

A Theology for New Thought Spirituality

By

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– *opus unius hominis vitae* –



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Introduction

There are three intentions for writing this book:

First, to provide a logical proof that substantiates the beliefs and tenets of spiritual metaphysics. Having read dozens upon dozens of books of spiritual metaphysics, I have yet to find someone who has developed a proof, a theology of spiritual metaphysics, that supports its tenets and beliefs.

Second, to reveal the process to paraphrase Buddha and Jesus, “we *become* what we hold in mind,” i.e., we become what we believe. Thoughts held in mind become manifest in our lives. The question I have held concerning that process has been, “How does that work, anyway?” Let’s find out.

Third, this clarification will be of immense assistance to mainline Christian faiths, especially to the Catholic Church. Most believers of Christian faiths have always had an intuitive “gut” feeling that the message of the Creator was not being revealed in the same transparent manner that Jesus gave it to his following. That uneasy gut feeling is our response to the lack of understanding of the mechanics of the universe, especially to the lack of transparency by clergy for not knowing those mechanics.

By providing clear, logical, and simple explanations to the laity, that lack of transparency can be removed, and the authentic nature of God can be revealed. What will be revealed will be the hugely loving, compassionate, and innately empathic relationship that God has for each person, directly. Doing so will create a historic break from misaligned, male-dominated religions that no longer reflect the loving character of Jesus for children of any age.

If the Catholic Church is to survive, then it must initiate The Second Reformation from within. Doing so would provide that women are accepted into the priesthood, and all that would imply. As you will read in the text, The Creator loves everyone equally – children, women, and men – as did Jesus. The argument that women are inferior to men to carry the message and the sacraments in all of its forms to the laity is simply false bravado on the part of men of the cloth. The reliance on the traditional male philosophy “I think, therefore I am right” is no longer credible nor believable. It is the main cause for the current disintegration of the Catholic Church from within.

When the sexual debacle of the Catholic clergy is examined in light of Jesus’ own ministry, we do not see Jesus taking children out behind the synagogue and

The evidence is clear, that the obligation to remain “married to the church” rather than a woman and raising a family within a career in the Church, and that only men can become priests, bishops, cardinals, and a pope have caused irreparable damage to the credibility of this former bastion of belief.

The time is NOW, not later, that the Catholic Church must create its own rational Second Reformation to regain its credibility as a vehicle for the faith of Jesus; or follow the long arc of all historic societies, cultures, and nations from their rise, cresting, decline, disintegration, and collapse from within. The positions of authority, power, and control do not exempt any organization from the moral and ethical responsibilities to make meaningful contributions to the individual/family, other organizations, and society to become socially sustainable into the centuries ahead. ¹

You might question “my right” to make these candid suggestions. The right comes from being a holistic life coach for over 15 years and having coached and counseled many women, and men, who were ignored, abused, or violated by men, and those of the Catholic clergy. The pain of it all does not stop with the victim’s generation, but acts out and spreads to become a trans-generational injury that attacks the soul of the victim, their family, children, friends, and many others.



The founders of God-centered spiritual metaphysics are all in agreement that God is good, God is loving, God is the Source of creation, and that the Presence of God is within each of us, as the text will clearly prove.

The design of the book provides for the fundamental beliefs of spiritual metaphysics, and almost immediately begins the substantive logical development of what underlies those beliefs.

Chapter 1, “New Thought Beliefs,” reveals the generally accepted beliefs about God throughout New Thought religions.

Chapter 2, “The Logical Characteristics of The Creator,” sets up the logic for a pre-creation theology.

¹ Raphael, Daniel 2018 *Making Sense of Ethics — A Universal Normative Theory of Ethics, Morality, and Values*.

Raphael, Daniel 2018 *UNDERSTANDING Social Sustainability*

Raphael, Daniel 2018 *Restoring Democracies Greatness — A Radically Conservative and Liberal Approach*.

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Chapter 3, "The Loving-God," expands that logic by examining the rational nature of God as mortals would perceive God's relationship to the universe, and to them.

Chapter 4, "The Challenge of a Co-Creative, God-Moral Relationship," provides the challenge of understanding what God is not, as much as what God is.

Chapter 5, "Questions and Answers about God and Creation," provides readers with an understanding about their functional relationship to God, and God to us.

Chapter 2 and the following chapters set out to prove the accepted beliefs of spiritual metaphysics beginning before creation by using the logic of the intimate relationship that exists between God and each of us. Doing so will help spiritual metaphysics students begin to "think theologically," which is applicable to *every* God-oriented religion, whether Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Taoism, Sikhism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, or New Thought. Most God-oriented religions have a theology, a way of thinking about God that supports the beliefs of that religion. For those who are members of New Thought religions having a consistent and uncompromising understanding of God and God's nature is essential for the development of clear thinking without conflicts of belief – to have your mind-beliefs consistent with the Mind of God.

Yet, none of these religions has a theology that begins *before* creation that leads the believer from that moment to the present time, with the ability to explain issues, and the difficult situations, problems, issues, and circumstances that have confronted believers over the centuries. To have a holistically consistent God-related religion requires us to logically and rationally explain the chain of events that begin *before the creation of the universe* to the present time. This is the most definitive place to start! If each God-centered religion began its theology from a point *before* creation, infra-faith and inter-faith dialogue would become far more effective.

Older God-entered religions have changed many of their beliefs over the centuries for one reason or another. These changes reflect a changing understanding about God and the universe, or changing needs of the church by theologians and leaders. More importantly, they reflect an incomplete theology that does not accurately portray God's nature. Until that void is filled, there will always be ongoing changes and inconsistencies of beliefs within and among religions.

From a broader perspective, while God does not change, God continues to expand our understanding of God through revelation, if we are open to new ideas. Growth and development of concepts of God are a continuing process because God is infinite in concept and our growth potential is infinite. We may not get it right the first time, but with continual effort on our part and the Presence of God within leading us on, we will eventually arrive at a more complete conceptualization of what and who God is in relationship to us. Then, we will come to know that God's true divine nature is consistent, constant, and unwavering in character.

A consistent, constant, and predictable theology would aid several issues in our contemporary and future societies: Inter-faith dialogue of all God-centered religions; the interpretation of social, ethical, and moral issues of our societies, communities, families, and personal lives; the enactment of reliable social laws and policies; and finally and foremost, the individual's understanding of his or her personal, intimate, and unique relationship with The Creator.

Chapter 2 begins the description of a "Pre-Creation Theology" – a way of thinking about the universe and all human-related activities – beginning where The Creator began, before creation. Any theology that has its beginnings after creation, in early Hebrew times or the life and death of Jesus, for example, has blind assumptions about God, God's situation before creation, creation, the universe, and all that follows, up to the era where that theology begins. These blind assumptions are the cause for the great difficulties contemporary God-believers have in explaining contentious social, religious, moral, and ethical issues today. By beginning before creation we will leave no era unexamined.

If by some way we were able to witness and observe all that took place before creation to the present time, the development of the universe and God's actions and lack thereof would make sense to us. But because we are latecomers in the universe, (scientists tell us that we are about 13 billion years too late!), we do not have any record of what actually occurred. Because of that, we must ask questions that place us at that "time" and strive to answer them, much as Detective *Holmes* would to unravel a complicated case. Some questions will yield great wealth of knowledge while others will yield little. The important thing is to ask questions and strive to answer them.



1

New Thought Beliefs

Any religion that wants to exist in an era of highly educated believers must be able to stand up under examination and scrutiny to provide a system of belief that offers the hope of being sustainable into the centuries ahead. To do that, it must be wholly consistent, reflecting the wholeness and Oneness of The Creator. Its theology, fundamental beliefs, doctrines, and all related instructional materials must have their very beginnings in the roots of the One, beginning *before* creation.

Resolving contradictions provides the frontier of an evolving religion. All sustainable religions are evolutionary, i.e., they must evolve to serve the evolving, spiritually sustaining, growing needs of believers. To evolve this year, next year, or four centuries from now, it must be based on a set of values given to us by the Creator to understand the Creator's relationship to us.

THEOLOGY

God exists.

There is only one God.

God is eternal.

God is all-knowing.

God created the universe, and pervades its existence.

God is all-powerful.

God has only one nature: Eternally perfect.

God's perfection is "good."

God is love.

BELIEFS

1. God intentionally created us as imperfect and subject to growth.
2. To overcome that imperfection, God provided each of us with a Divine Fragment of Its being to aid and guide us on our spiritual path. We may, however, reject our Divine Fragment either by our willful choice or by moral abandonment in our life's course.

3. Our spiritual assets:

- A mind mechanism. This is the faculty we use to process information, that we might interpret as “mental software.”
- Consciousness. It is the faculty of self-awareness that enables us to know there are options for choice-making.
- Will. Just as God has *will*, so do we. Will is the faculty we use to make choices and take action.
- Seven values. These are God’s gift to us to guide our choice-making, decision-making, and action-implementation.

When we come to the awareness that the purpose of our life is to grow into perfection as the means to become more like the Creator, we also become aware that as we develop the infinite potential we brought with us into this life we give our life meaning.

