

**WELCOME TO THE IMAGES AND NARRATION
THAT SUPPLEMENT
IS YOUR GOD BIG ENOUGH?
CLOSE ENOUGH?
YOU ENOUGH?
JESUS AND THE THREE FACES OF GOD**

FOREWORD BY RICHARD ROHR
(pages xix-xxi)



Thanks to my friend, Richard Rohr, for writing this wonderful Forward.

Fr. Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest, is a globally recognized ecumenical teacher bearing witness to the universal awakening within Christian mysticism and the recurring themes in all of the world's religions and philosophies that continue to say:

- There is a Divine Reality underneath and inherent in the world of things,
- There is in the human soul a natural capacity, similarity, and longing for this Divine Reality, and
- The final goal of existence is union with this Divine Reality.

His teaching is grounded in the Franciscan alternative orthodoxy—practices of contemplation and self-emptying, expressing itself in radical compassion, particularly for the socially marginalized.

Fr. Richard is the author of numerous, great books, including *Everything Belongs*, *The Naked Now*, *Breathing Under Water*, *Falling Upward*, and *Immortal Diamond*, *Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi*.

I begin each day before I read my other emails by reading my EnneaThought for the Day online, available to any who find the Enneagram useful at <https://subscriptions.enneagraminstitute.com/subscribers/create>.

The Enneagram is the best psychospiritual tool I have found to understand myself and others

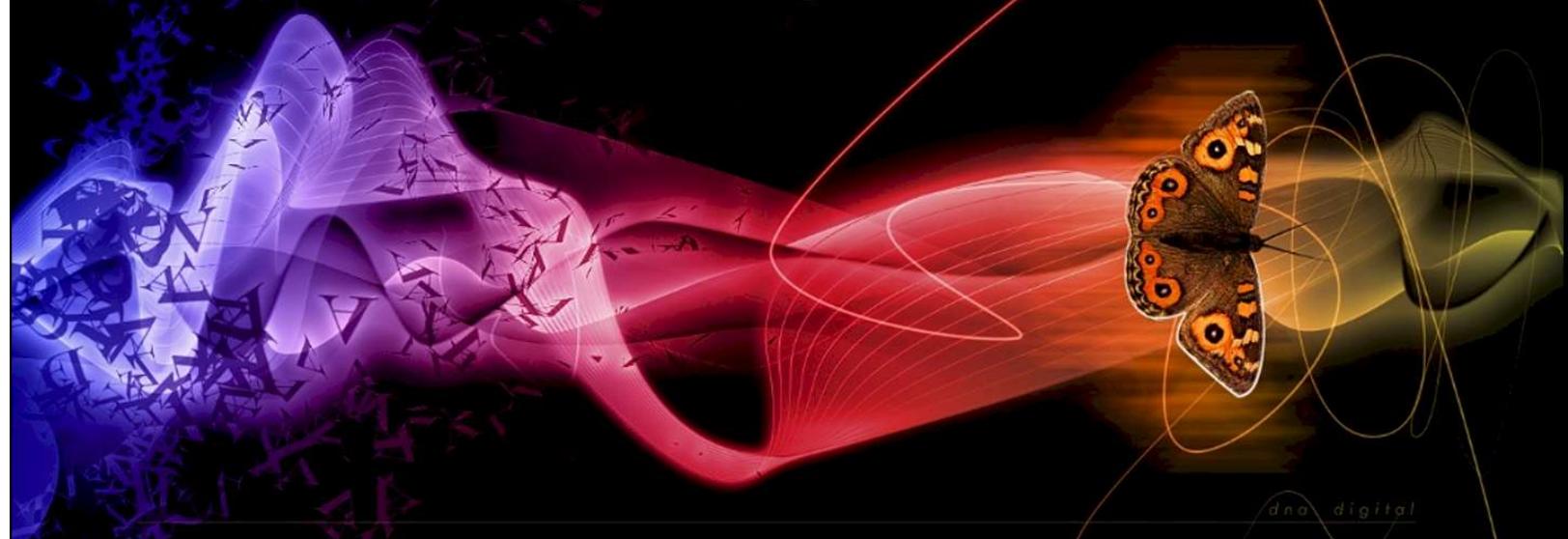
After the shock of that aiming for a direct hit on my shadow, I then read Richard's brief Daily Meditation online to recover and set me up for my day. It goes to thousands of people around the world. Anyone can subscribe to this for free at <https://cac.org/sign-up/>.

