The background of the entire image is a dramatic, dark sky filled with heavy, dark blue and black storm clouds. A bright, glowing light source, possibly the sun or moon, is breaking through the clouds from the left side, creating a bright, white glow that illuminates the edges of the clouds. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and intense. The text is overlaid on this background.

GOD

who is there!

Denis V Smith



GOD – WHO IS THERE!

A layman's look at the existence of God
Dr. Denis V Smith

THE GOD WHO IS THERE

Denis V Smith



I met God in a personal way, through miraculous circumstances and have known Him personally now for over 50 years. It might be easy to feel guilty by asking the question, "**God, are you really there?**"

However, I have a reason for asking the question.

Over the years, I have had occasion to be asked this question by a number of people who have been facing some fairly demanding situations. "*God, are you **really** there?*"

Over the years of my ministry, and in many crises, I have met with people who through their tears of mourning the loss of a loved one have asked the question... "**God, are you really there?**"

Good people, who are honestly searching for reality in their lives, have asked the question, "*God, are you **really** there?*"

So, I decided to review the basis of my faith, to study afresh why I believed in the existence of God; to approach the subject, not as a theologian, but as a novice.

I spent some time looking around in this world that seems to be going nowhere, but at a faster rate each year, and asked myself the question, "*God, are you really there?*"

Further, I believe these thoughts will not only help you to affirm your faith; it will also provide an opportunity for you to share these truths, with others who may be asking the same question, "*God, are you really there?*"

I think this question eclipses all other questions on the lips of mankind.

Humanity's destiny demands an answer.

Our relationship with each other necessitates that an answer be found, lest we revert to a primeval mentality that leaves us suspicious and demanding of our fellow man.

If there is no Supreme Being in our universe, then we are excused to think we are no better than the beasts of the field.

Therefore, it follows; we must consider life irrelevant and relationships unimportant.

And mankind can continue in their downward spiral following their atheistic philosophies that express themselves as '*might is right!*'

It follows then, that we will continue to defend our *humanistic* philosophy, living our lifestyle which says, **nothing exists but matter** – no soul – no spirit – only body – No God – no future – hopelessness!

We will return to the animalistic pursuit of *hedonism* expressed in *self-satisfaction*, *self-concern* and *sensuality* – *Me! Mine!*

We will support our stand by saying.

"Scientists have disproved God!"

"Better educated people than me agree with me!"

"What's the use anyway?"

And we will stay in the hopelessness of our life-style devoid of a foundation upon which to build anything!

The Swiss theologian Karl Barth was asked this question by a student during a seminar he conducted in the United States, "*Dr. Barth, what is the most profound thing you have learned in your study of theology?*"

Barth thought for a moment and replied, "*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.*" The students laughed and giggled at his simplistic answer – until they realised he was serious.



Barth gave a simple answer to a complex question.

I will seek to provide simple answers as I approach the question, "**God, are you really there?**"

I look at the world – the cosmos and I am overwhelmed by the greatness of it all. Scientists reach out to the most remote corners of the universe with their radio telescopes and discover solar systems, suns and stars that existed centuries ago.

They are so far distant from us, that the original light of their being is still reaching us even though the sun or star may have died a thousand years ago! I sit at night on my own earth, looking at the Milky Way, pondering it all.

I hear the echoes of the evolutionists espousing the "*big bang*" theory. There are reports in *Time Magazine*.

I remember it was Karl Marx who asked Charles Darwin to write the introduction to his book, *Das Kapital* since he felt Darwin had provided a scientific foundation for Communism. But, even Darwin had second thoughts from time to time concerning his treatise on evolution.

And I am confused...

How did it happen?

I know that ninety per cent of all astronomers today believe in God.