4. God gave us the opportunity to decide to join It in Paradise through the experience of becoming perfect.
 - a. All human will-decisions are infinitely sovereign and will not be abridged, amended, countermanded, or removed by God or any of Its children of light.
 - b. We are solely and completely responsible for our decisions and actions throughout our spiritual journey.
5. God can best experience the universe to the fullest extent through us as we strive to become perfect like God as we traverse our spiritual path to Paradise, where we will have achieved perfection.
 - a. This is achieved most effectively when we choose to do God’s will...

- b. ...and is enhanced when we strive to become as perfect as God.
- 6. When we have successfully demonstrated that we have irrevocably chosen to do the Father's will above all else, the Divine Fragment, which guides us through the duration of our infinite spiritual career, and our personality will be fused as one, becoming inseparable and indistinguishable.
- 7. "Love" is both a goal and evidence of being in harmony with the universe and all beings thereof.

DOCTRINES

1. **The Doctrine of Innocence:** All children are born morally perfect and without humanly defined sin.
2. **The Doctrine of Fallibility:** All human children grow from the perfect state of innocence to the point where they will make their first moral decision. It is eventual that children who have reached this age will make a fallible moral decision.
3. **The Doctrine of Perfection:** Having made a fallible moral decision, it is our option to decide and then take action to strive to become perfect once again. Having made this decision and taken action, our Divine Fragment will do what we allow it to help us. God's Divine Fragment will give us options so we may choose what is the right action for us, individually.
4. **The Doctrine of Separation:** God, being perfectly loving and having given sovereignty to the will-decisions of human beings, has provided that those who do not wish to participate in their plan of life and spiritual ascendancy are allowed to pass out of existence as though they never were.
5. **The Doctrine of Wholeness:** The universe and its function are whole and unified. All aspects of universe-function operate in oneness where any one aspect affects the rest, and the whole has an effect upon the single aspect. (The universe does not exhibit "fracturing," where parts operate distinctly from the whole. Only beings with self-will who choose to live outside of wholeness exhibit "fracturing.")

6. The Doctrine of Flow: All aspects that exist in alignment with the greater universe "flow" in agreement with the universe. "Good" (divine order, divine timing, divine serendipity, and coincidence) is evidence of being in the flow of the universe. The greater our alignment, the greater we are in agreement with the flow of the universe.

7. The Doctrine of Conscious Spiritual Evolution: The rate of development and evolution of our ascendant spiritual career is immensely increased when we consciously participate by making appropriate and timely conscious decisions and taking similar action. Our rate of growth is further augmented when we consciously choose to establish and maintain a co-creative relationship with our Divine Fragment.



2

The Logical Characteristics of The Creator

This chapter begins the proofs of logic to develop a rational theology that supports New Thought Beliefs.

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS —

God exists.

There is only one God.

God is eternal.

These three statements cannot be proven by any empirical means but exist solely as beliefs.

EXPANSION OF FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS —

God exists.

God's existence and presence are not dependent upon those who conceive of It. God is, exists, and is universally present whether people think of God as existing or not. God does not exist solely because people think of God.

Centuries ago several philosophers came to a conclusion that if people *thought* of God, God could exist, and that if they did not think of God, then God would not exist. Both statements are silly because if that were the case, then the universe could not have come into existence until after God was thought of: God, who created the universe, and the person who thought of God. So, we say God's existence and presence are not dependent upon those who conceive of It.

God is without gender.

Since God is *eternal and there is only one God, God was not brought into existence by any other power or being. God has no gender or reproductive system, either to produce or create other beings or as a remnant of Its existence. God, therefore, is neither "he" nor "she," but more accurately an "it," an "it" that more perfectly combines the attributes of father and mother without the biological and social hassles of hormones and sex organs. Using "He," "Him," and "His" convey Jesus' relationship to the fatherly attributes of God. The male gender pronouns are metaphors that Jesus used intentionally so that we could understand our personal relationship with our Creator-parent.

*** Eternal means without beginning or end. It is outside the dimension of time.** Infinite, on the other hand, means a beginning with no ending and is time-dependent.

God is without form.

Because God was not created and did not evolve, God does not have a body. God is without form.

Just as we have *will*, so does God. Our will has energy that emanates from within us, yet it is without form. Many aspects of ourselves exist without form, yet we *know* with certainty they exist. God is a fully developed being and has no need of form in the physical sense, but exists as a spiritual being. In order to create the universe, God must be pure will and without form.

God is spirit.

No form, no substance, just spirit as far as we can understand what spirit is from our limited perspective. God is spirit that is *will* and capable of creation and much more. Without form, God can *will* to be anywhere as a whole or a fragment. (It is beyond the scope of this text to discuss whether material matter is God-manifested in material form, or whether God is "in" matter.)

God existed before creation.

We can say this as a fact, dependent upon the third original statement of belief, "God is eternal." Before creation, God existed in the Eternal NOW, when there was no "when," where there was no "where." God existed in

the nothingness that was only God – all undeveloped potential – that leads us to a very ponderable situation. When we think of a state of existence before creation, we must realize that there was NOTHING. Nothing, except God.

It boggles the mind, doesn't it, to think that before time there was absolutely nothing: No universes, no galaxies, no stars, no sun, no planets, no moon, and no air. Nothing, not even time or space. There was no expanse of the universe. No then, no now, no future. No place, no here, no there. Only God. Only God in the Eternal NOW, in the Eternal HERE. All the potential of the universe existed in God: The totality of all potential that would be material and invisible, temporal and spiritual, existent and undeveloped potential.

God created the universe.

Not to worry whether it was created by fiat in 6 days or by evolution over the eons. It does not seem relevant to know whether God created the universe in 6 billionths of a second, 6 days, or 60 billion years. Creation of the universe is not a closed-end event, but continues on and is a timeless phenomenon.

From our first statement of belief, God exists, and from our observation of the universe around us, we draw the belief-conclusion that God created the universe. That is, we believe in God. We believe the universe exists. We believe God created all of it, including all the spiritual beings on all spiritual planes; all physical and material aspects known and unknown to us; and all other aspects of the four dimensions and all other dimensions known and unknown to us.

The universe is an expression of God, an expression of God's will. Looking out upon the universe, what we see is an impressive, grand, and generous experience. Looking upon the universe in this world, whether we see clouds, flowers, or personalities, is also a generous experience. Looking within, again viewing what little we can, and understanding even less, at DNA molecules, we are overwhelmed by the care and thoughtfulness of these creations and developments of the original creation. These narrow views are but small fragments of the magnificent and thoughtful expressions of the nature of God. If we could view all dimensions of time and all the facets of physical and spiritual creation at once, how would we feel? Surely, we would be filled with awe and great humility to be a part of this creation.

We are extensions of God's power when we will to create. Here, at this juncture of our existence, we come face to face with the spiritual responsibilities of our will to create: To treat, care, and nurture God's manifold creation, including our planet, Earth, as well as we care and nurture the products of our own creation whether a wall painting, a garden, a child, a house design and blue prints, or a poem. Doing so, we create sacred relationships with all else around us, whether with our planet Earth or with other people. Our attitude is the same for both. We are in awe of what is created; we feel immensely humble in comparison to what God has created; and we are immensely humble for being able to create, and for what we have created.

Our will to create is an exact image of God's will to create with the same proportional capability for being a creator. The implications of this statement are truly profound as they apply to our sacred relationship to this planet and each individual on it. That potential capability exists within each of us. We can more fully unlock that potential when our beliefs about God are in full alignment with God's true nature. Then we can see God's true nature in us — our true nature!

In the moments just prior to creating something, what existed before we *willed* to create? Nothing. By examining the non-event before creation we can gain a better idea of what God's situation was like before God willed the universe into existence.

How can anyone explain how the universe came into existence? Probably the best we can do is draw a parallel between God willing the creation of the universe into existence and us willing one of our thoughts into existence. There exist no equivalents to measure the energy that was necessary to bring the universe into existence, or the energy to will the creation of one of our thoughts. To think is the easiest and most effortless act of creativity, and I suspect that God created the universe as easily as having a thought. This parallel provides us with a fairly accurate estimate of the relative difference of magnitude between our power and authority, and God's. As we explore the idea of an unlimited, all-powerful, eternal, all-knowing being, The Creator and sustainer of the Grand Universe, the more interesting and complete our concepts and understanding of God will become. Remember, God was and is in sacred relationship with Itself, and extends that relationship to the universe and all its inhabitants.

God created time.

When God created the universe, the four dimensions were created. This is the starting point of chronology, sequences of events, developmental initiations, and the infinite perspective. We say, "in the beginning" and this is when time began.

Since God created the temporal dimension of time, God existed before time. Having created time, God can function within, or outside, the dimension of time and the universe. The Creator's usual habitat is outside the dimension of time, since time is limiting and linear. Since God exists in eternity, a place with no time, with no past or future, God's presence exists in the Eternal NOW.

God is present everywhere.

That is, God can be in one location, or two, or the extent of all creation at once. God is everywhere God *wills* to be. God, being in the Eternal NOW, can be anywhere or everywhere at once. Because God lives in the Eternal NOW outside of time, God can be present anywhere. If it doesn't take any time to go anywhere. The Creator can be everywhere at once!

