

GOD THE INFINITELY INFINITE

I've studied various religions and philosophies over the years, and a while back I decided to undertake what I considered a serious study of Christianity and the New Testament of the Bible in particular. The result is I no longer consider myself a Christian and have opted to follow a more mystical path. Mysticism as I understand it means establishing and maintaining a direct, unmediated relationship with God. I think that's what Jesus taught, and I've adopted that orientation. I also consider myself an Existentialist, following Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The two pillars on which Existentialism depends are "free will" and individualism. Free will basically means I have choices or decisions to make and I bear the responsibility for having made them. Denying responsibility for a decision or action simultaneously denies the associated authority for making that decision or taking the action involved. Individualism provides the basis for the personal authority and power necessary to decision-making.

I do not confuse individualism with egotism as it appears many people today would do. Individualism holds that each person has personal authority and personal power and enjoys the "God-given right" or free will to exercise both. That decentralizes authority, making it anti-authoritarian. Authoritarians want authority centralized into one, or a very few, decision-makers, everyone else being relegated to the status of "follower" or, in general, everyone else must obey the authorities. Egotists are authoritarians with themselves in the position of authority. Egotists promote slavery. Individualists promote freedom. It's a critical distinction, and one of its effects is that individualists must decide for themselves what is real, what is true, what is good, and all the rest of our intellectual universes, including what God is and the ramifications of that decision.

As part of the process of constructing my universe, I decided to replace the religion I was taught and give myself an alternative. However, I wanted something which did not require me to "check logic at the door" and rely on "faith." Still, I thought God was a good idea, mostly because I think atheists claim knowledge they can't possibly have. That is, it's simply not possible in my estimation to "prove" that God does not exist. I know of no way to know that God does not exist, and in the logic I learned it's not possible to prove a negative. I tried agnosticism for a while, but I couldn't seem to "get" anywhere with that perspective. I wanted to build a mental universe, but "not knowing" is just ignorance, and that didn't seem to connect to anything else. So, I opted for what I had learned to call a "quad-omni" God, but one that's logically consistent (within my capacity).

"Quad-omni" means God is (1) omniscient, meaning there is no knowledge God does not possess; (2) omnipotent, meaning there is no power God does not exercise; (3) omnipresent, meaning there is no place where God is not; and (4) omni-temporal or eternal, meaning there is no time in which God is not. If I put the last two together the result is there can be no space-time co-ordinate where God is not, which means everything I experience as existing must be God "in expression" or "made manifest." But an omniscient God cannot be limited to being "just" our universe because it limits the range of possible experiences or knowledge to only what's true here. If there are other knowable possibilities an omniscient God would have to experience those as well, so it seems likely there are probably infinite universes. Still, a quad-omni God would necessarily be everywhere and "everywhen" within this

universe, so every atom, star, planet, life-form, rock and dust mote of this universe, as well as space itself, must be God expressing Itself. Thus, there is nothing but God in the existence we experience.

This perspective requires me to view myself and everyone else, no exceptions, as equal expressions of God. Another logical outcome of this perspective is, since everything is God, then no particular “thing” can be considered “sacred” (which means “set apart”). Thus, nothing in manifestation is worthy of reverence or worship in and of itself. Yes, everything can and should be appreciated for what it is, but true reverence and worship I reserve for God (the Totality).

Taking all four of the omni’s together means everything we do, everything we think, is God in action. What we know, God knows. What we “will to do” is God willing to do that. Essentially, we are participants in an ongoing creation because we are God living these lives, doing what we do, believing what we believe, learning what we learn, and deciding what we decide. This necessarily means we cannot violate “God’s will” because our will is God-in-expression’s will, and that means there is no such thing as “sin,” original or otherwise. Our responses to experiences and how we deal with people and situations are just whatever we choose. We make a plan and take some action, and then God gets to know what that’s like.

Another, and somewhat more mind-stretching, outcome is consistent with what I understand to be the “multiverse” idea from quantum physics. That is, it would seem that every time I make a decision new universes come into existence. I, being limited in awareness by being only God-in-expression, just one part of the Totality, can follow only one life/time line: the one in which I chose whatever I chose. However, omniscience would require that everything knowable must be known, so every alternative in that decision must be explored by the Totality in order to be known. Say, for example, I have the choice of salad, chicken sandwich or nothing for lunch. I will “realize” (bring into my lived or experienced reality, this life/time line) one of those options. However, my decision will generate two other universes, one for each of the other possibilities. Following that through and considering all the decisions that have been, are being, and will be made by all the billions of people on this planet means there are likely just oodles and oodles of universes in which God can play. And to add to the mind-blowing-ness of it, so far as God is concerned, it’s all happening at once! That is, since the Totality of God is eternal, It experiences everything in the eternal “now”, while we, or God-in-expression, get to experience the “flow” of time. It all seems a bit strange, I admit, but as a friend of mine, Bruce Linnell, said, “If, when you’re thinking about god, your head doesn’t hurt, you’re doing it wrong.” (used by permission)