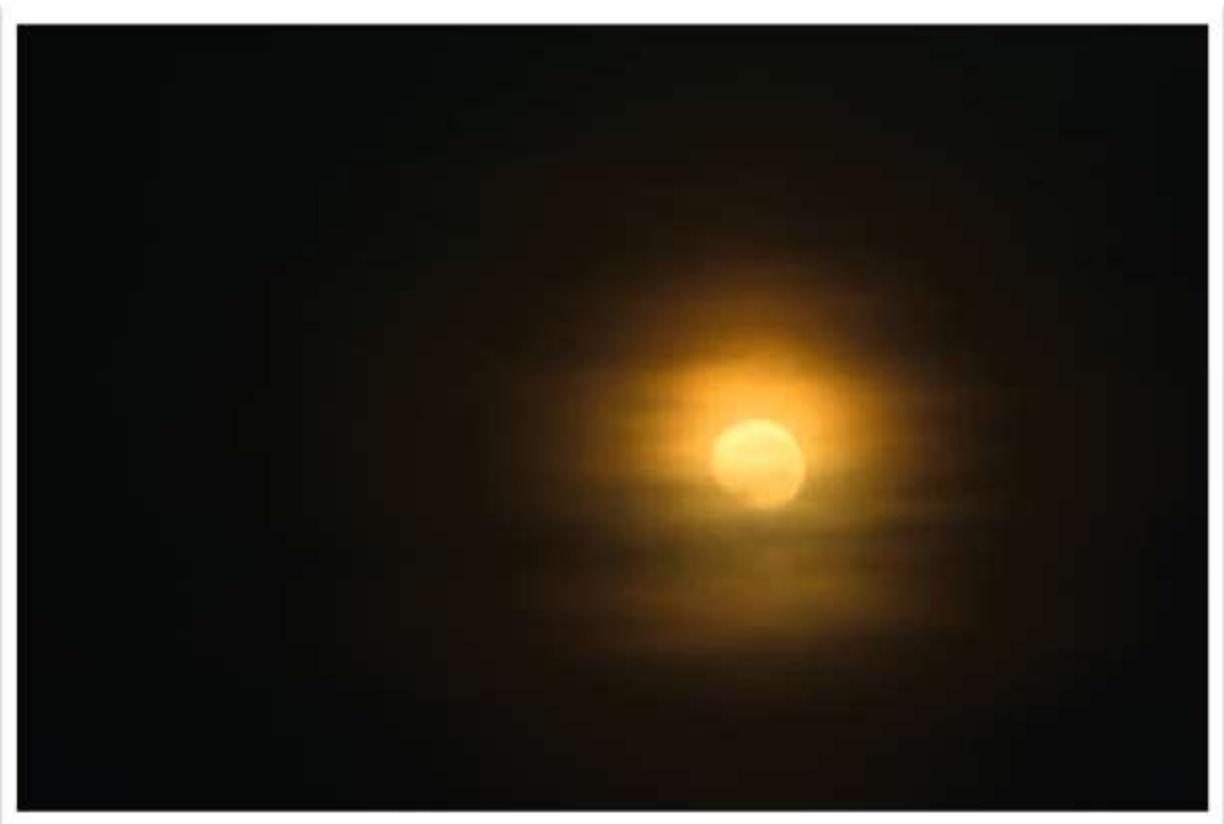
Those who have looked out into the universe find that somehow, the "**heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows his handiwork.**" [Psalm 19:1]

Pierre Simon de La Place, one of the world's greatest astronomers said that the evidence for God as Creator as opposed to the evidence against Him as Creator was as infinity as is to one. It could not be measured. [Evidences of Revelation, Pierre Simon De La Place]

Sir James Jeans, an outstanding modern astronomer said that the more he examined the vast expanses of space and the tremendous complexity of these things, the more the universe seemed to be one gigantic thought of a great mathematician. [Quote from "Why I Believe" D. James Kennedy p40]