INTRODUCTION

(pages 1-28)



The psychologist Carl Jung said that deep transformation happens primarily in the presence of images. They alone can touch the unconscious—in one invasive and healing reconfiguration of the soul.





It might also take the form of a biography, a song, a theater piece, a movie, a dream image, a sculpture, an inner vision, a piece of art. But after the encounter, you see things differently.

One hundred sermons could never have moved you to this new place.

Richard Rohr



I use pictures and images because they can ease past our mental static and transform us just by looking at them.

Paul Smith

FIVE SEEKERS OF GOD



“Where have you found God?”



“God is way beyond me”



“God is right beside me.”



“God is here inside me.”



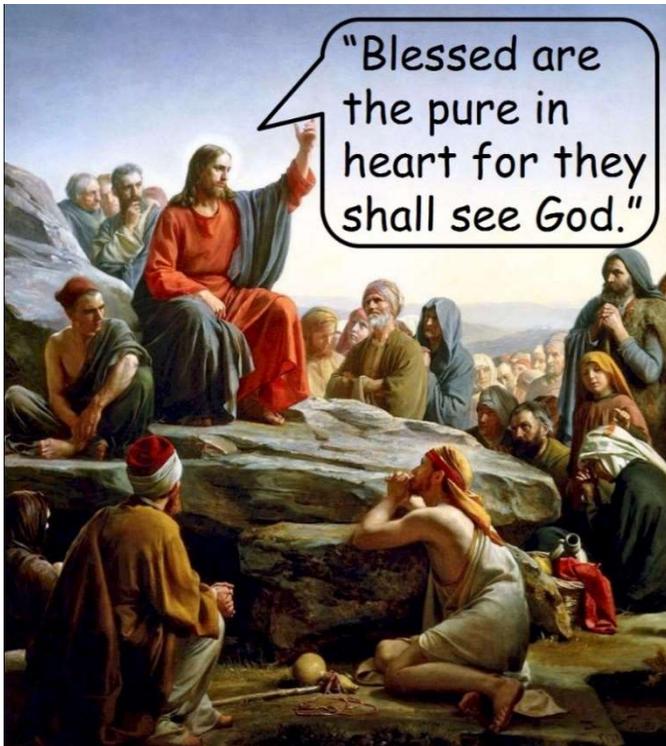
“If you three can’t agree, then you are all wrong. God is nowhere.”



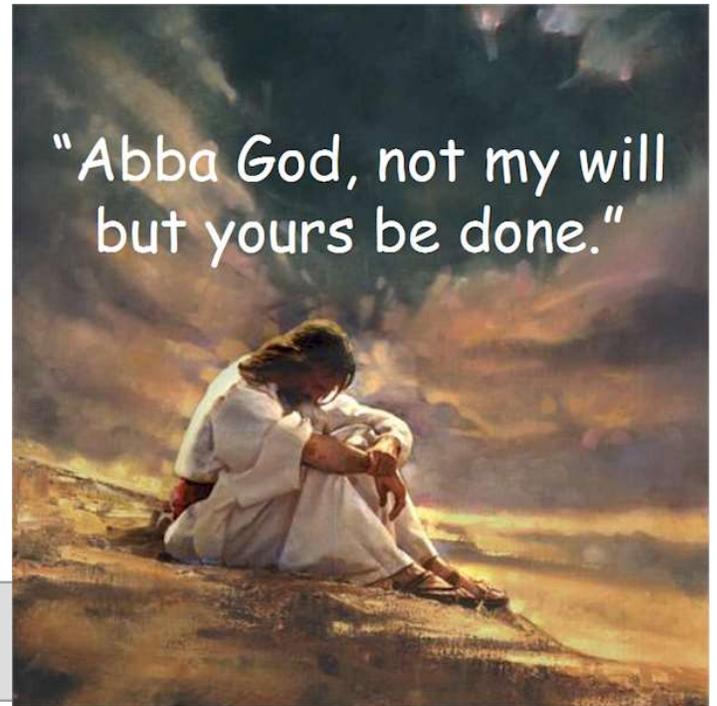
“No! You are all right! God *is* beyond us. God *is* beside us. God *is* inside us being us!