God is all-knowing.

God encompasses the sum of all existent knowledge. Being in the Eternal NOW of the past, present, and future, and able to be everywhere at once, God is aware of all. God knows everything. Being outside the continuum of time, God knows everything whether in time or out of time, in space or out of space, temporal or spiritual. God created the universe and understands and knows the universe, its existence, and its operation. God knows all there is to know of the *existent* universe.

God is all-powerful.

From God The Creator, all was created. All energy before creation was contained in The Creator's being, and God's power was not diminished one erg by bringing creation into existence. (An erg is far less energy than is required to snap your finger and thumb together.) Just as one thought, or an effort to will a thought, does not diminish our power and energy, God's power and energy was not diminished by the act of Creation or any later acts of will.

Though the physical universe is the most immediate and immense manifestation of energy visibly evident to us, physical objects are only a small portion of the total sum of energy that exists in the universe. There exist many forms of non-visible energy that we have no way of measuring. Astrophysicists tell us there are vast cubic light years of tenuous clouds of nearly invisible hydrogen, and dark matter. How many subatomic particles are there in the universe? And how many galaxies would they make? Very possibly, there are whole galaxies of invisible forms of energy. It is apparent that energy is everywhere and fills all of what we call "empty" space.

And God created it all! That was and is the most powerful act ever. It follows, then, that God is all-powerful, and can do anything God *wills* to do that is consistent with Its nature. We do not know of any limit to God's capability, except as God wills to limit Itself. We can say, therefore, that God is all-powerful and without limit to what God can do.

Just as an architect and contractor can conceive of and build a home or subdivision, those acts of construction do not diminish their creative potential. Architects can still conceive of many more homes and subdivisions. As humans, the only limitation to what we can bring into being is whether we have the resources and time to build what we conceive. If we had the unlimited resources and unlimited time, as God has, and an infinite expanse of three-dimensional space, we too could build houses until we died. But God, who exists outside the dimension of time, has no such limitation. God's only limitation is that which God places upon Its will. God is therefore unlimited in power.

God is whole.

The universe is a form of God's expression, yet God is complete without the universe. Creating the universe did not take anything from God. Just as thinking does not take anything from us, will and creation do not take anything from God. God was whole before creation and is even now whole. God is intact and undivided. God is not in need of anything to be or become whole.

God is complete.

That is, God is not in need of anything, anyone, or any state of being to sustain Its existence. There is no symbiotic relationship between God and that which God created for God to be complete. Further, God is not flawed

and has no need to prey upon that which God brought into existence. God is self-sustaining in sole existence.

God is perfect.

We know this is so from several perspectives. God exists in eternity. If God were not perfect, God would be imperfect, flawed, and susceptible to degeneration and eventual death. God would not exist. The universe would not exist.

Implicit in the statement, "God is eternal," is that God is perfect. Though the three statements, "God is whole," "God is complete," and "God is perfect," are closely related, the first two were presented first to lead our logic to the point where we understand that God is perfect, too. All have their proofs within our original three statements of belief.

Further, we logically know that since God exists in eternity, outside of time, God would be aware of the beginning of the universe and any possible "endings" of it. Knowing this, God would have been aware of any flaws before they began and would have eliminated any flawed processes. Time-bound creatures do not have this eternal advantage to know and feel with assurance that there are no flaws in the function of the universe.

Human observations of the universe are very limited and our recorded history of it is very, very brief. However, because the universe is so huge and so old, if there were any mechanical or physical flaws inherent in its design, they would have developed over the eons and be in evidence around us.

Rather than chaos, we see beauty and order in the universe. And it is lasting and self-perpetuating in its unfolding. What we see is benevolent, humane, and even magnanimous when we appreciate the abundance around us. It is divine! There is beauty and order in the appearance of a confusion of evidence. Picture a colorful butterfly in the warm sun – iridescent segments on the wings of a creature that appears to float effortlessly in the air and on the tides of breezes – spectacular, incredibly beautiful, and good.

The terms "good" and "beauty" are our interpretations and conclusions of what we see in the universe. That is, we see the universe and how it operates, and perceive it as a "good" place to live, with "beautiful" experiences around us. If the universe were not this way, we would as

easily say that the universe is cruel and ugly. We interpret processes that are self-sustaining, self-perpetuating, and benevolent as "good." Processes such as these, which continue into infinity or which originate in eternity, must, then, be perfect. If God were not perfect, the universe would exhibit that imperfection and pervade all creation.

The universe is the canvas of God's artwork. We know the ability and depth of an artist by what he or she produces, yet we do not know what unfathomed and unproduced works yet lie within that artist's creativity. So, too, with God, as far as we can see of the universe. It is beautiful. It works. It is without evidence of inherent self-defeating flaws. This is the outward evidence of God. It is the outward evidence of what God is capable. Yet, the universe does not express all the capability of God's potential.

With God's unlimited power, existence outside the confines of time, and an unlimited creative potential, The Creator appears to have only begun to express Itself!



The Loving-God

The Logical Characteristics of The Creator assure us of the integrity of The Creator, that The Creator is whole, complete, consistent, and ultimately reliable. It follows then that –

God has only one nature.

When people believe in a god with two natures, they lead themselves into deception as to the true nature of God. God cannot be both loving and spiteful, loving and resentful, loving and jealous, loving and vengeful, constant and inconstant, consistent and inconsistent. God is not divided in nature or at odds with Itself.

Looking at it another way, God is not capricious, impulsive, whimsical, fickle, inconsistent, inconstant, or imperfect. God cannot be perfect and imperfect, impulsive and thoughtful, fickle and true because such inconsistencies are contrary to the oneness of an eternal, creative nature, contrary to becoming, to unfoldment, to the eternal expression of all-potential. Creation would have collapsed if God's nature were conflicting or changeable. It is a reasonable conclusion to know that God has only one nature.

God has only one nature, perfect and loving, because all the other paths of logic and reason lead us to places that end. The path of one-nature, wholeness, leads us unendingly toward a greater and more complete revelation of what God is. The opposite of love, which is hate, leads to limitation, finite and diminishing growth, and contraction of self. God is not just a little bit evil, sinful, or bad. Any inconsistency in the nature of God would have become magnified over the eons of time since the beginning of creation and inherent in the act of creation. Any blemish of imperfection would have become as evident as the development of rot from one small bit of imperfection in one apple in a barrel of apples, to the

point where the whole barrel, over time, becomes rotten and maggot infested.

If we could view the universe, this world, without the errant behavior of self-willed individuals, we would see a universe that is ultimately and absolutely good. So, where does the negative and evil that we see come from? From God? No, it is from self-willed, errant people. What errant people will to do is not a reflection of The Creator's will. We can say then that God's nature is not dualistic, nor is the universe. The conclusion that "forces of light" and "forces of evil" exist is simply a conclusion made from observations of human behavior. God, and the universe, are only good, only benevolent, and universally generous. When we align our will with the loving energy of God, we begin to see and feel the rightness of reality.

God is good.

If we disregard the ill-behaved manners of self-willed people, some of whom seem to muck up this universal pattern of beauty, the universe as a whole is one of order, inherent logic, and an ultimate expression of greater reason and wisdom. It is good – another value judgment – and is a reflection of its creator. All that God created is good – therefore God is good.

God is love.

We see that, except for the behavior of self-willed creatures, the universe is good – infinitely good and perfect in its operation – a reflection of its creator. Since God is The Creator of all that is good, God is the ultimate pattern of creation, the ultimate good, which we would term ultimate goodness, or "loving." God, who created the entire universe, did so with Its will. Creation, then, is an act of positive action, a positive expression of will. When God expresses Its will, God does so with ultimate goodness, an expression of love. Love is the expression of God's will. Love is God's will, expressed. Therefore, God's nature is loving.

Succinctly, God is love. God created, and creates everything as a loving impulse. That which is love in the universe stems from God. That which is not-loving in the universe stems from the free will accorded to man.

Martin Luther King, Jr. had much to say in his sermon , "Loving Your Enemy," about the power of love and the ends that love can bring.

"Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. We never get rid of an enemy by meeting hate with hate; we get rid of an enemy by getting rid of enmity. By its very nature hate destroys and tears down; by its very nature, love creates and builds up...." ("Strength To Love" 1963:521.)

Taking Dr. King's advice, when we focus our intent and decisions for living upon love, we move out of the simplistic, circular logic of dualistic thinking. Doing so we can move forward into a new development in our relationship with God: As partner and co-creator – an alliance with God that more fully supports our responsibilities to aid the healing of our planet and ourselves – to learn to love more completely.

We will have no confusion about our relationship to others when we understand clearly that our relationship to God has only one nature. When we feel safe in God's universe and we feel safe in our relationship with God, then we can trust God and ourselves to act and make decisions that move us into loving, sacred relationships.



The Challenge of a Co-Creative, God-Mortal Relationship

A Loving-God seems to be “too good to be true” for most Christians because of the inherently conflicted concepts and messages about God that believers have received from their church from the time the Christian church was recognized in 333 C.E. It is no wonder that so many Christians have opted out of the “guilt trap” of traditional Christianity to join spiritual centers that share the message that God is good and that God loves each of us.