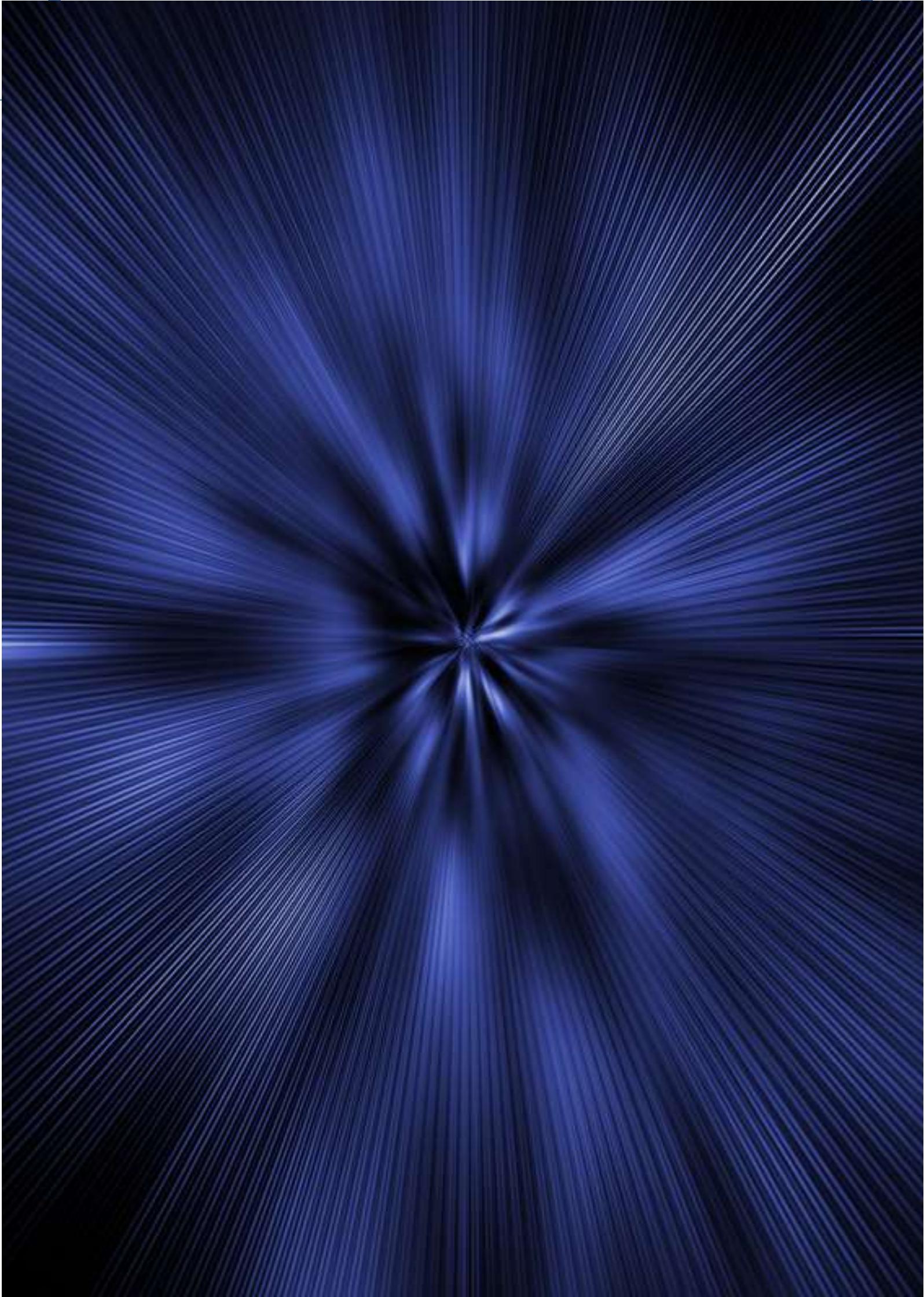
The universe as we picture it is a system of thousands and millions of galaxies.

Each galaxy is a swarm of thousands and millions of stars. Towards the outer rim of one of these galaxies – the Milky Way – is a star of medium size and moderate temperature, already yellowing into old age – our sun. [Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible, George W Grey p35]



And to think that the sun is more than a million times larger than our little earth!

The sun is spinning a dizzy course toward the outer rim of the Milky Way at 20 kilometres per second, trailing the earth and all other planets with it.



It moves at 300 kilometres per second as the galaxy itself rotates like some colossal stellar pinwheel. It is estimated that the number of galaxies composing the universe is in the order of 500 million, million.