The twelve words that changed my mind and heart about God

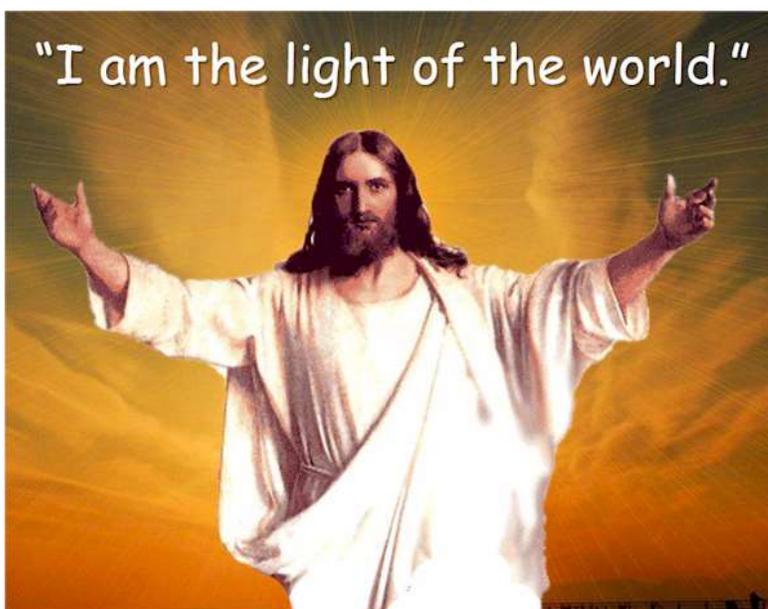
Jesus talked about God, to God, and as God.



Jesus talked
ABOUT God

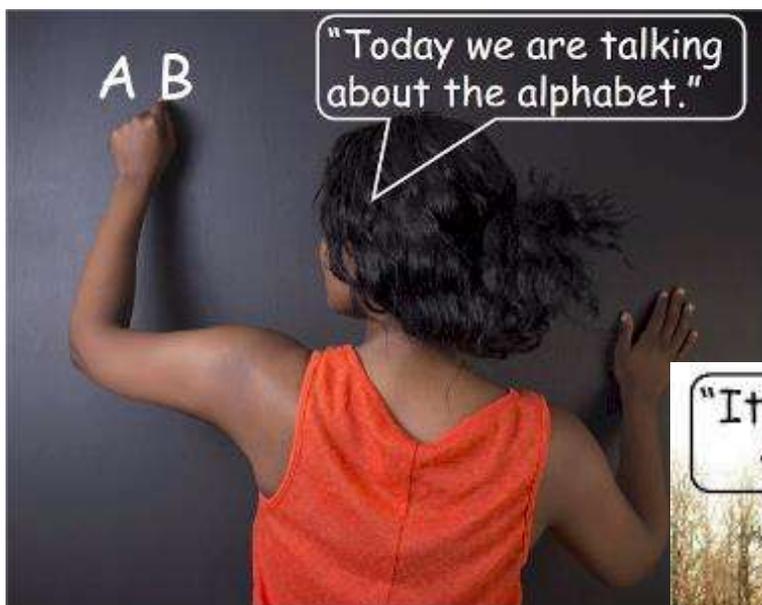


Jesus talked
TO God



Jesus talked
AS God

As Ken Wilber has pointed out, “about,” “to,” and “as” are the three basic perspectives on every situation that we learned in elementary school as third, second, and first person.



