

God is Relative

Byron Batz, Ph.D.

© 2026 Byron Batz. All rights reserved.

No part of this work may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the author, except in the case of brief quotations used in reviews, academic work, or other permitted uses under copyright law.

GOD IS RELATIVE

God is everything imagination imagines God to be.

Some traditions speak of God as a being, a presence with intention, personality, and will. Others speak of God as Being itself, the ground of existence, the “is-ness” from which all things arise. Some imagine God as energy, the pulse that animates galaxies and breathes through every living cell. Others see God as plural, a chorus of forces, archetypes, or deities. Still others insist on oneness, a unity so complete that division is an illusion.

And then there is a more unsettling possibility, that God is not something we discover, but something we create. Not necessarily in the sense of fabrication or fiction, but in the sense that humans give shape to the ineffable. We carve metaphors around mystery. We name what overwhelms us. We personify what we fear, love, or cannot comprehend. In this view, God is the language we use to speak about the unspeakable.

Then, who is God?

What is God?

Where is God?

These questions sit at the crossroads of metaphysics, psychology, culture, and longing. They are less like riddles to be solved and more like mirrors that reveal the shape of the one who asks.

Perhaps God is not a being but a relationship. Not an entity but a direction. Not a noun but a verb, the ongoing act of creation, emergence, and becoming.

Perhaps God is the convergence of all questions into a singularity while simultaneously the same questions expand into infinity.

Not the solution, not the conclusion, not the final word, but the force that keeps consciousness collapsing, stretching, departing, reaching, and wondering into the endless. The impulse behind curiosity. The spark behind every “why.” The restlessness that refuses to let the universe settle into nothingness.

In this view, God is not the one who knows.

God is the one who asks.

And we, each of us, are the instruments through which that question echoes. This aligns beautifully with John Archibald Wheeler's idea of a self-observing universe: a cosmos that becomes real through the act of being perceived, a universe that looks back at itself through the eyes of conscious beings. Wheeler suggested that the universe is not a static thing but a participatory loop, observer and observed co-creating reality.

So, God may be the universe asking itself who or what God is.

Every perspective, every interpretation, every analysis, every spiritual tradition becomes one more attempt by the cosmos to understand its own nature. Each human viewpoint is a data point in the divine inquiry.

Across the ages, humans have tried to answer the question of God. Not because the answer is close, but because the question refuses to leave us alone.

We have searched for God in natural sciences, hoping that the laws of physics might whisper the name of their lawgiver. In Philosophy, where reason tries to stretch itself toward the infinite. In Religion, where stories, rituals, and symbols give shape to what cannot be held. In Imagination, which dares to picture what the mind cannot grasp. In Psychology, which wonders whether God is an embodiment, a projection, or a reflection of the self. In Neuroscience, which traces the electrical storms that accompany awe, prayer, and transcendence. In Medicine, which observes the strange resilience of the human spirit in the face of suffering. In Dreams, where the unconscious speaks in images older than language.

And yet, after all these attempts, the question remains open, perhaps deliberately so.

Every method reveals something, but none reveals everything. Science shows us order, but not meaning. Philosophy shows us logic, but not presence. Religion shows us devotion, but not certainty. Psychology shows us projection, but not transcendence. Dreams show us symbols, but not their source.

Or perhaps God, if such a reality exists, refuses to be reduced to any one lens. And so we are left with a profound ambiguity. Either we are the ones who created God, shaping the divine in our image to soothe our fears, explain our world, and give meaning to our lives. Or God is the one who created us, and our endless attempts to understand the divine are like a single skin cell trying to understand the human body.

Or perhaps the most mysterious possibility, both are true. That in seeking God, we shape God, and in shaping God, we are shaped in return.

I have come to believe that each of us carries a fragment of the answer, but no single fragment is ever whole. Every understanding is partial, every insight angled. What we call God is not a fixed point but a vastness, shaped, colored, and refracted by the lenses through which we look. God becomes relative not because the divine is small, but because our vantage points are.

God is the totality of all our attempts to name the unnamable, the sum of every angle from which consciousness has ever tried to see the infinite. What we perceive depends on the tint of our lenses, our histories, our wounds, our cultures, our fears, our curiosities, our doubts.

This is the heart of what I explore in my essay *One Infinite Color*: the idea that what we see is not a single hue but a spectrum so wide that no mind can take it all at once. Each of us glimpses through many lenses that create a unique, even beautiful, but immensely incomplete prism, and mistake that limited view for the whole.

The trouble we face as a species is not that people seek God, but that so many claim to have found God, fully, definitively, exclusively. Those who are convinced they “know God” often cling to a single, inherited lens, usually a religious one, and mistake that narrow aperture for the entire horizon. The problem then arises when a single small part of the whole spectrum declares itself the entire light.

There is something almost tragicomic about this. Many of us struggle to understand our own inner lives, let alone the hearts of those closest to us. Yet we speak with absolute certainty about the most mysterious presence in the universe, as if the infinite could be captured by the vocabulary of one tradition or the worldview of one era.

In most cases, the fewer the lenses, the greater the confidence. The more limited the perspective, the more absolute the claims. It is like standing before a vast, shimmering ocean and insisting that the single cup of water in the hand is the whole of it.

God is not hiding. The divine is not some elusive presence tucked behind clouds or scriptures or rituals. Look in any direction, into the sky, into a stranger’s eyes, into the ache of your own heart, into a smile, into a flower, even into pain and suffering, and God is already there. On this point, I find myself aligned with religion: omnipresence may not be

doctrine, nor proven fact, yet it remains an observable truth. Maybe that observation is subjective, illusory, and even hopeful, but available to anyone willing to see.