I turn from the telescope to the microscope!

Quantum Physics has demonstrated that at the level of subatomic particles, there is an irresistible urge of electrons toward symmetry. *"Nature is a great architect,"* shouts the agnostic. But what is nature?

Or is there a Supreme Being that created it all in perfect harmony and design?

Now I turn from the cosmos to the design of our world. I look at our earth. If the earth were either ten per cent larger or smaller, life would not be possible on our planet. If we were father away from the sun we would freeze, closer to it and we would fry!



The 23 degree tilt axis of the earth is unknown in any other planet in our universe.

Without this tilt to our axis, the poles would accumulate enormous masses of ice and we would burn in an intensely hot atmosphere at the equator.

The moon, so much sung about by lovers is more than a light in the evening sky.

Without it, life would be impossible on this planet. Without the moon there would be no tides which clean up the oceans and shores of all our continents and our earth would become a stench pool of garbage.

The plankton in the sea would die from lack of oxygen, thus destroying the ocean's food chain – and our lives! The wonder of our atmosphere is in the news constantly.

The ozone layer is being attacked by our use of fluorocarbons and the like. We live under an ocean of air made up of 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen and 1% of a dozen different trace elements!

No other planet in the universe has such an atmosphere that is able to absorb the carbon dioxide of its inhabitants and return its oxygen so that life might continue.

There is the amazing nitrogen cycle. Nitrogen is *inert* – if it were not so we would all be poisoned by its effects.

Nitrogen is needed for the plants. How does it get from the air into the soil?

Lightning! One hundred thousand lightning bolts strike this planet each day creating a hundred million tons of usable nitrogen plant food in the soil every year!

The Ozone layer is above us.

It could be compressed into a layer, one centimetre thick. But without it we would be burned, blinded or boiled!



Beneath our earth is molten lava, held in by a thin crust of soil. Above us, are the clouds – always covering 50% of the earth's surface at any one time, allowing just the right amount of sunlight to penetrate! Water above and water beneath!

When it freezes, it floats from the bottom to the top, rather than the top to the bottom, lest all fish and marine life be destroyed.

If there were no dust it would never rain. One drop of rain, made up of eight million droplets, and each one of those eight million droplets is wrapped around a tiny particle of dust.

Wilson J. Bentley an expert in micrography used his talents for over thirty years in photographing snowflakes. After viewing thousands of them he noted no two were alike.

Each was a beautiful pattern. Each was six pointed.

When asked to account for that symmetry by A. J. Pace, the cartoonist of the Sunday School Times, responded...*"Of course no one knows but God, but here is my own theory. As you know, snow crystals are formed from water-vapour at temperatures below freezing, and water is composed of three molecules, two of hydrogen combining with one of oxygen. Each molecule is charged with positive and negative electricity, the tendency of which is to polarise at opposite sides. The number three, you see enters the business at the start."*



"How may we account for all these curious dots and loops, and graceful curves, these delicately chiselled, bevelled edges, all of them arranged about the centre in perfect symmetry?" asked Pace.

He shrugged his shoulders and said:

"Only the Artist who designed and fashioned them knows how it is done."

Pace was intrigued by the statement *"The number three, you see, enters the business from the start."*

He noticed that each snowflake was a perfect hexagon of six perfect equilateral triangles gathered into a central nucleus. Curiosity led him to study the word "snow" in the Bible.

In the Old Testament there were 21 references (3 x 7) and in the New Testament, there were three.

He looked at the Hebrew word for "snow" and to his amazement found the word "SHLEG" used.

The Hebrew language has no numbers – they use letters of their alphabet for this purpose. Interestingly, the

SH	represented	300
L	represented	30
G	represented	3

Three hundred and thirty three – the design of a Designer!

"How marvellous Mother Nature is," shouts the atheist. Really?

- One sun – yet manifests itself in heat, light and fire!
- Water – yet it can be found as a solid, a liquid and a gas!
- Light – invisible, visible and heat!
- Time – past, present and future – yet always time!

A study of the human body with its parts and functions leaves us amazed.