Yet, spiritual metaphysics belief systems have not yet told their believers what it is about mortals that God so dearly loves. Many thoughtful metaphysical students still yearn to understand the nature of God, God’s relationship to each person, and God’s relationship to Jesus.²

Because we know very accurately what God is, the discussions in the text require us to also investigate what God is not and to fully understand the limitations of God. That phrase, “the limitations of God,” almost sounds like a bad joke, an inexplicable irony until we fully understand the reasons God created humankind in the first place, and why It has this almost peculiarly kind and loving relationship with us individually.

WHAT GOD IS NOT —

To gain a further perspective of what God is, it is also important to understand what God isn't. We could make a list of what God is not that could go on *ad infinitum*, but some more important aspects of what God isn't may be helpful to develop a more realistic perspective of God. We begin the discussion with stating “God isn't human.” We have

² Raphael, Daniel 2017 *God for All Religions — Re-Inventing Christianity and the Christian Church*. Available as a downloadable PDF from <https://sites.google.com/view/danielraphael>

"humanized" God, but God is not human. God is God. The Creator is perfect and unwavering. We have anthropomorphized God by creating a god in our own image with the weaknesses of human nature. But that is an incomplete and inaccurate picture of God.

For those who had inadequate or absent father figures during their formative years, it is very UNfortunate that God has been cast as a male – a father figure living in the clouds at the end of an infinitely tall ladder. This has set up certain expectations for us that are both positive and negative. We have set ourselves up for expectations of our Heavenly Parent similarly as our earthly father role model. That is an unfortunate parallel for many of us because it hampers and even inhibits a healthy, loving relationship with God. While the highest combined role of a human father and mother is far less than the wonderfully loving nature of our heavenly Parent, it does portray a fair approximation of God's nature: An unqualifiedly loving, benevolent, and just Father-Mother-Creator.

If we see God without form or substance, without gender or emotion, without race or creed, then we have come a long way toward seeing God as The Creator really is. But how can The First Great Source and Center of the universe be a God of love, and yet be without emotion? The answer lies in our interpretation of God's benevolence. We interpret God's unconditional giving, sharing, watch-care, and universal benevolence as love. Try looking at it through this example: Suppose you had a neighbor you never met and didn't ever see, but whose presence was very evident in many intriguing ways. Suppose she quietly planted flower bulbs and seeds in the fall, which in the spring surprised you with blooming flowers. Suppose she quietly arranged it so that you got the right job that helped you fulfill your family's needs. Suppose she was able to put you into situations where you had to grow, and though the times were rough you were glad you had gone through them because you had grown. And suppose she was able to mysteriously answer your sincere requests that were in keeping with your highest good. If you had a neighbor like that, you would interpret his or her actions as "loving." Think of God as a neighbor who is eternally, universally, unconditionally, and unlimitingly generous and "good." We interpret God's unlimited and unconditional benevolent behavior toward us as "loving."

THE LIMITATIONS OF GOD, AND OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY —

Nothing limits God but God, Itself. If we argue that The Creator can do anything and create anything, then we must also include in that argument that God can also set limits on what It does with Its power and authority. Succinctly, to deny the possibility of God's volitional self-limitation would amount to a denial of the concept of God's volitional absoluteness.

God has defined Itself to be of one Nature: Perfection.

God is all powerful, all-knowing, unchanging, eternal — complete perfection — perfect in every way. God does not act against Its own nature, because doing and being less would be contrary to Its perfection. Consistent with God's nature, however, God has the power and authority to will to do anything.

We can apply this same logic to our own lives. "Why would we want to express and be less than the greatest of our potential?" Why, indeed? Why would we express and be less than the potential of goodness that we are capable of? These are not rhetorical questions, but questions whose answers are pregnant with hope and potential. Only by aligning with and exercising the innate God-potential within us can we discover ways to overcome difficulties in our relationship with others and particularly with ourselves.

God limits Itself where self-will of humans occurs.

God has not, does not, and will not violate the initiative of our self-will. Our self-will is an inviolable aspect of God's relationship to creatures that have will. This is self-evident when we examine the self-destructive decisions we make and God does not interfere.

We make millions upon millions of decisions each day, yet none is transgressed by God or Its spiritual legions. Why? Because, if God began changing the outcome of our decisions and actions, several things could occur: We would wise up and realize that someone (God) was changing the outcome of our decisions; we would defer deciding what to do in favor of God making the right decision the first time; we would not give

Careful thought to our decisions knowing that God would intervene and make it right for us; we would not learn – gain in wisdom – from our decisions; we would not gain in spiritual insight and growth to make better decisions as we live out our lives. By making better decisions, our souls grow from the challenges presented to us in our lifetimes, and this enhances our potential to become survivors in the duration of our ascendant spiritual career.

Total freedom – total responsibility.

Without total freedom and total responsibility for our self-will decisions, the potential for complete, fulfilling growth in the infinity of time of our lives would be denied to us. God limits Himself in our lives to provide us with the possibility to express and fulfill the totality of our potential on all levels of our being, just as God does.

Many people have a generalized anxiety and fear about God's relationship to them. Their fear and anxiety is usually due to their old beliefs that, because God created the universe and all that is in it, God is responsible for all of it and what happens in it. They fear that God will unilaterally judge them and take action according to all their errors. This is simply archaic thinking.

Ultimately, with total freedom, *we* are totally responsible for our actions, not God. There is no need for fear or anxiety on our part concerning God's intentions or actions for us. This being so, the real source of our anxiety originates from our confidence or lack thereof in our own ability to lead our lives as responsible citizens on this planet and in the universe. There is much to fear, but not God. God has generously given us all the necessary attributes of Himself, particularly self-awareness, and furthermore has provided a pattern, an example to follow. When we become self-aware of the necessity of becoming a responsible decision-maker, we have come a long way to becoming a responsible, co-creative partner with the Presence of God within. Then we will know that the course of our life is shared, and our anxieties will dissolve. With the Presence of God within as our guide and co-creative partner in life, we empower the flow of our lives in the right direction when we begin to "Let go, and let God."

CONFUSING "BAD THINGS" WITH THE NATURE OF GOD —

Very simply, all that exists in the world is that which is of people and that which is not of people. Following this logic, the tragedies and traumas of life are caused by: 1) the events of *nature* that injure people, 2) the result of *decisions we make* that are harmful, and 3) the result of *decisions other people* make that are harmful.

Death is perhaps the worst "bad thing" most people consider that could happen to them. In the broader perspective of our infinite lifetime, death is necessary for us to move on to the next phase of our infinite life-experience. It is not to be feared, and only to be avoided because it decreases our ability to gather greater wisdom of the process of living from imperfection to perfection on this material plane.

For people who have not had the benefit of a near-death experience, death represents an irrevocable transition from being "of people" to the realm of "not people." Those who have had a near death experience understand and know that this lifetime is simply one short phase of an infinite lifetime. Once past this material plane, they have come to realize that they are still "of people" but not material.

When "bad things" happen to us, it is not an indication that God is angry with us. God is perfect. God is loving, and in perfect love there is no anger. Simply assigning the responsibility for all bad things that occur in the world to God is a child-like way of resolving the situation and a result of lazy thinking. Nonetheless, suffering does occur. People do get hurt, either physically, emotionally, mentally, socially, or any other number of results from "bad things."

Many, but not all, people have become distant in their relationship to God because they were taught that God created the painful events and situations that affect them personally. This single mistaken belief has led believers to think of God as having two natures. To them, God simultaneously is a mean and hurtful being, yet a loving, kind, and forgiving benefactor. This raises questions about God's nature. What is God's true nature, good guy or bad guy? People with this fallacious concept of God wouldn't know from one minute to the next which of God's natures they were dealing with. When people think of God as having two or more natures, they have anthropomorphized God and they come to distrust God.

"Bad things" due to acts of nature.

Concerning acts of nature, nature is a place of gravity, rocks, water, weather, trees, and other growing things. Acts of nature include all aspects of nature not capable of self-will. The physical laws of nature we are acquainted with have been in place for billions of years, and are mechanical and not subject to amendment with any predictability. The travesties of nature that befall us are like the rain. They fall upon the good and the bad alike, without malice or preference.

For instance, imagine that you are on vacation driving along a highway under a steep, rocky embankment, pulling a travel-trailer behind your car. Suddenly a large boulder crashes down onto the trailer. That is a "bad thing," as most all of us would agree that occurred as an act of nature. Nothing personal about it — it just happened. Though God set into motion the creation of the world including its rocks and the laws of gravity, God didn't actively cause the rock to fall down and ruin your vacation. You just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Nothing personal about it. Had you passed earlier or later, the boulder would have merely cratered the highway rather than your trailer. Remember, it wasn't a premeditated act of God to harm you.