Now, I admit this isn’t much of a religion. Actually, it isn’t a religion at all. It’s just a perspective or way of living my life. Religions, in my experience, generally involve hierarchies and infrastructure, rituals and social roles and such which I simply ignore. Religions also seem to tend to incorporate systems of morality and ethics, providing a basis for deciding what’s “good” and “evil,” what “should” be done or “should” be avoided, and the like. Well, as a rabid individualist I have to leave all of that up to each individual and his/her personal authority to choose. Sure there are social networks and relationships of which I’m a part, and in those situations there has to be a “coming together” or some way of agreeing what behaviors are acceptable. That can vary from situation to situation. Is that “situational ethics”? I

don't know. I think of it as freedom. One reason I've come to this position is I've come to the conclusion that I don't have enough actual knowledge to make moral judgements, to decide what's "good" or "bad." To make such a judgement seems to me to require having intimate knowledge of all the effects of an action for everyone affected in all of space and time. This expression of God (me) doesn't enjoy that breadth of knowledge. Aside from that, my evaluation of something as "good" or "bad" seems to me to rest only on what I like or dislike, and I find that a flimsy base for a generalizable morality.

Am I saying murder isn't evil? Actually, no, I'm not saying that. I'm saying it's up to me to decide whether I think it evil or not. And to decide that I would like vastly more information than I'm likely to get. And as part of that decision I have to remember omniscience. That is, if God is to know absolutely everything, then God has to know what it's like to be a murderer as well as a murder victim. Some knowledge seems to me not knowable unless it's experienced. So, for example, I had no idea what an orgasm was like until I experienced one. I didn't know the taste of key lime pie until I ate a slice of one. Omniscience cannot exclude anything potentially knowable. Am I saying God condones murder? Actually, I'm saying God-in-expression-as-a-human-murderer commits murder, condoned or not. Am I saying murderers shouldn't be punished? No, I'm not saying that, either. In fact, omniscience would require punishment as well as all other possible results, which, again, would likely involve multiple universes. I'm just saying punishment or retribution is one more decision people in societies have to make.

This opens the door to the topic of "supernatural" retribution or punishment. Again, I'm not founding a religion here, just explaining my perspective. Karma might be a fact. Indeed, omniscience likely requires it. On the other hand, omniscience also would require it not to be. Probably the two would involve different universes, but that's not a problem. God's got plenty of those in inventory. My take on this perspective is that karma is largely irrelevant. Yes, actions are causative and have effects. Yes, we are responsible for those effects. Is there something which is going to "hold me to account" for those effects? I have no idea. If it does, it does. Existentialism requires me to live as "authentically" as possible, recognizing causality and accepting responsibility for ameliorating and/or eliminating undesirable effects. Is there more I could do? I believe the teachings about karma include what in essence is a threat of living an undesirable future existence (reincarnation). Well threats induce fear, and I think fear is over-rated as an incentive. I'm personally more familiar with the threat of hell, and I no longer respond to that. Both seem to me to be encouragements to "buy insurance" against the future, either "disaster insurance" in the case of karma or "fire insurance" in the case of hell. So, is there a hell? How would I know? But again, given omniscience, probably there is, but also probably there isn't, and neither, and both. It's that danged omniscience thing again. I have to admit, this would all be a lot simpler if I didn't have to consider all these infinities.

I wouldn't want to leave a wrong impression, so I think I need to clear up a possible confusion. I am not "anti-Christian" at all. I think Christianity is a fine religion, I just disagree with Christian theology. That's why I can't call myself a Christian. Similarly, I have theological disagreements with Islam, so I won't call myself a Muslim. But Islam is a fine religion, too, in my opinion. I mean no disrespect to anyone, and I don't feel qualified to judge anyone else or to claim "rightness" or "wrongness" for any particular belief

or practice. That goes for religious beliefs and practices as well as things like sexual orientation or choices, hairstyles and clothing choices, having and rearing children, and all the other decisions this life requires be made. In my perspective, it's all just God becoming omniscient. I make my own choices about these things, and I expect others to make their choices, though I have no investment in what those choices might be. It's that "rabid individualist" thing again. I don't run the world, nor do I wish to do so. I just live here along with everyone else. I like living the way I choose to live, and I have no problem with everyone else choosing how they live. Whatever it is, God gets to know what it's like.

I'm also not saying this way of thinking is "the Truth" or "the right way" or anything of the sort. It's just what I've come to in my struggles with the issues of life. I wrote it mostly to clarify my own thinking. Sharing it reflects my hope that it could prove helpful to someone else who might also be struggling.

I have named my perspective "God the Infinitely Infinite." The "quad-omni" part was basically a "jumping-off" point, but it leads everywhere, and all at once and stretched-out in time, too. This universe of existence in which I live and think and think I live is one in which duality plays a critical role: light/dark, good/evil, now/then, old/young, real/unreal, complete/incomplete, changeless/changeable, and on and on and on. When you add in one/both and either/neither there's a huge range, possibly infinite (at least from my perspective), of selections and positions. An omniscient God would have to incorporate all of that and whatever I didn't think of as well. I am one tiny expression of All-That-Is-And-Could-Be. Being that limited, I just simply run out of mental processing power to get any farther with it, and so I give up and say God is infinitely infinite. But I still take comfort from it, because it means I'm part of God, as are you. I'm not just a random collection of vibrations which came from nothing and has nowhere to go and nothing meaningful to do in the interim. And even better, I have a role to play in the whole thing, too. I like that; makes me feel useful.