But where religion often stops at presence, I go further. If God is everywhere, then God is everything. Not just the moments we celebrate, but the ones we flee. God is joy and sorrow, the warmth of a smile and the salt of a tear. God is the trembling before birth and the stillness after death. God is the wound and the healing, the hunger and the satisfaction, the breaking and the mending.

To deny this is to carve the divine into pieces, keeping only the parts that flatter our hopes and discarding the rest. But an infinite being cannot be curated. If God is truly omnipresent, then God is present in the full spectrum of human experience, light and shadow, ascent and descent, creation and collapse.

But this compels us to confront a difficult truth, that God, as imagined by human beings, becomes the distilled essence of our own emotional spectrum. The highest kindness and the deepest selfishness. The most generous heart and the most ravenous greed. The capacity for boundless love and the impulse toward consuming hate. The purest good and the purest evil.

In this view, divinity is not a being apart from us, but a mirror held to the extremes of what we can feel and become.

To encounter God is not to escape suffering, but to recognize that even suffering belongs to the same vast tapestry. The divine is not the opposite of pain, it is the context in which pain becomes meaningful. To see God only in the bright colors is to miss the depth, the contrast, the wholeness. The infinite includes every color and every shade.

If God is everywhere while simultaneously being everything, then the question naturally arises, what are we supposed to do with such a God? And the most honest answer may be the simplest one.

Nothing.

Not in the sense of neglect, but in the sense of release.

We do not need to manage God, serve God, defend God, interpret God, or contort ourselves to fit someone else's idea of God. Instead, the invitation is to live, fully, attentively, courageously. To experience the world with unchained senses and an open

heart. To let our existence be a kind of participation in the divine rather than an explanation of it.

If God is the totality, then our task is not to worship through fear or obedience, but through presence. To connect with the universe in a way that leaves a long-lasting ripple when we are gone. To connect with each other in a way that increases the net amount of light rather than shadow. To shape our brief moment of consciousness into something that adds, even slightly, to the harmony of the whole.

And perhaps most radically, we are invited to offer something back, to give God our perspective. Our joys, our disappointments, our questions, our astonishment. If God is the infinite experiencing itself through finite forms, then every honest encounter we have with life becomes a kind of feedback loop, a conversation with the cosmos.

So life is not a test but a dialogue.

Not a pilgrimage toward a distant deity, but an exchange with the very fabric of being. Not a quest to find God, but an opportunity to express what it feels like to be a conscious fragment of the infinite.

God does not demand our submission, our worship, our rituals, our devotion, our penance.

Only our sincerity.

Maybe God, simply, is genuinely interested in what you see, your angle, your interpretation, your lived encounter with the mystery. Therefore, our opinion is not blasphemy but contribution. It is one more color added to the spectrum of eternity.

And if you truly wanted to “impress” God, if such a thing is even possible, it would not be through obedience or conformity. Those are predictable. Those are easy to anticipate. Those are outdated and dull. An infinite being has seen every ritual, heard every prayer, memorized every repetition of inherited belief.

What God cannot predict, at least not in the human sense, is the moment you step out of the script. The moment you act from genuine freedom rather than fear. The moment you create something new rather than recycle what was handed to you. The moment you choose compassion when resentment would be easier.

The moment you surprise even yourself.

If God is the infinite experiencing itself through finite beings, then the only thing that stands out is the unexpected. Not rebellion for its own sake, but originality. Authenticity. A gesture that arises from the deepest part of your being rather than from the expectations of your culture or tradition.

In that light, to “impress” God is simply to be fully alive, to think your own thoughts, to feel your own feelings, to see the world through your own unrepeatable prism, and to offer that perspective back to the universe as something it has never seen before.

Maybe that is all living beings are here to do. Not to solve the universe. Not to decode God. Not to pass a test or earn a reward. But simply to live, to inhabit a slice of existence so the infinite can see itself from one more angle.

And at the end, whether that “end” is literal or metaphorical, we offer something back.

Our opinion.

Our viewpoint.

Our report from the front lines of being alive. It is not a judgment or a confession. It is not a scorecard. It is simply a perspective that only you could have produced. This makes existence feel less like a trial and more like a collaboration, a conversation with the fabric of reality itself.

If God is the question, then we are the answers-in-progress.

If God is the curiosity, then we are the observations.

If God is infinity asking, “What am I?”, then each life is one more attempt to respond.

Maybe there is no wrong answer.

If God is the question, the curiosity, the unfolding inquiry, then every response becomes part of the exploration. Even the answer that denies God’s existence. Even the silence. Even the refusal to participate in the metaphysical game.

The atheist’s answer, “There is no God,” is not a contradiction; it is a data point. A perspective. A legitimate angle. A contribution. A color in the spectrum. In fact, the atheist may offer something uniquely valuable, a view of the universe stripped of assumptions, stripped of inherited metaphors, stripped of the need for a divine narrator. That perspective is just as essential as the mystic’s vision or the believer’s devotion. It reveals what the cosmos looks like when consciousness stands entirely on its own feet.

Surely, God can absorb contradiction without breaking.

The believer's yes and the atheist's no are both reflections of the same mystery. Both are honest. Both are necessary. Both expand the conversation.

In this model, the only truly "wrong" answer is the one never offered, the life lived without reflection, without curiosity, without daring to return its singular angle back to the universe. As Socrates reminds us, "the unexamined life is not worth living," not as a reprimand, but as an invitation to participate in the ongoing conversation of existence.

There is only your answer, your angle, your color, your offering to the spectrum. And whatever form it takes, scientific, philosophical, or religious, it remains unfinished, incomplete. A fragment of a truth too vast for any single explanation to hold.

This, I can say with reserved confidence, God does not want replicas.

God wants revelations.

And each of us carries one.

© 2026 Byron Batz. All rights reserved.