On the other hand, although God didn't actively cause the accident, God also didn't keep you from harm, either. You might ask, "Why didn't God save our trailer from that act of nature that destroyed it?" The answer is this: As we saw earlier, since God is all-wise, there is no need to change the initial decisions made on how reality, including nature, should work. Once set in motion, it does what it is supposed to do even when we get in the way. If God intervened in the events of our lives, we would come to expect God to do so, and we would abandon our quest for personal growth and maturity. We would not be challenged by life. Life would become easy and we would become lazy, uncreative, unchallenged, uninventive, and so on. Further, we would feel that our lives were being controlled and we would resent being pawns of God. Intervention by God in our lives to prevent harm works against our need to grow, mature, develop values, and pursue the ennobling qualities of our humanity.

If we prayed for a successful trip on our vacation and our trailer was hit by a boulder, that does not mean that God either caused the boulder to hit the trailer or that God did not prevent it from hitting the trailer. It simply means that it was an act of nature. For myself, I would give great thanks

to God that the boulder did not hit the car and kill or injure us! Was our prayer answered or not?

"Bad things" due to human decisions.

Of the two categories of "bad things," the most complicated involves "bad things" that are caused by people. Considering that decisions and actions can be intentional or unintentional, personal or impersonal, "bad things" caused by human behavior can get complicated.

However, in none of these cases does God cause the "bad things." "Bad things" caused by people are products of independent will. God created us with free will, and God will not (God wills not to) interfere with our decisions – or anybody's decisions of any sort – after having given us the right to make our own decisions using our own free will. Remember, God is not capricious, fickle, or inconstant. God is constant and perfect. God doesn't change Its mind.

God does not and will not intervene in the self-willed decisions of people to either cause or prevent the tragedies of life, which come to us from our own decisions and actions, or from the decisions and actions of others. In any of these cases, personal self-will operates: ALWAYS. Self-will is sovereign within each of us. God has not, does not, and wills not to intervene in any of our decisions even when they are contrary to God's will.

Let us examine the most tragic, intentional human-decision catastrophe that has ever taken place – the Holocaust of World War II where six million Jews were intentionally exterminated by Hitler's Nazi regime. The question that theologians, ministers, priests, and anguished believers have asked thousands of times is, "Why didn't God intervene in this tragedy that took place over a period of many years?" The question assumes that God didn't, but neither learned church scholars nor believers know if God did or didn't intervene without their awareness.

The answer is a refrain of the above statements: Individuals have self-will, not groups of people. Individuals determine the course of their life by every decision, whether significant or insignificant. The Holocaust took place over a period of many years because hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of people of Germany and other countries individually agreed with that policy of extermination by their commission or omission

to act. On the other hand, courageous individuals as Schindler (*Schindler's List*) saw that a higher choice was available, made a decision, and took action to save Jews who would certainly have become ashes in the ovens of Nazi death camps.

Where was God?! Ever present in the hearts and minds of those courageous individuals, just as God's Fragment was present in the minds of those who chose and acted to kill innocent Jews. God's Divine Fragment was present – waiting for the individual to invite God to aid his or her decision for loving-action. God's participation is not a dance of marionettes, but a co-creative dance of two living, willing partners – The Creator and each one of us. To realize God's Presence inside us is an act of will. God won't force Itself into our awareness! We have to make the effort. It is solely our decision to make – God has already made the decision to be in relationship with us.

Do you see how relevant this is to you, you personally, today? It is relevant to each of us every day in every decision we make. *Decisions are made by individuals, not societies.* God does not intervene whether ten or one hundred or one hundred billion people err. God's influence is not fickle or capricious but always consistent and subtle, allowing for the *individual* to will the course of his or her life into being. In this regard, the course of nations is determined by the decisions and actions of *individuals*, whether they lead or follow, whether they decide to act or not, or ignore to decide! God is present with the individual, acting in concert with the invitation of the individual. The Holocaust is a good example of God demonstrating complete respect for the sovereign will of the individual. The tragedies of societies are always, first, tragedies of individuals whether they are victims or persecutors. What could be more damning to a soul's infinite existence than a person's conscious will-decision to terminate the life course of one or hundreds of thousands of innocent victims?

"GOOD THINGS," "BAD THINGS," AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH –

Yes, the world is a tough place to live in, and it's easy to die here if you're not careful – sometimes without even knowing you're going to. But it isn't an impossibly difficult world to live in, either. Our species has grown, matured, become smarter, and wiser, not by being lazy and slothful,

decadent or unproductive, but by the tough challenges of living and overcoming them.

We wonder why there is so much difficulty and trouble in the world, most of it created by people, including ourselves. Yet, difficulties do provide experience and wisdom in the use of our will to consciously and intentionally overcome them. Tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, droughts, earthquakes, and human needs provide an environment for decision-making for exercising our will in situations that test and stretch our strengths. In that stretching, we grow.

God created the universe, set laws into place, and then gave us a mechanical, electrochemical body and brain, a mind, and a will to direct and train the mind and make decisions that hold the potential to develop our spirituality and contribute to the growth of our soul. We learn from our mistakes and from right choices and decisions. These experiences aid and guide our decisions that advance the maturity of our personality, increase our wisdom, and help us learn to love better each day.

Overcoming the difficulties of life and surviving tragedies tempers our character and our personalities, giving us a history in our soul by which our surviving spirit will be known after our physical death. Our record of decisions marks our capacity for soul survivorship. What this means is that our decisions, as humans on this material plane, enhance or diminish our capability to overcome the challenges of survival in the many eras of our afterlife experiences. Our soul is the record, or storehouse of wisdom, that returns to us in the afterlife after our material dissolution (mortal death). If you make no decisions during your lifetime, then there is no wisdom to go forward with you.

Our intentions tell of the direction of our longings. Shakespeare accurately said that all the world is but a stage upon which we act our lives. Had God made it easy for us to live without risk, then we would become lazy, slothful, ignorant, and generally unproductive without need or want to progress and improve the way we live, and especially the way we think, what we think, and the choices we make. We would not have developed to the point where we could express our loving nature, no matter how immature it may be, or our willingness to become like God. Difficulties exist to force us to choose the way we act and react to life, to choose what we will become. An easier life does provide more immediate choices for

growth, though there is often less motivation to choose challenging avenues of growth.

The uncertainties of life and the vicissitudes of existence do not in any manner contradict the concept of the universal sovereignty of God. All evolutionary creature life is beset by certain inevitabilities. Consider the following:

Is **courage** – strength of character – desirable? Then must every [person] be reared in an environment that necessitates grappling with hardships and reacting to disappointments.

Is **altruism** – service to one's fellows – desirable? Then must life experience provide for encountering situations of social inequality.

Is **hope** – the grandeur of trust – desirable? Then must human existence constantly be confronted with insecurities and recurrent uncertainties.

Is **faith** – the supreme assertion of human thought – desirable? Then must the mind of man find itself in that troublesome predicament where it ever knows less than it can believe.

Is **the love of truth** and the willingness to go wherever it leads – desirable? Then must man grow up in a world where error is present and falsehood always possible.

Is **idealism** – the approaching concept of the divine – desirable? Then must man struggle in an environment of relative goodness and beauty, surroundings stimulative of the irrepressible reach for better things.

Is **loyalty** – devotion to highest duty – desirable? Then must man carry on amid the possibilities of betrayal and desertion. The valor of devotion to duty consists in the implied danger of default.

Is **unselfishness** – the spirit of self-forgiveness – desirable? Then must mortal man live face to face with the incessant clamoring of an inescapable self for recognition and honor. Man could not dynamically choose the divine life if there were no self-life to forsake. Man could never lay saving hold on righteousness if there were no potential evil to exalt and differentiate the good by contrast.

Is **pleasure** — the satisfaction of happiness — desirable? Then must man live in a world where the alternative of pain and the likelihood of suffering are ever-present experiential possibilities.

The confusion and difficulties on our planet do not signify that God and Its administrators lack either interest or ability to manage affairs differently. God possesses the power to make our planet a veritable paradise, but that would not contribute to the development of those strong, noble, and experienced characters that God so surely is forging out on our world between the anvils of necessity and the hammers of anguish. Our anxieties and sorrows, trials and disappointments are just as much a part of God's divine plan for our world and our lives as the exquisite perfection and infinite adaptation of all things to their supreme purpose on Paradise — heaven. ³



³ *The URANTIA Book*, [3:5.6]

Questions and Answers about God and Creation

There are ultimate, universal realities that are eternally existent: 1) God exists; 2) God is love; 3) you are truly important to The Creator. Your existence is precious to God, and you are cherished *every* moment of your life. What this means is that God already has a personal and intimate relationship with you. God truly loves you, for only *through you* can God gain the experience of existence as a process of living. God cares for you and has provided a generous universe to support and assist you individually to have a meaningful and fulfilling life. There is no positive benefit for God when you suffer the harsh difficulties of life, but only when you overcome these difficulties with positive, constructive, and loving effort. Though you may challenge this eternal fact, that is the underlying reality of God's relationship to you and to each of us.

1. Why did The Creator create the universe?

For similar reasons that you go on vacations by yourself, and sometimes with others. You enjoy a personal experience. You enjoy getting to know who you are in larger terms. You gain experience in doing so and learn more about yourself. In that way, it probably was not much different for The Creator than it is for us. But, for The Creator, it was, in other ways, profoundly vast and eternally different.