Talking ABOUT something or someone (Third person “IT” space)



Talking TO someone or something (Second person “WE” space)



Talking AS someone or something (First person “I” space)

THE THREE PRIMARY PERSPECTIVES



This gives us the three basic perspectives on any situation.



Integral's Big Three Perspectives

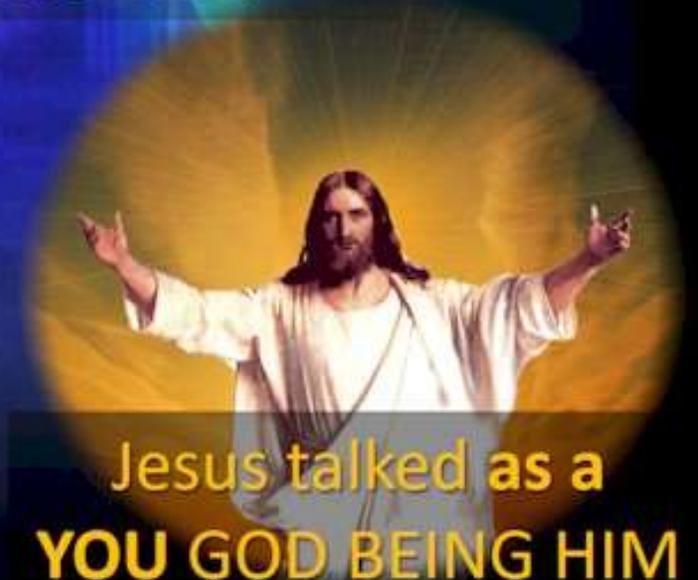
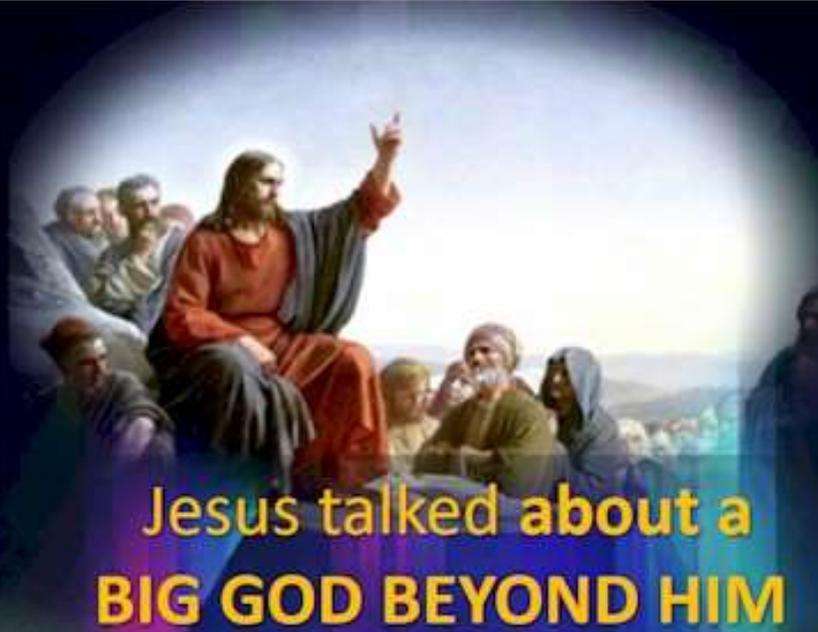


Two different perspectives

Three Different Perspectives



Jesus Had Three Perspectives on God



Jesus talked ABOUT God

Whatever Jesus was saying about God, he was always referring to the awesome, vast God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God Moses encountered at the burning bush. The “I AM” God of Moses is best described not as a Being, but as Being Itself.

