

**God – or no
God?**

A vital question (that
has nothing to do
with religion)

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GOD – OR NO GOD?

Some people say they believe in God, some say they don't. We might hear someone say, in a welter of emotions, "If there were a God, he wouldn't have allowed this to happen," when the cause of pain and suffering is both inexplicable and unjustifiable. Many are honest enough to say that they just don't know one way or the other, although the threat of extreme danger can turn them to some form of supplication "just in case". We are all rather a little mixed up when it comes to the possibility of the ultimate.

Religions have a chequered history when it comes to marketing the ultimate and, perhaps because of that, the question of whether there is a supreme or all-embracing aspect to our universe and everything in it is frequently demoted to the realms of superstition or the quaint. Those who overtly say they are religious are often reluctant to discuss deeper issues or meaning; when they are, it is often conditional that any ideas expressed fit in with their beliefs. Moreover, we live in a time of scientific discovery and technology and that which cannot be grasped by the intellect is not given a great deal of time. Yet in a bizarre twist, science, particularly in the realm of quantum physics, is making great inroads in discovering that the physical

world of so-called reality is not real at all.

Perhaps part of the confusion and mixed ideas about God concerns the word itself. "God" implies, in principle at least, that there is something that is identifiable. If there is an identifiable thing, or being, there must be other things and beings that are distinguishable from it. So in old religious parlance there is God, which represents everything that is good at one end of the spectrum, and the devil or evil at the other. Inbetween is us, humanity, a mediocre lot, resisting pulls to the lower end of the spectrum and aiming for the higher, maybe waiting for a saviour to rescue us from the murky depths of our own nature. There is a certain degree of illogicality about that model of reality and because more people these days can sense that it is lacking, they question whether it is possible for there to be God or a God. And the fact remains that, using the old religious model, if there is God on the one hand and everything else on the other, there is rather a lot that remains "not God". If that were the case, then it would not be possible for God to be the ultimate and so, by definition, God could not exist. No wonder it is a discomfiting subject.

But if we take the word "God" to embrace the totality of the universe – and, indeed, everything in every dimension, universe, gross or subtle plane of life, a different scenario

develops. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can be excluded. Growing numbers of people seem to accept this as being more logical because it means that we all belong to a great wholeness. Some feel that understanding this wholeness is better served by using a different term than God, and there are many other expressions - some from other cultures and others a little more modern. Naturally, whichever word we use always carries the risk of misunderstanding because of the limitations of language, and indeed of our own minds.

The beauty of the facticity of wholeness is that it means we are never isolated. Rather than there being a rather distant figure or concept, it means that you, me, the grass, the sky, the trees, the sun and anything that appears before our eyes are all different expressions or appearances of unified wholeness. Because it includes absolutely everything, a necessary implication of this is that wholeness must have inherent intelligence. All forms of life have intelligence, albeit limited, and as we are not separate from wholeness, intelligence must arise from within it. So although Clint Eastwood talked to the trees, according to his song of many years ago, and they didn't listen to him, we are actually all in immediate contact with wholeness and therefore can address it in whatever way we choose.

It is this facility for contact that makes us extraordinarily free. It is part of the human condition – or rather *conditioning* – that causes us to believe that we are to some extent, or even entirely, isolated; and so we naturally try to eradicate the vulnerability associated with isolation by seeking social contact of various sorts. Inevitably that can cause pain when emotional support derived from contact disappears or is threatened - friends and loved ones going away from us, for example. Eventually the time comes when we sense that the remedy to isolation is not to be found in *outside* connections but through *inner* ones. In other words, we have to come back to ourselves and look within.

When we stop and look inwards, over a period of time we may discover increasing levels of silence and expanding horizons of awareness. Without any shadow of doubt whatsoever, we know that not only are we not isolated but also that our personal boundaries – the limitations we habitually impose on our personal identity – do not exist. There is a reality beyond everyday appearances and most certainly beyond the morning apparition looking at us from the bathroom mirror. There is a reality, too, beyond the feelings, thoughts and beliefs that hem us in and restrict the way we react to the world. By looking within, we gain a wider view and greater confidence.

There can be little doubt that every religion begins with teachings on the inward path and that what is called God is both the path and the result. As with most things, the purity of the original teachings becomes lost as they are interpreted by minds with limited understanding. Importance is often placed more on the outer appearance and structure of religion than the inner message. If we believe that God is a great being in the sky, inevitably we will interpret all teachings with a narrow way of thinking.

Today, religion is being rejected by increasing numbers of people and the belief of a separate God goes out of the window with it. When religion is rejected, it can lead to a phase of apparent lack of spirituality until the sense of something missing in life begins to emerge. That can cause some people to turn to forms of fundamentalism or evangelism, where old religious teachings are interpreted literally and extreme views tend to arise. The majority of others seek a deeper meaning to life and, at some point, the question of "God - or no God?" almost inevitably arises.

When we look deeply within, God can no longer be perceived as an entity or indeed as anything separately identifiable at all. This is not a rejection but a *natural acceptance of all that is*, as a result of transcending the boundaries of the mind. What we call God is beyond form and, at the

same time, inclusive of all forms and all qualities.

"God" must mean wholeness or it means nothing at all. If, instead of the word "God" we use the term *wholeness*, or what I like to call "*magnificent wholeness*"¹, the answer to the question "God – or no God?" becomes blindingly obvious. It is in front of our eyes right now, always has been and always will be. How we address the remarkable intelligence within wholeness, should we wish to do so, is entirely a matter of choice, and requires no intermediary.

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Andrew has written two books – [The Great Little Book of Happiness](#) was published in 2008 and [Awakening Heart](#) was released on 1st June 2011. Both are available from bookshops and from www.radiantsunbooks.com.

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¹ For a fuller discussion on magnificent wholeness and the concept of the divine, see *Awakening Heart: The Blissful Path to Self-Realisation*, Radiant Sun Books 2011