First, you become aware that you want an experience that is broader than what you have been having. Second, you think about what it is you'd like to do and make plans. And third, you actually do something to bring that new experience into existence. It is reasonable that God was in much the same situation before creation. Before creation, there was just God, only God – God alone. God had not yet expressed Itself.

2. What attribute did God have to want to create the universe?

In the situation before creation, God could only experience Itself by being conscious of Itself. God had *consciousness*. Consciousness is the essential

common attribute of God and us! Consciousness is thinking and wondering about our existence and experiences. Being conscious expands our ability to live consciously, to experience more of life and living. To experience more than consciousness, God had to *express* Itself. Doing so, God created the universe and became "The Creator."

Without the first step, consciousness, we cannot become more than we are, or express ourselves in ways that fulfill all the potential that lies within us, just as God did. Consciousness is that God-like attribute that enables us to become aware of the immense, innate, and undeveloped potential within us. Consciousness leads us to the awareness that we have options and choices for living. Our journey of life is very similar to what God must have experienced before creation – an awakening awareness of needing to experience more of ourselves. The next step is to choose to *express* our will to bring our undeveloped potential into existence – and then experience and enjoy what we have created, ...even if that is a vacation.

We can surmise that the first experience of the universe was The Creator's awareness of Itself as solely alone without extension into any dimension beyond Itself. From this position, The Creator expressed Its innate capability – to create. And from this thought sprang the expanding universe, as we see and experience it today.

Surely, The Creator must have enjoyed watching the universe unfold, develop, and expand. Yet, a difficulty became apparent, if we can call it that. God existed and enjoyed the *finite* universe from the "outside" looking in. For us, it would be much like being in an airplane looking out the window. You are inside and everything else is outside. The only thing you can experience is what is inside the airplane. To experience the sky, you would have to become a bird.

3. What does the universe provide that The Creator could not get without it?

The creation of the universe gave The Creator the *experience* of expressing Its potential to create. It gave The Creator the *experience* of creating.

Of all that existed and now exists in the universe, the one thing truly new that is added to the universe is experiences of those who live in it. Look at

it this way: If The Creator knows all there is to know, nothing would be new to know. As you probably realize, The Creator is a curious being, a characteristic of people "created in God's image" on all planets. If you are curious, you too will wonder about your life and ask, "Is this all there is?"

Do you see that simple point? Before creation, God had no way of experiencing, beyond self-awareness. God's existence was neither dead nor alive. The Creator was not dead for it had not lived. The Creator existed but was not living. In such a situation, you would ask, "Is this all there is?" The Creator probably did, too, and in less than an instant the totality of all-potential of a dimensional universe sprang into existence and will continue to expand into the Infinite Ages.

4. Once the physical universe was created, did this new relationship help The Creator experience Itself?

In that instant immediately following the initiation of Creation, which you would estimate at less than a nanosecond of time, God knew all that could be known about Its relationship to the dimensional universe and the totality of the universe that would come into being. All matters of the dimensional universe are predictable when you know all the laws of physics and you are also the "Grand Absolute Actuary" of the universe. Perhaps an overly developed metaphor is that the dimensional universe, devoid of sentient beings, is a grand, four-dimensional billiard table that is not limited by gravity, other than that which emanates from the center of the physical universe, and by the rotational motion of the whole of the universe.

In that moment, God knew that to experience the universe in a more intimate relationship it would be necessary to exist simultaneously *as an experiential being inside the dimensional universe*, as well as being outside of time and the dimensional universe as the Eternal Creator in Paradise. Doing so, to continue the metaphor, God could simultaneously enjoy the experience of flying as a bird in the clouds, while still being "inside the airplane," i.e., the eternal universe, Paradise.

Although The Creator could observe all that was existent within the universe, God was, nonetheless, separate and apart from it. God resides in the Eternal Now of Paradise (without dimension or time), while the physical universe exists in time as an infinite, developmental, material presence "outside" of Paradise.

The physical universe and its three dimensions provide measurable boundaries, while the fourth dimension, time, provides a way of measuring the process of existence, i.e., living. Living is a process of experiencing all that is around us from one development to another, as time passes. Without the universe, without some expressed form or manifestation of The Eternal Creator's potential, The Creator would have no process of existence to experience Itself and know Itself. The process of existence is what we call living; living provides experience for knowing ourselves.

While God The Creator encompasses all *existent* knowledge, even the omniscient God, the One who knows all, cannot know that which has not taken place, i.e., God cannot know that which does not exist. The future is predicated upon the present and what occurs in the present. The decisions we make today will affect the rest of our lives. If no one made any new decisions, the future would not change. You see, the future is predictable but only if no changes are made in the present. Any decisions and actions that are made today cause the future to become different. Think of it in terms of making a cake. Mix the ingredients together and pour the batter into a pan. If the batter is not placed in the oven, it will remain the same almost indefinitely. But, put the pan of batter into the oven, and the future of the batter changes. Soon you have cake! The actions taken thirty minutes earlier changed the outcome.

5. Why did The Creator create imperfect beings who would make errors?

Because God is not material, has no dimensions, and exists outside of the finite physical universe. The element that was needed for God to experience the process of living was an extension of Itself *within* people who would live within the infinite universe. This extension is an ethereal wisp of God's Consciousness — something very distinct and identifiable of God in every aspect. Some people call this fragment “the Presence of God,” “the Kingdom of God,” “the Father Fragment,” or the “Holy Spirit.” Due to the gender of the word “father,” the Fragment will be referred to as the “Divine Fragment” in the rest of the book. It is through the Divine Fragment in each of us that The Creator personally experiences the universe as a process of existence — living. A Divine Fragment of God resides in us and experiences living through us!

We have all the necessary attributes of God that make this possible. Consider your own being. You are innately *curious*. You are also invested with *self-will*, will that is totally supported and guided by your own *intelligence, wisdom, and spontaneous insights*. Your will expresses in ways that are truly God-like, many of which you have only partially explored.

All these attributes of The Creator are primary to our being like The Creator. Yet, the attribute that is foundational to the development of our conscious, co-creative relationship with the Divine Fragment is the attribute that is foundational to God: *Consciousness*. Our consciousness is the frontier where we become aware that we are not alone, but are accompanied by "the other" who travels with us in our life's course. The ethereal wisp of God's Consciousness in us and our own consciousness provide the window and doorway for a conscious and intimately personal relationship between God and us!

Though you have a finite beginning, you are given the possibility of an infinite life. You can live into the future for as long as The Creator will, if you make that choice and act on it. You have the innate capacity to learn, to grow, and to guide the evolution of your own spiritual development, which is inherent with the ascendant spiritual career. Lastly, you have choice of all that is in you and surrounding you, notwithstanding congenital physical and mental problems of some individuals.

Primary to our development is our ability to be self-aware — *consciousness*. When we are self-aware, we begin to question our existence, probably as God did before the universe was created. Only when we question our existence, and become aware of ourselves as having the God-like abilities to choose, decide, and act to change our lives, can we truly, consciously experience life as a *conscious process* of living. Until then, we will be dependent upon what the world dishes out to us.

Only through the willing participation of imperfect humans, who aspire and strive toward perfection of being, while interacting with all aspects of the universe and each other, can The Creator experience the *process of becoming* perfect.

Look at it this way: As a child you looked at yourself and knew yourself as who you were, not knowing any differently. But through your curiosity and your desire for an easier and more fulfilling life, you began to explore

your being and to express its potential. Through experience and interacting with life and all its challenges, you became aware of who you were as fulfilled and unfulfilled potential. So, too, with God The Creator.

The joy of God's perfection of being can only be achieved and understood through the process of living from imperfection to perfection, if we accept the challenge. God can only experience this through us! And though this may take billions of years involving trillions upon trillions of ordinary people and created beings over the span of an immense dimensional universe that continues to expand, there is no necessity to hurry the process, but to enjoy it – both for all of us who engage the challenge and for God The Creator, and all Its helpers. No one loses, as it is to every creature's benefit to win, if you wish to put it into a win-lose context.

Only through imperfect beings, who have total freedom and total responsibility for their lives through the choices they make as they wrest a living in each moment, could The Creator experience existence AS a personal process of living. Only through the most imperfect of beings could The Creator experience the process of becoming perfect – and only through those people who make decisions to survive, then perpetuate their survival, learn, gain experience, and make wiser and wiser decisions and create a more profound life. We learn to live in harmony with others, then with their planet, and then the universe. Some do not succeed, but only because they consciously decide not to continue, which is unfortunate but wholly their choice.

You can see then that life has purpose but only you can give it meaning. The purpose of life is to live and grow. The meaning you give it is your own life's expression of how you live your life to the fullness of your potential.

6. Why is our imperfection important to The Creator?

Almost immediately after the creation of the dimensional universe, God could predict all that could be known about the universe, even into the ageless infinity of the future. Though God knew all, God could not experience a relationship with Itself, or know Itself other than as The Creator. Initiation of material beings who would live on habitable worlds was begun, whereupon began the "seeding" of the universe with fragments of The Creator in individual humans when they were ready.