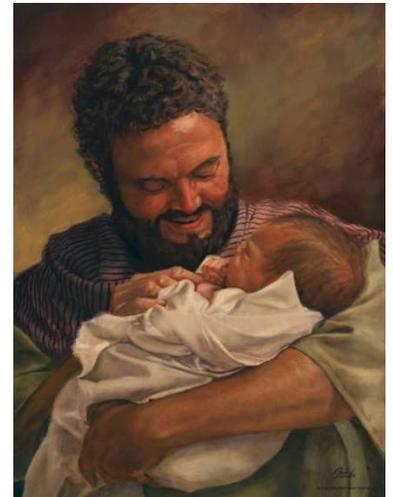


**This was a BIG God!
For Jesus, this was
GOD BEYOND HIM.**

Jesus talked TO God

Jesus talked to God using the name “Abba.” This was the same name he called his own father. I understand Abba as “father-mother” in today’s understanding.

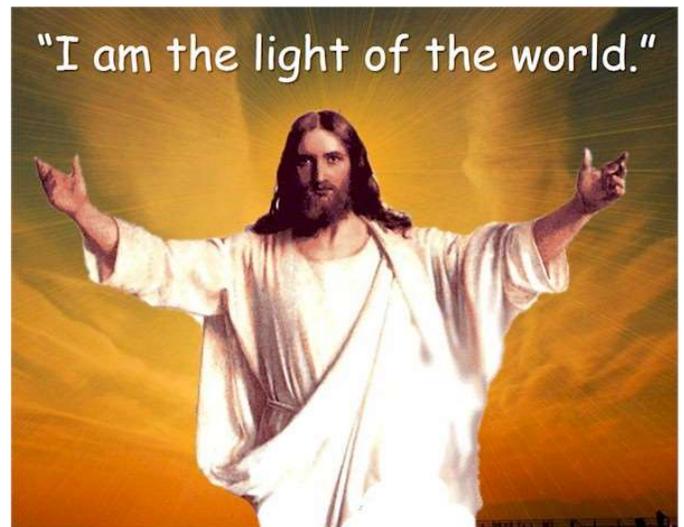
**This was a CLOSE God!
For Jesus, this was
GOD BESIDE HIM.**



Jesus talked AS God

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Thomas Jesus acted and spoke as God and on behalf of God. After the resurrection, the early Christians came to believe that they knew God in the presence of Jesus in such a profound way that they offered the same reverence and worship to Jesus that they offered to God.

**This was a YOU God.
For Jesus, this was
GOD BEING HIM.**



Like Jesus, we need a God that is:

BIG enough for
our mind —
God beyond us,



CLOSE enough for our heart —
God beside us, and



US enough for our deepest identity —
God being us.

The Trinity – Breakthrough or Breakdown?



Traditionally, for Christians, God has been presented in the words and images of the Trinity—a breakthrough for the minds and hearts of followers of Jesus in the fourth century. This has served as a faithful anchor down through the centuries.

However, many find that this understanding of God is not big enough, close enough, or us enough for the modern mind and heart.

It does best as a God who is close to us in three forms—a father, a son, a spirit. However, as we shall see, even the common experience of this closeness is not very compelling.



When it comes to God who is big and beyond us in today's world, rather than a breakthrough, the Trinity as it commonly understood, can be a breakdown—a linguistic and imaging barrier to knowing God.

God appears to be a big “man upstairs” who lives above us. Michelangelo's image of God is very powerful in our Christian consciousness

If we are made in God's image, male and female, then how can God be only male. Doesn't God really include all genders and go beyond them?

Michelangelo's God is bigger than us but not really beyond us. In a world of quarks, dark matter, and an infinite cosmos, his God is just another divine, human-like, being in the universe—not the source of the universe or beyond it.

The Jesus of the Trinity appears as a one-of-a-kind divine human being who came to reveal God to us. We are to be like this Jesus. Is it possible, given that he is a one-of-a-kind being according to the traditional understanding of the Trinity?

As far as God being us, Trinity depicts a picture of a God who is entirely separate from us. The Father, Son, and Spirit may be One but we are not included in this Oneness. Jesus taught something different from that which we will explore in the following chapters.

We are going to look at the traditional Trinity through the lens of the Three Faces of God — God Beyond Us, God Beside Us, and God Being Us. Like this:





Looking through the lens of the Three Faces of God



at the traditional Trinity.