

The essence or individuality of God is given as a datum implicitly in all of our most universal conceptions, i.e., transcendentals. All that is necessary is to make this implicit conception of God explicit.

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There is, with certain qualifications, a single religious idea of God. This is true, at any rate, if one prescind from fanciful mythical ideas of quasi-divine gods and demons and focuses attention solely on the higher religions. Once this is done, there is a rather definite, coherent, and universal idea that may be said to provide the religious meaning of the term "God." But although the idea of God is thus religious in intuitive origin, philosophy has tried, more or less successfully, to find logical forms or patterns appropriate to express this intuitive idea.

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The intuitive idea of God more or less adequately expressed by all religions (along with other logically independent accretions) may be defined in various ways, in essentially equivalent terms, as follows:

worshipfulness (or the worshipful One) \equiv unsurpassibility (both relative and absolute, i.e., both by another and even by self) \equiv nonfragmentariness \equiv modal all-inclusiveness.

Thus "God is whatever is the adequate object of unstinted or wholehearted devotion, whatever could be loved with all one's being" (Hartshorne).

Also, **modal all-inclusiveness \equiv modal coextensiveness \equiv modal coincidence.**

God is modally all-inclusive (\equiv modally coextensive \equiv modally coincident) in that God is all actuality unified into one individual actuality and all possibility unified into one individual potentiality, or capacity, for actuality.

God is "the all-inclusive yet individual actuality and the all-inclusive yet individual potentiality" (Hartshorne).

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It is not the case that everything is either actual or potential. The ultimate universals, or transcendentals, including the essence of God, are eternally real but are not and cannot be actual in themselves. This is because they are the common factors in all possibilities, abstract elements of being in all becoming. Events, by contrast, even though past, are not thus common to all (but only to some) possibilities and therefore are either actual or potential.

"Actual" means determinate, "potential," more or less indeterminate. Whitehead says, "definition is the soul of actuality" (*PRc*: 223) to which Hartshorne adds, "and the reason for its superior value"

Possibility is simply an aspect of existing individuals and therefore of the momentary actualities in which existing individuals are fully concretized or particularized. Actualities have data whose futures they further determine, and they themselves will in turn be data in actualities that are anticipated but not fully determined by their own futures as in the present, or as what not only can be but also must be further determined subsequently.

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The most concrete or determinate realities are not individuals, in the sense of things or persons existing through successive changes, but rather events, in the sense of momentary actualities that happen, that become and perish, but do not change—change being the successive becoming of distinguishable, if often closely related and very similar events, or actualities.

Individuality—even in ordinary cases—is relatively abstract or general as compared to the momentary events or actualities, the states, in which individuality is

concretized or particularized. But only God's individuality is so utterly abstract or general as to be a transcendental that, as such, is and must be somehow concretized or particularized in *all* momentary events or actualities whatever, possible as well as actual.

God is thus "the eminent individual, concretely actualized in an eminent form of actuality, one aspect of which is eminent possibility or futurity. 'Eminence' can be defined as 'unsurpassability by another,' the last two words indicating that self-surpassing is compatible with eminence," provided that it is "the eminent form of self-surpassing" and that "there must also be an eminent form of 'unsurpassability even by self'" (Hartshorne).

"[A]ll abstractions and possibilities are contained in concrete actuality, all past actuality [is contained] in present actuality, and all ordinary actuality [is contained] in divine actuality. Thus quite literally all reality is [contained] in God. And yet both God and every other individual have some creative freedom [God] is an individual, eminently acting upon and receiving influences from the nondivine individuals. The 'glory of God' is neither God apart from the world, nor the world and God, but the world taken into the divine life. And this life is genuinely such. It has a settled past and a future open to endless further enrichment" (Hartshorne).

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Anyone who says that she or he has no faith in God, and yet goes on living, thereby shows that she or he has faith in *something*. Let her or him explain what that something is, and a theist will hold that, unless it is explained to be God, it will not fit the faith that she or he has in it.

To think as well as to live in any world whatever would express some sort of faith. And a theist holds that this faith can become fully intelligible only as faith in God and in God's essential attributes of eminent power, wisdom, and goodness.

The "global argument" for God's existence, of which all the particular arguments are simply phases, is that a properly formulated theistic view of life and reality is the most intelligible, self-consistent, and satisfactory view that can be conceived.

All the so-called proofs of God's existence except the ontological may be interpreted as showing that the idea of God, taken as true, is required for the interpretation of some fundamental aspect of life or existence.

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