These "Divine Fragments" contain all the attributes of The Creator to promote growth and the eventual development of attributes of God-like qualities in the lives of material beings in the dimensional universe. Thus, The Creator could participate in the settling and development of the universe *not only through but also in and with* those individuals. The investment of so many God-potential attributes provides us with an ever-expanding potential. This too is necessary for God to experience the process of becoming perfect through our imperfection as we approach perfection through the expression of all of our potential capabilities.

This plan could only provide results approaching perfection if humans were in many ways created in The Creator's image with many attributes inherent in their being, with total freedom of will, and total responsibility for their will and their actions, similar to The Creator. That is why The Creator did not create automatons or perfect beings for this task, but imperfect beings. Is this not an ingenious solution and absolute paradox of sorts?

Reasonably, the all-knowing, Eternal Creator of the universe was curious enough about a personal relationship with Itself that It brought into existence short-lived, unknowing, and imperfect material beings to assist in that pursuit, and is loving enough to share it all with us. By doing so. The Creator also created an infinite and loving personal relationship with each of us. Each of us is personally needed, wanted, and loved by The Creator as though we were the only person in the universe that God loved. The relationship of The Creator with Itself is oneness, wholeness, and complete eternal love of self. In order for God to *experience* and enjoy this relationship, God extended that relationship to each of us, and we get to enjoy the benefits as our own. Take heart! God enjoys you, and me, and every person. And we can best support that relationship when we strive to attune our lives to God's — as creators of oneness, wholeness, and unselfish love of self and others.

The benefits for both partners in this relationship are similar. The Creator receives the experience of living through the lives of each person, totally at risk that he or she may never aspire, let alone strive, to become like The Creator. We receive the opportunity to use all of these attributes as a finite creator to make decisions and take actions that will propel us along an infinite journey of life that will never end even after we are in the very presence of The Creator in Paradise. Then we will reside in eternity, in

Paradise, with God, as active, co-creative partners ready to serve God and those who are still on their ascendant spiritual journey.

This is neither a predatory nor vicarious relationship for either partner on this journey, but one that is highly beneficial and personal to both. The Divine Fragment is a guide, much like a pilot on a ship who guides the ship into safe harbor when the captain (your will, in this case) relinquishes control of the ship (your life) to the pilot. When we offer full cooperation to the Divine Fragment, we have engaged the journey with the most possible benefit to each of us.

7. Did God create us with any attributes to help us grow into perfection to join It in Paradise?

Because values always underlie decision-making, God gave us the freedom to make our own decisions; and gave us a set of values to guide our decision-making that would contribute to the success of our spiritual growth, maturity, and evolution – to eventually become more like God, loving in all our thoughts and actions.

SEVEN VALUES HAVE SUSTAINED OUR SPECIES' SURVIVAL



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“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries
Without them humanity cannot survive.”
— Dalai Lama

The characteristics of these seven values. Our conscious awareness of these values will eventually change the course of human destiny for the better. The self-evident nature of these values is only one of several *characteristics* that have obscured their presence while in plain sight.

- a. Timeless/Organic /Innate** — Even though I cannot prove it, statistical suggests that these seven values are organic to our species and are perhaps embedded in our DNA from our earliest

beginnings. They have motivated us, everyone, to yearn for the improvement of our *quality of life* materially and socially. We can safely predict that these same values will continue to motivate our species to enjoy an ever-improving *quality of life*, and to *grow* into our innate potential in future centuries and millennia.

b. Universal – These values are universal to all people of all races, cultures, ethnicity, nations, and genders. Ask anyone, whether they live in Buenos Aires or Baltimore, Houston or Hanoi, or any other city if they would like to develop the innate potential they brought into life ... to improve their *quality of life* with an *equal* ability as anyone else would or could. The answers are universally the same whether a poor person is asked or a multi-billionaire. Everyone I have talked to as a holistic life coach has chosen to improve the *quality of their life*, and *grow* into their potential.

c. Irreducible – The four primary values are the superordinate values of our species and are not subordinate to any other values. The pursuit of sustaining *life* and improving *equality*, *growth*, and *quality of life* provide the foundation for human motivation, as interpreted by the individual, and expressed in a personal hierarchy of needs. Together, these seven values provide us with a *unified, values-based theory of human motivation*. Eponymously, it becomes the *Raphael Unified Theory of Human Motivation*.

d. Self-Evident – The four primary values are self-evident similarly as those stated in the famous sentence in the United States Declaration of Independence, “*We hold these truths (values) to be self-evident, that all [people] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*” The proof of this becomes evident when people around the world are asked whether they would like to enjoy an improved quality of life, as they define it.

***Life* the ultimate value.** *Life* provides the pivotal element for the existence of the other six values as a *system of values*. Decisions made about life are qualified by the other six values that become the criteria for human decision-making, to express the highest values of human existence and our humanity.

The four primary values, (*life, equality, growth, and quality of life*), are the original cause of human motivation and material and social progress that have given us the capability to sustain our species over thousands of generations.

The three secondary values, (*empathy, compassion, and "love"*), are also organic to our species and share the same characteristics as the four primary values. *They exist in us as an impulse to do good. They are proof that people are innately good, and created that way!* For example, we want peace for others as much as we want peace for ourselves because we are wired with the values that make us human – humane.

These seven values give us the capability to choose to grow into our innate potential in the seven spheres of human development: Physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, and spiritual.

An integrated decision-making system of values. Because these two sets of values are innate to our being, they provide for a holistic, integrated, and consistent moral and ethical system of decision-making. They motivate us to progress individually and collectively, while also reaching out to others who are less able or capable of doing so for themselves. These seven values create a oneness of humanity that is only violated by willful decision-making.

When applied consciously, they can be used by anyone in any situation, whether personal, social, or organizational, whether religious, secular, corporate, political, or governmental to provide positive answers to difficult social problems and situations. As individuals and in organizations, through our decisions, actions, words, and thoughts we define our self as being one with all people, human and humane, or separate and apart.

8. Does God control everything?

Surely not, for that would be far less than The Creator's profound generosity. God has no need to control us, as that would limit God's ability to experience the universe through us. We are effectively controlled by our material nature and the decisions we make. While our material nature limits us, our spirit nature provides us with a means of liberation through the use of our will and the decisions we make. Thus, we have the capacity to liberate ourselves when we make decisions that contribute to the expression of our God-like attributes. There is a balance

at work: While our mechanical limitations provide for stability at the expense of progress, our spirit alliance liberates us from the physical level. Individually, as we gain universal insights and begin to comprehend the cosmic aspects and responsibilities of our decisions, we become more and more stabilized as a part of the larger universe. Doing so, we have less and less need for a material body to stabilize our reckless nature.

The stability of our life's course is important because our biological evolution has provided us with an immense lack of self-restraint. On one hand, that can be very detrimental to our finite existence, yet, on the other hand, it provides us with an immense capacity to try anything, and everything, to grow. Individually, it allows us to have a tremendous number of experiences from which we can gain vast treasures of wisdom, provided we use our mind to reflect upon those experiences to gain wisdom. And because of the energetic nature of our mind, this wisdom is imprinted and passed on to others through the universal mind function of spiritual epigenetics with the Infinite Spirit that connects everyone on our planet. The wisdom we gain after we beget children is not lost but passed on through this energetic circuit.

9. Does creation continue?

Yes. Is new energy created? Yes. The original expansion of the energetic universe continues to flow from the eternal center of the universe, never ending. Creation continues.

Our scientists look in the heavens and witness the birthing of stars from clouds of gasses, gasses that were formed from free atoms and molecules, and these having been formed from the material that is either particles or energy. For scientists and yourself, these formations of stars appear to come from nothingness, and so creation is seen to continue. When you are more fully aware of material formation, you will know that this is simply one evolutionary step of many – from nothingness through the super novae explosions that disseminate material far and wide.

Creation from our perspective is the manipulation of universe energy to form new phenomena. While The Creator controls universe energy, The Creator generously encourages many beings to manipulate that energy.

10. If God knows everything and is all-powerful, doesn't that mean that our lives are a part of God's plan for the universe and that the course of our lives is predestined?

As The Creator living outside of time, in eternity that is timeless, God has an awareness, omniscience, of all that exists and happens. Yet, foreknowledge of events does not mean that what occurs is foreordained. Though each of us has a pre-destined plan for our life, it is not foreordained. Just as God has free will, we have free will, too. It is free and unfettered by any set course.

Though the universe has a plan of development, how we live our life in that process is totally up to us, dictated by our decisions from day to day. And though we are invested with a Fragment of The Creator, that does not mean we are coerced to follow the course of the universe, what our Divine Fragment suggests, or to follow our own plan of life. God has no need or desire to interfere in our free-will decisions. As the way of the universe is the flow of harmony, God granted each person the freedom to make decisions to become a part of that harmony, or not.

11. If God doesn't control everything and we have creative powers similar to God, why are we so incapable?

We are so incapable because we are so immature in our awareness of the consequences of our thoughts, decisions, and actions. It is our material nature that limits us. Fortunately, we are in possession of a mind to make rational decisions to remain as we are, grow, or regress. By the use of our mind mechanism we can enrich and develop our spirit-potential, or not. Our spirit-potential is that new, budding, and emerging spirit-being that will be fully existent after our material death. Developing it in this lifetime helps us be a part of the flow of the universe. Doing so, we become capable members, partners, in the universe.