And then there is our incredible mind! Sir Henry Fairfield Osborn, the noted anthropologist said, *"To my mind, the human brain is the most marvellous and mysterious object in the whole universe."*

Weighing a little more than a kilogram, it can perform what 500 tonnes of electrical and electronic equipment cannot do! Containing 10– 15 billion neurons, each a living unit in itself, it performs feats that boggle the mind.

Dr. Henry M. Morris said, *"Therefore, men who reject or ignore God do so, not because science or reason requires them to, but purely and simply because they want to."* [The Bible Has the Answer, p16]

Then there is the universal consciousness of right and wrong. Laws *within* require a lawgiver *without!*

Further, as I contemplate my world, I note that there is a universal belief in a Supreme Being! How did it get there?

Most atheists seem to imagine that a group of clever theologians met in secret session to invent the idea of God and present it to the peoples of the world!

But the theologians did not invent God any more than the astronomers invented stars or the botanists invented flowers!

To be sure, the ancient astronomers had some wrong ideas about the heavenly bodies but that did not disprove the existence of those heavenly bodies. And it is mankind that has held distorted views about God – and even that implies there is a God about whom they could have wrong ideas. So there is a Supreme Being *or there is not* a Supreme Being!

This led to man believing in one of three areas:

Man was either an atheist who did not believe in God! Like the Russian astronaut who was reported to have told his press conference on his return from outer space, *"I have been out there and I did not meet God!"* A reporter responded, *"You would have, if you stepped outside of your space capsule!"*

Or, he was an agnostic who didn't think it possible to find an answer concerning the existence of God or a believer in God!

The Australian census revealed that most people living here, believe in something – most said they believe in God.

But because of hurts, frustrations and lack of time, they find it difficult to relate to God or really anyone else, in whom they say they believe.

But we all believe something!

- **A sceptic?** He believes in his doubts!
- **An agnostic?** He believes there are not enough facts to help him make the full leap towards God!
- **An atheist?** He believes there is no God!

We *are* a people who *believe* continually! So, you are a believer! In *what* do you believe?

If God exists (and He does) what is He like? This led mankind to express their opinions.

Some said "*God is nature itself!*" – **Pantheism!** Worshiping the creation rather than the Creator!

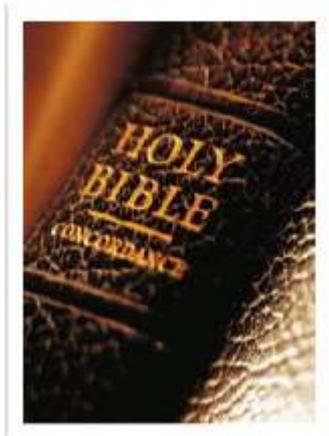
Others said "*God is just God! Leave it at that!*" – **Deism!** Worshiping the Supreme Being, whoever and whatever He was!

Others said "*Just as there are many things in our universe so there must be many gods behind each one of them!*" – **Polytheism!**

Still others were led down an occult road, bowing down to gods of wood and stone in an effort to placate the evil one responsible for their dilemmas – **Occultism!**

Where is the answer to be found?

Who is right and who is wrong?



And then mankind discovered a book that was different from any other book in the world.

This book was a book of prophecy with historical accuracy!

A book, having manuscript evidence for its authenticity, claiming divine inspiration of human authors!

It made no bones about its origin! It did not explain all the sciences but was in itself scientific!

The evaporation cycle was there before mankind discovered the principle in his laboratory!

The circular shape of the earth was declared while mediaeval man pronounced it was flat! [Isaiah 40:22]

The history of the world was recorded in detail – that is before humanity attempted to obliterate its truths with its own theories that were expressed as follows: *"Once there was a gigantic explosion of inert gases that existed, coming from nowhere and going nowhere. When this cataclysm was over and the resultant physical forms cooled, one planet found itself with a blob of amoeba swimming in slime. It turned into modern man?"* Really?

