

OMG!



A Bad Christian's Guide to Prayer

How to be a **bad** Christian



...And a better human being

Dave Tomlinson

Anyone who experiences love, or appreciates beauty in art or nature, or who is fascinated by truth and meaning in life, or who simply senses gratitude for being alive on this beautiful planet knows something of God – however God is named.

Many people connect with God – and even pray without realising it...

Prayer is less a religious activity than a universal instinct. It's a coverall term for how we sense, connect with, and respond to the divine or transcendent, named in different ways, or unnamed.

Prayer is the most democratic activity - all creation is itself a prayer

OMG!



A ~~bad~~ Christian's
Book of Prayers

Dave Tomlinson

If 'woke' means imagining a better world, then surely woke has to be a great idea...right, God?

Some dismissed Lennon's dream as sappy sentimental tosh, 'all you need is love etc...' yet most people I know would wish to live in that world.

I know I'm not the only one who believes that goodness will outlive spitefulness, that kindness will beat the heck out of hatred, or that light will vanquish darkness – because finally...love will endure.

But I long for a world where freedom to 'be' outstrips the right to tell others how they should be, where social fears and phobias (xeno, homo, trans and the like) are a thing of the past, along with racism, misogyny and other senseless attitudes.

Surely, this can't be too much to ask!

I believe the golden rule of love and mutual respect trumps every other rule, and far outstrips our silly likings and proclivities,

Am I woke, dear God? I do hope so, especially if woke means living with compassion, striving toward a world that welcomes strangers whatever their story, that makes poverty history, that defends the rights of all people, and relishes this incredible planet.

I don't think woke is something new or faddish for bleeding liberal hearts like mine, it is the wisdom of old, emblazoned in every tradition – 'treat others how you wish to be treated', 'love your neighbour as yourself.'

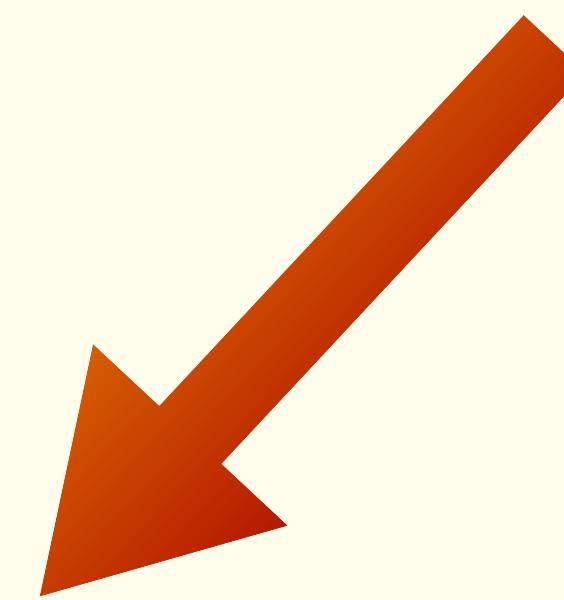
Just imagine that I say – it is easy if you try!