12. Does this mean that the whole race of humanity becomes more and more mature as each individual does?

Yes, and to the contrary, too. The consciousness of genocidal warfare that has spread among our kind is to the contrary and now infects most of our species. Positive, constructive decisions contribute to the maturity of our species, while negative, destructive decisions do not. Using wisdom is the application of past constructive experience, yet even destructive

experiences contribute to wisdom. Destructive past experiences give us the wisdom to say, "Not this way!" while positive experiences give us the wisdom to say, "This way!" It is still a matter of individual mind-decision. Each decision in our life is truly one that contributes to or tears down our life and others.

13. If genocide, for example, is spreading won't the planet eventually be lost due to destructive imprinting on human consciousness?

Yes, except for new efforts to give us a broader spectrum of choices for decisions.

14. Are illnesses, genetic flaws, and physical, mental, and emotional degeneration a part of God's plan for us?

Although God The Creator is ultimately responsible for the consequences that creation set into motion, our bodies are susceptible to damage by processes that are also a part of creation. At the grossest level, we can fall down and break bones, pulverize muscle tissue, snap tendons, and crush ligaments. At the most definitive level, chromosomes can break due to exposure to harsh conditions. Radiation and chemicals inside and outside the body can affect gene structure so that when chromosomal splitting and fusion occur, the problems are passed onto the next generation. It is not personal.

In a very elementary parallel, the problems of physical health are not much different from the physical problems of a house. Yet, people in our culture do not assign responsibility for the problems of their house, such as a leaking roof, to God. People have separated the house from themselves. So, too, will people on our planet ultimately understand that their body is not who they are and that God is not using their bodies as a medium of discontent for them. Our illnesses and degenerative problems were not assigned to us personally or generally, but are a result of the evolutionary development of our species. As these problems affect every human being, it is a general affliction of being a material, evolutionary being on an undeveloped material planet. We could say that God is disposed to hurting humans in general, and we could say that God is disposed to hurt us individually, since we take our illnesses and problems personally. But neither is the case. The reason God does not interfere in our lives individually or in general is because of the gift of free will.



Conclusions

The question from the Introduction “How does that work, anyway?” has been answered in the previous pages. We have discussed what God is and what God is not, what God does and what God does not do.

One of the major conclusions that needs to be made is to state what mortals are and what they are not, what they can do and what they cannot. Knowing that mortals have all of the major attributes of the Creator-God tells us that these are to be used along our mortal-spiritual journey to strive to become perfect as our Creator. What we have not discussed is why we do not have the other three main attributes of the creator.

We are not omniscient, that is, we do not know everything. To counter this absence, we are immensely curious to know and to experience as much as possible in order to unlock the innate potential we brought into life.

We are not omnipresent, that is, we are not present everywhere but are confined to this planet by gravity, and with a very finite lifetime. Even with many of the creative attributes of The Creator, our ignorance, naïveté, and innocence would be highly dangerous to the universe if we were able to “fly around” the universe poking our noses into everything and upsetting the order and pattern of other inhabited planets.

We are also not omnipotent, that is we are not all-powerful. And we can say, “Thank goodness!” that we are not, as our ignorant innocence, naïveté, and acquisitiveness for power and childish sense of entitlement would wreak havoc upon whole galaxies.

No, we are stuck here on this planet, literally by gravity, so as not to escape the purposes of our mortal-to-spiritual journey, if we choose to accept that challenge.

Though we are limited by our physical attributes, our mind has the capacity to think thoughts, thoughts that did not exist before. Although

we take that for granted, it is totally creative in nature. In imagining, we have created something that did not exist before. Our challenge then is to project that imaginative energy outward so as to “imprint” the quantum field to fulfill the pattern of our imaginative energy projection.

As the quantum field is the construct from which the pattern of the Infinite Universe was brought into existence, it is “of the nature of The Creator.” And if we are to emulate The Creator, then our attitudes, inclinations, and our whole being would need to be in alignment with the attitudes, values, and inclinations of The Creator.

As we are time-bound physical beings, getting acquainted with “divine timing,” “divine development,” and “divine order” would become our attempts to “think like The Creator.” ...where “thinking like The Creator” is the eminent act of bringing developments into existence. The three “divine statements” do not manifest a house, a car, or anything physical, but are our commands upon the Universe quantum field to bring about the right and perfect outcome of time-bound developments. For example, acceptance into college, a promotion, the arrival of children, and all of the developments that take TIME to bring about.

Our intention of life and our commitment to the path of BECOMING better citizens of the universe, starting with this planet, set the PATTERN for what comes into our life. Living morally, ethically, and with a social conscience then sets the ORDER for the pattern to become manifest in our lives.

And it all begins with the VALUES the Creator embedded in our species’ DNA during our evolutionary creation. These are our guide for making decisions and taking action that contribute to our spiritual journey.

On the pragmatic mortal plane, when we move our life along the “Hope Continuum” to know God, we come to understand that **KNOWING ONLY COMES INTO EXISTENCE THROUGH EXPERIENCE**. As with all mystics, to know God is to have personally experienced the presence of God.

For mortals the bounds of our lives are forever changed when we have had the experience of knowing God. Then we have moved from hope of knowing God, to the faith of knowing God, to the trust that we can actually know God, and then the experience of knowing God.

Hope → Faith → Belief → Trust → KNOWING

Our work as spiritual metaphysical students is to KNOW what is to come into our lives before we practice spiritual metaphysics principles. When we do so, we have successfully engaged the process of **BECOMING**.

The ontology of **becoming**. ... The concept of "**becoming**" in philosophy is connected with two others: movement and evolution, as **becoming** assumes a "changing to" and a "moving toward." **Becoming** is **the process** or state of change and coming about in time and space. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Becoming_\(philosophy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Becoming_(philosophy))

In our case as spiritual metaphysical students our ambitious project for becoming leads to our becoming the image of The Creator. The paraphrased words of Jesus fulfill this conclusion with his statement, "Be(come) perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." In a more simplified form, when our will and consciousness are in alignment with God's will we are able to create great good through our mind action.

Let's begin with peace. In order to create peace, we must first know peace; and knowing peace requires us to have had the experience of being at peace from within.



BIO: Daniel Raphael, PhD

Daniel Raphael is an independent, original thinker, and futurist. He is a Vietnam veteran with 18-years of experience working in adult felony criminal corrections; father of three and grandfather of four children; former volunteer fireman, small business owner, inventor, and manufacturer of a household sewing machine product; self-taught theologian, ethicist, and holistic life coach; principal of Daniel Raphael Consulting since 2003; and a remarkably unsuccessful self-published author of numerous books, papers, and articles. Daniel enjoys public speaking and has taught numerous classes and workshops nationally and internationally.

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- * Creator of The EMANATION Process, the core process of Stage 3 Democracies.
- * Creator of The Design Team Process, which incorporates the seven values and subsequent ethics and morality, the Raphael Design and Validation Schematic, and specific Design Team member roles.
- * Discoverer of the seven innate values of the Homo sapiens species
- * Creator of the Raphael Unified Theory of Human Motivation
- * Creator of the Raphael Unified Theory of Social Change
- * Originator of A Universal Theory of Ethics, Morality, and Values
- * Creator of Learning Centers for Sustainable Families
- * Discoverer of the Four Foundations for Sustainable Civilizations
- * Creator of the Raphael Premise and Hypothesis for the Existence of Dark Matter and the Increasing Rate of Expansion of the Universe

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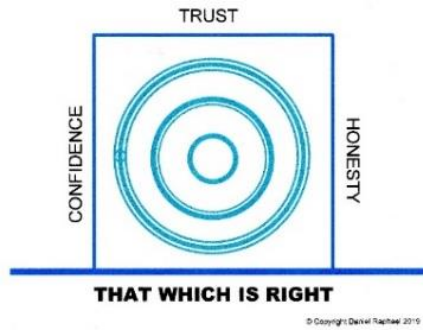
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Dream no small dreams for they have no power
to move the hearts of men [and women].

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749-1832



A Theology for New Thought Spirituality

by

Daniel Raphael, PhD

ABSTRACT. If we believe that there is an ultimate and original creator of the infinite universe, then we must as well accept that given the great age of the infinite universe all aspects of it are integral. This means that there are no elements or aspects that are adrift, detached, and isolated from the rest of the universe, whether that means the physics involving the ultimately smallest subatomic particles or the operation of the whole of the infinite universe.



For students of spiritual metaphysics, this also means that the mind of The Creator and our mind are in many ways similar. Mind, then, underlies creation, whether the original creation of God or the creation of a new thought by us, individually. The repercussions are profound, which are dependent upon us, individually, striving to become perfect as The Creator. That is, that our mind becomes clearer and clearer of any conflicts of thought within us, whether it is our values, beliefs, assumptions, or expectations, particularly about what God is and Its relationship to each of us.

The most fundamental place to start, in order to have clarity of our capability to create, is having a clear, operational understanding of God and Its relationship to each of us and to all humanity. This little book will give spiritual metaphysical students much to think about to answer their perennial question, "How do I become more effective in my metaphysical practices?"