This Book, known as the *Holy Books* – sixty six in all – commences, not with an explanation, but a declaration – **"In the beginning, God!"** [Genesis 1:1]

And this same book has declared Him, not as many Gods – **but One God!**

One God who exists in three Persons, each separate, yet one!

God, who is one in unity, person, harmony, purpose, substance, essence and being.

Not as creation – but as Creator! Not as a deity – but the Sovereign Lord of the Universe!

And He is declared as to His being...

Self-existing, having life and giving life!

We need to say that no human being has the ability to understand God exhaustively. [R. C. Sproul, Essential Truths of the Christian Faith, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton Illinois 1992]

There is a *built in barrier* that prohibits a total, comprehensive understanding of God.

We are finite creatures; God is an *infinite* Being. This does not mean that we can know nothing about God. Rather, it means that our knowledge is partial and limited, falling short of total comprehension.

The *infinite* cannot be fully understood by the *finite* – but the *infinite* can choose to reveal Himself.

Thus there are two aspects to God – the secret and hidden and that which is revealed.

God's Word declares, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever."
[Deuteronomy 29:29]

You may gaze at the full moon on a clear night and think you see all of it. Not so! You only see the part that is revealed to you.

Likewise, a portion of the divine knowledge remains hidden to our gaze. We work in the light of what God has revealed.

His Substance?

His essential life is *fellowship* – reaching out to mankind whom He has created. In the Christian church, we come across a word which is not in the Bible – ***trinity!***

Essentially, many think it is like $1 + 1 + 1 = 1$

Not really, because there are not three Gods – but One!

Perhaps $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ is a better picture?

Although the word, *trinity is not found in the Bible*, its truth is!

There are not three gods, existing as one person – but One God
[Deuteronomy 6:4] who exists in three persons!

God:

- As the Father – **the fullness of the Godhead invisible** with elective love to claim us!
- As the Son – **the fullness of the Godhead visible** with redeeming love to free us!
- As Holy Spirit – **the fullness of the Godhead acting immediately upon creation** with regenerating love to recreate us to fellowship with Himself and with each other!

His Nature?

He is declared to be omnipotent! The thinker has often asked the question, *can God create a rock so big, He cannot move it?* If you answer 'yes', then you say there is something God cannot do. If you answer 'no', we are saying God cannot build such a rock – in either case, He is not all powerful! God *is* omnipotent – but there are some things He cannot do!

He cannot lie! [Hebrews 6:18] He cannot die! He cannot act against His nature! *Omnipotence* means God holds all power over His creation. To answer our dilemma about the rock – The **answer is "No!"**

God cannot build a rock so big He cannot move it.

If He did so, He would be creating something over which He has no power. He would be destroying His own omnipotence. He cannot, **not** be omnipotent!

This is encouraging to one who believes in God – **it means nothing is going to get out of control!**

He is omnipresent! This means God's presence is in all places. Yet, He does not occupy the space of that place in the sense that something can occupy a space. He is spirit and infinite! Further, **all of Him is fully present in every place.**

This fills me with awe, because I can be encouraged that God can give me His undivided attention.

I don't have to queue and wait my turn. Even the wicked in hell are not separated from God – they are only separated from His love and care – because of their own choice!

He is omniscient! Only an infinite and eternal being can know everything. His superior knowledge allows Him to resolve mysteries that baffle me.

That means, I can trust Him for the right answers [not to my exams – that’s my responsibility] but to the things that create confusion in my mind!

His Character?

1. Transcendent yet immanent over all things, yet as close as a gentle breeze!
2. Personal – having intellect, emotion and will.
3. Holy, compassionate and Love!

Yes, I believe in God!

And we have been created in his image – In Genesis 12:26, God [Elohim – a uni-plural noun] said, “*Let us make man in our own image.*” If mankind is created in the image of God, then the question is obvious – *what does God look like?*

God is –

1. A personal being
2. A rational being
3. A volitional being
4. An emotional being
5. A spiritual being

I am –

1. A personal being
2. A rational being
3. A volitional being
4. An emotional being
5. A physical being

Yet in our reflecting the Divine image of ‘three in One’ – we too are a *trinity* of being:

“May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” [1 Thessalonians 5:23-24]

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."
[Hebrews 4:12-13]

1. Our body is our **sense**-conscious part – with our physical being we relate to our world!
2. Our soul is our **self**-conscious part – with our personal being we relate to those around us!
3. Our spirit is our **eternity**-conscious part – with our spiritual being we relate to God!

