with Jesus. They went from Sept. 10, 1946, to Dec. 3, 1947.

In 1950 Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity, a Roman Catholic religious congregation which had over 4,500 sisters and was active in 133 countries in 2012. The congregation manages homes for people dying of HIV/AIDS, leprosy and tuberculosis; soup kitchens; dispensaries and mobile clinics; children's- and family-counselling programs; orphanages, and schools. Members, who take vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, also profess a fourth vow: to give "wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor"

She received the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize and was canonized (recognized by the church as a saint) in 2016.

11. The invitation by Jesus to us to be cocreators with God like he was.



Jesus changed Michelangelo's picture. Now we know there is actually a creative partnership between humankind and God and it is sealed with a divine - human handshake!

Cocreation—partners with God

As the evolution of our consciousness has progressed, it seems clear that in Jesus Christ God has invited us into a creating partnership. We can now consciously participate in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) as cocreators of mystical experience and releasing love into the world. Therefore, spiritual phenomena are events in reality in which both God and our consciousness creatively participate

This means that all spiritual phenomena are co-created events. All of our spiritual experiences are a mixture of our interpretation from our level of development, our culture and its symbols, and our authentic and very real experience of God and the nonphysical spiritual realm. Cocreation is a dynamic and realistic understanding of the ontological reality of spiritual entities while at the same time recognizing our part in their creation and shaping.

If spiritual experiences can be seen as the result of human participation with a God that is ontologically real, then their reality and authenticity can be firmly anchored and affirmed in a sophisticated modern world. This kind of approach can explain and account for the great varieties of mystical experience and spiritual phenomena, while at the same time making a solid case for their ontological and metaphysical reality. This is not dismissing them as fantasy or products of only human thinking, or something dropped straight out of heaven, but more realistically seeing them as real even as they are shaped and interpreted by our culture, worldview, and needs.

12. My own experiences in life

I have found that relating to *Abba* God and Jesus is real and intensely transforming. My numerous visions and experiences of expanded consciousness have shown me a reality I was not aware of before. I believed in it for years before. Now I have seen it with my own eyes, felt it with my own senses, and been changed by it in my own deepest self.

Jesus' presence as an unseen but palpable presence, God as divine "Abba-Daddy" and other spiritual guides that assist these two.



Being able to access inner peace and deep bliss at almost any time has been so very healing for my life. I have moved from being mostly anxious, obsessive, and panicky to only moments and episodes of such distractions.

Increasing times of being aware of embodying God have opened up vast new worlds of transcendent awareness. I see all people differently. When I look at someone, instead of seeing a body, clothes, and a personality, I now see a consciousness—a divine human consciousness delighted in by God and here on a journey of evolving awareness.

Conclusion

I have attempted to show my new consciousness in the accompanying image that illustrates more and more moments where my mind is in the vast cosmic spaciousness of Infinite Being and my heart opens like a rose, symbolizing love. This loves fills me with waves of bliss.

All of this is compelling evidence to me for the ontological reality of the close Intimate Face of God. We can commune with Jesus, Abba Daddy-Momma, and other authentic expressions of the Beloved as if they are really there — because they are!