One more point with which to deal: someone familiar with mysticism might ask about the "God-realization" thing or do I think it possible to "become one with" God, or however it's phrased. Given the position as stated, I think it impossible not to be one with God. If I'm God-in-expression, then I already am, pretty much by definition "one with God." The trick would come in the "realization" part. That is, if I believe I am only a collection of atoms I certainly won't recognize myself as anything else. As I understand the situation as presented by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, Jesus in the gospels, Gautama Buddha, "near-death experiencers" and loads of other mystics past and present, the only key to the lock is simply to believe we are what this position says we have to be: God-in-expression. That is, we share God's Mind, so if we harness that power we will be able to "realize," to bring into our everyday, experienced reality, our God-nature. It's one of those "simple, but not necessarily easy" type of things. We've spent our whole lives believing we're "just" humans. Changing that overnight is possible, I'm told, but it might require something like a "dark night of the soul" or a "near-death experience" (which I have been assured is not "near" anything – it's being dead for a while). No, I'm not claiming to be God-realized at this point. I said it wasn't easy, didn't I? Well, I'm working on it. But that's no reason you can't be. I am, after all, still holding out hope that I will. Indeed, I think it inevitable that we all will reach that state at some point.

There is yet another consideration: ramifications or results. What effects has adopting this perspective generated for me? I've already mentioned a couple. I no longer believe in "sin" or the possibility of violating "God's Will." I've sort of done in fear of karmic or other supernatural retribution. I no longer think of myself as "just a body." I now think of myself and everyone else as expressions of God, "Thoughts in the Mind of God" if you like, an extension of that Mind and an associate in creation. That gives me a direct line to all of God; all the power in the universe, all knowledge, etc. I might not use all of it. I might use hardly any of it, but it's there for me to avail myself of should I so choose. It means I cannot think of myself as "separate" and "all alone," rather I'm part of the whole, directly connected with everything else.

Another outcome is that I no longer think of the "blame game" as a fun pastime. Everyone simply chooses as they do and that has to be good enough for me. Responsibility takes precedence over blame or liability, but I can't require anyone else to accept responsibility. I can only do that for myself. Nor can I manipulate others through blame or shame since I don't occupy a position superior to anyone else. My opinions and beliefs are only as correct or good, and as faulty or bad, as anyone else's. Does it seem odd that thinking of oneself as God leads to humility?

Are there other outcomes? One weird one is that I no longer have any constraint on or even a basis for making decisions. However, if I'm "plugged into" omniscience, then it would seem I could simply ask and get help with anything I want. I remember learning that Jesus told his students they could ask anything and get an answer. If it's that easy, then I just have to be willing to hear the answer to get help anytime I might need some. That's nice. I'm talking here about freedom, real, implementable, no restrictions freedom. That can be scary, but with so much help available I see no need for fear. And if everything is God, comes from God and will return to God because it can't be lost from God, then there really is no reason to fear even death.

I'm suspecting now that dealing with my fears is mostly a matter of how much faith I have in my own beliefs. That is, just how willing am I actually to believe what I claim to believe? If I can trust God and myself (part of God), I can be free to live this life and enjoy it; really enjoy just the process of living. All of my past conditioning tells me "there's gotta be a catch in here somewhere!" But I can't seem to find one.

It would seem I'm in a situation where it's safe just to love myself, everyone else, and everything/God, and have a good time with my life. Weird. That takes some getting used to. It would seem to mean I could do "just anything" and thus would become unpredictable. But when I stop and think about it, that's already the case. I just like to think we're all constrained by moral systems or fear of retribution or whatever. Those "constraints" actually "work" only if and when someone decides to adopt them. If I never considered morality, legality, social norms or mores, or anything else, I would already be unpredictable. So any difference is only in my own or others' expectations of me or mine of them. This perspective makes our actual condition obvious, so I can be prepared for others (or myself) to act unpredictably. But that also doesn't matter. Given God as presented and me as part of God, whatever exists is whatever it is, and everything will be ok. Even if everything does "go to hell in a handbasket," it's all just experience for the purpose of completing omniscience.

Well, darn! Now I have no reason whatever to worry about things! Why does that seem “not fair?” Oh, but wait! I can still decide to worry. It’s just another decision, isn’t it? God gets to know what it’s like if I choose to worry, and God gets to know what it’s like should I choose not to worry. Cool. Maybe this is why it seems those who have had a mystical experience or are God-realized or whatever appear so laid-back and at ease, even when the world around them looks like it’s falling to pieces. Given what I’ve said, my take on that attitude would have to be, “Ok, something happened, and now God gets to know what that’s like.” And I didn’t have to die or even be seriously traumatized to figure that out. How nice. And now God gets to know what that’s like.