I believe in the God who is *there*!

What do unbelievers have to offer?

W.O. Saunders wrote in the American Magazine,



"I would like to introduce you to one of the loneliest and unhappiest individuals on earth. I am talking about the man who does not believe in God. I can introduce you to such a man because I myself am one, and in introducing myself, you shall have an introduction to the agnostic or sceptic in your own neighbourhood, for he is everywhere in the land. You will be surprised to learn that the agnostic envies your faith in God, your settled belief in heaven after life, and your blessed assurance that you will meet

with your loved ones in an afterlife where there will be neither sadness or pain. He would give anything to be able to embrace that faith and be comforted by it. For him there is only the grave and the persistence of matter. After the grave, all he can see is the disintegration of protoplasm and psychoplasm of which my body and personality are composed. But in this materialistic view, I find neither ecstasy nor happiness. The agnostic may face life with a smile and a heroic attitude. He may put on a brave front, but he is not happy.

He stands in awe and reverence before the vastness and majesty of the universe, not knowing whence he came or why. He is appalled at the stupendousness of space and the infinitude of time, humiliated by the infinite smallness of himself, cognizant of his own frailty, weakness and brevity. Certainly sometimes, he yearns for a staff on which to lean. He, too, carried a cross. For him, this earth is but a tricky raft adrift in the unfathomable waters of eternity with no horizon in sight.

His heart aches for every precious life upon the raft - drifting, drifting, drifting, whither no one knows." [American Magazine, November 1930]

"**God**, are you really there?"

"God, are you **really** there?"

"God, are you really **there**?"

The answer is a resounding 'yes' to our trinity of questions!

William Irwin Thompson wrote:

Imagine God in Heaven surrounded by the choirs of adoring angels singing hosannas unendingly. *"If I create a perfect world I know how it will turn out. In its absolute perfection it will revolve like a perfect machine never deviating from my absolute will."*

Since God's imagination is perfect there is no need for Him to create such a universe, it is enough for Him to imagine it to see it in all its detail.

Such a universe would not be very interesting to man or God so we can assume that the Divinity continued His thoughts.

"What if I create a universe that is free, free even of Me? What if I veil my Divinity so that the creatures are free to pursue their individual lives without being overwhelmed by my overpowering presence? Will the creatures love Me?"

Can I be loved by creatures that I have not programmed to adore me forever? Can love arise out of freedom? My angels love Me unceasingly, but they can see Me at all times.

What if I create beings in My own image as a Creator, beings who are free, but if I introduce freedom into this universe, I take the risk of introducing Evil into it as well, for if they are free, then they are free to deviate from my will. Hmmm ... but what if I continue to interact with this dynamic universe and what if I and the creatures become the creators together of a great cosmic play?"

What if out of every occasion of evil I respond with an unimaginable good, a good that overwhelms evil by springing out of the very attempts of Evil to deny the Good. Will these new creatures of freedom then love Me? Will they join with Me in creating good out of evil, novelty out of freedom? What if I join with them in a world of limitation and form, the world of suffering and evil? Ah, in a truly free universe even I do not know how it will turn out? Do I even dare to take that risk for love?" ["The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light", pp. 24-25.



Well, He did take that risk!

However, to believe in Him is not enough! Devils believe and they tremble!

However, I understand that to fully understand God, I might require a model – or something I could relate to. Is there a way to work from the known to the unknown?

Yes.

God incarnated Himself in Jesus Christ and died for my sins! And I need to believe that I cannot save myself from myself or anything else for that matter! And I want to know there is a God who understands how I feel – in every way!

There is a God! He is the *God who is there* – in Heaven

And here – right next to you! And you can find Him for yourself – He's only one prayer away!

Walk through that door now!



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