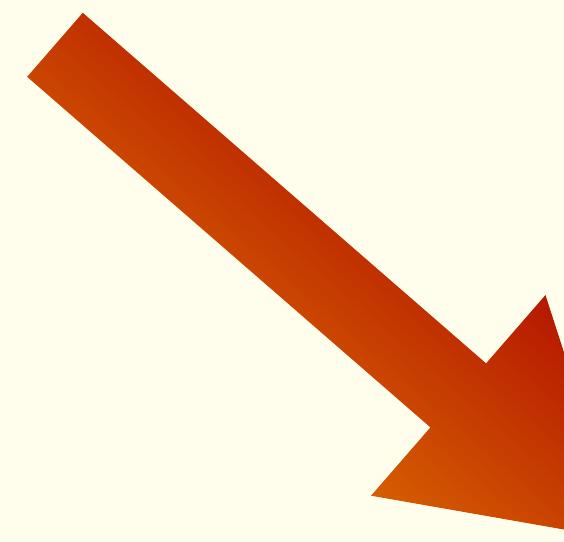
You May Say
I'm a Dreamer

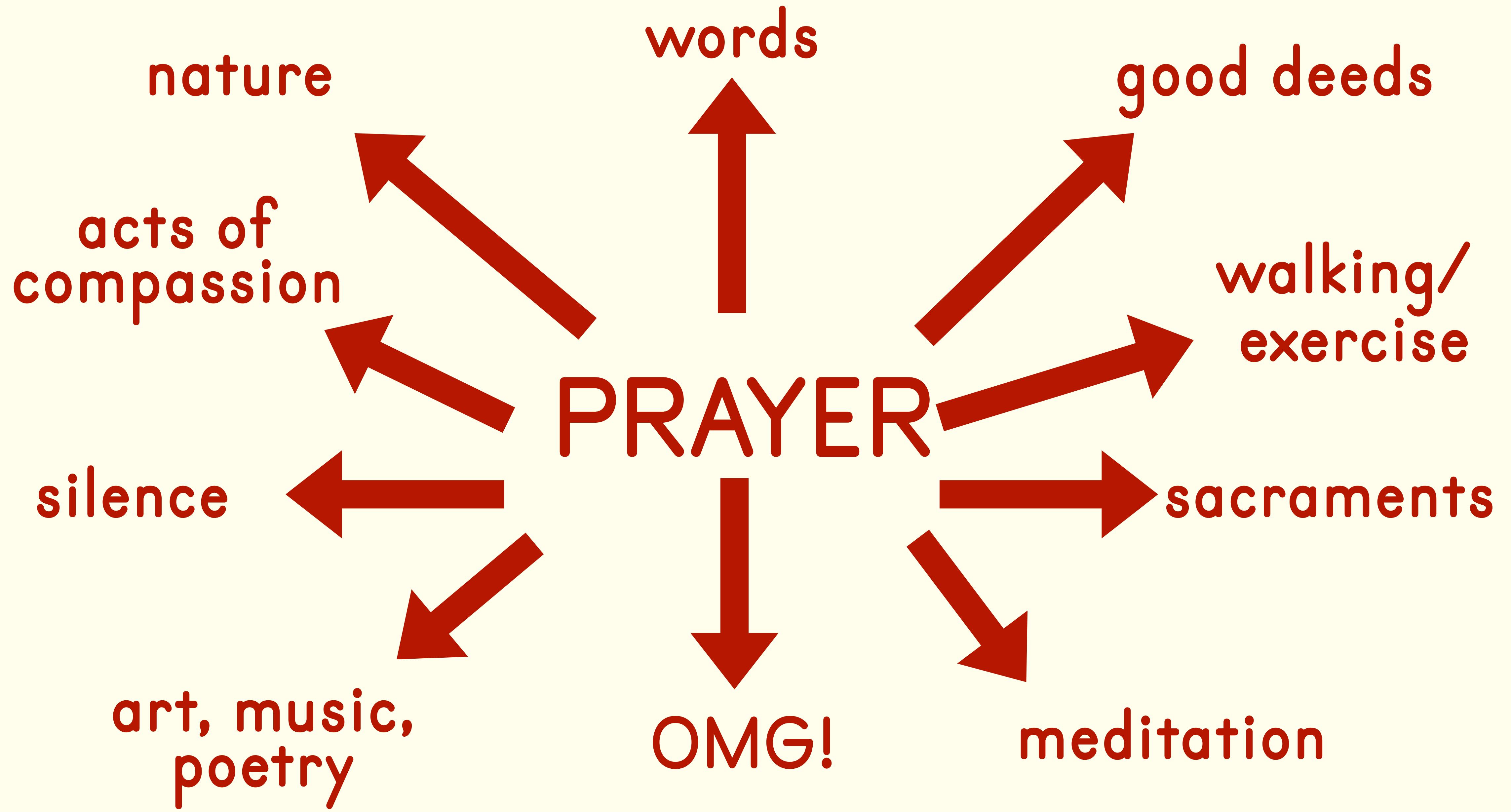
PRAYER

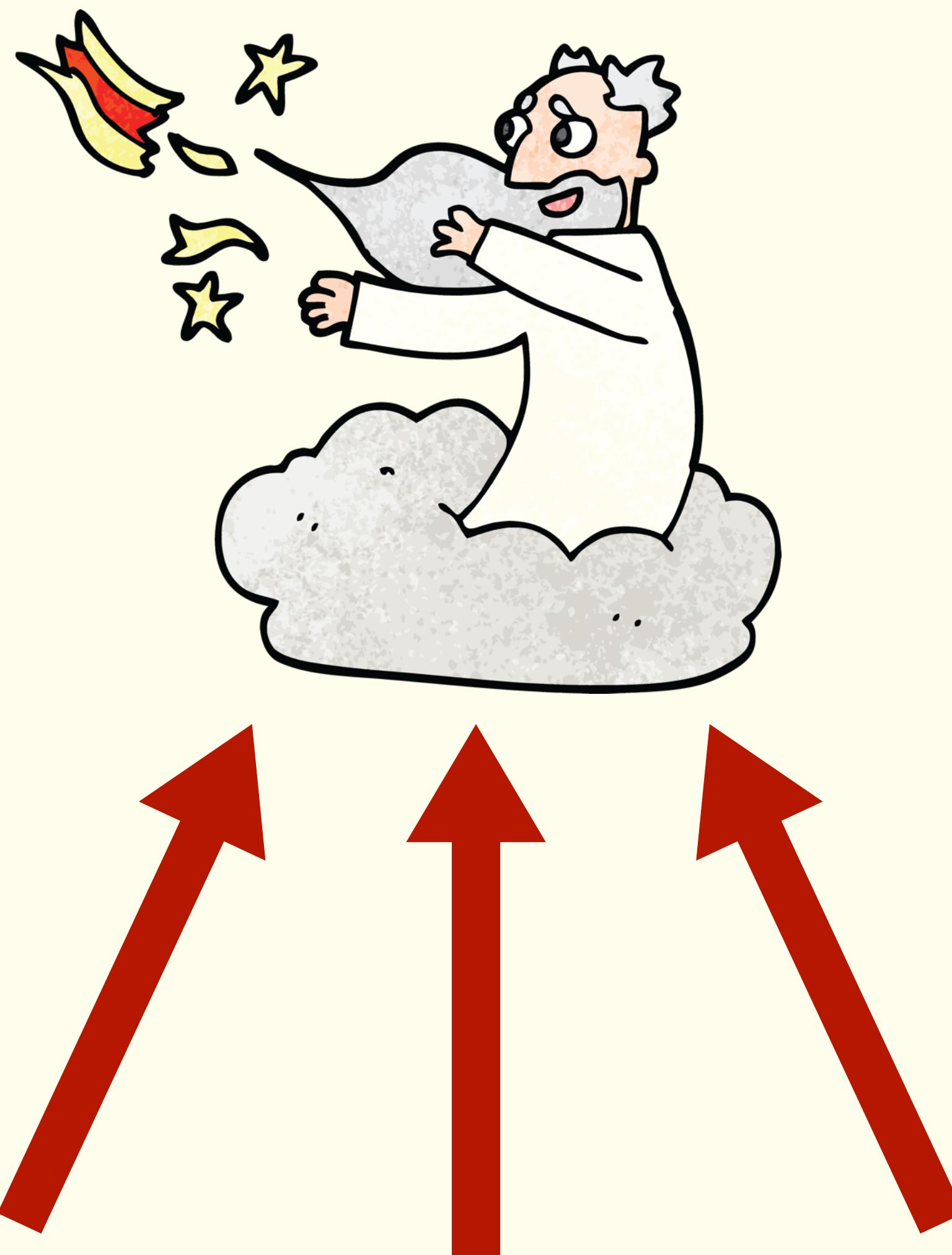
Intentional
form of
expression



Non-Intentional
form of
consciousness



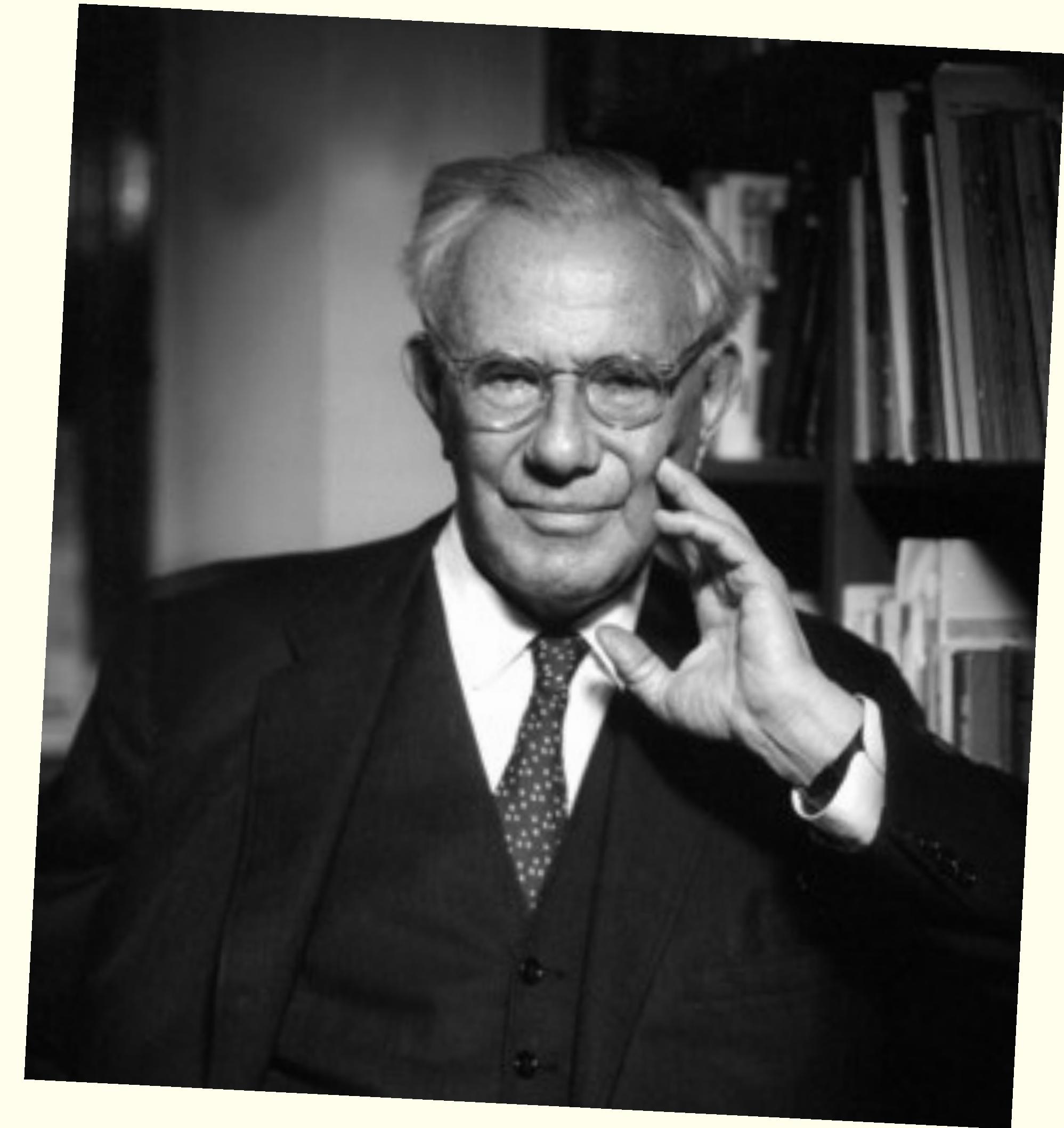




To whom do we pray?

If when we think about
God, we are thinking about
something that may or may
not exist, we are not
thinking about God...To
argue that God exists is to
deny God.

Paul Tillich



BEYOND GOD

I can't believe you are bothered
what name we give you when we
feeble attempt to label the Ineffable.

I imagine you have greater things
on your divine mind, if mind is
something even worth contemplating
where you are concerned.

Yahweh, Allah, Krishna, Waheguru,
God, or the Far Shore as Buddhists say,
what can these words possibly mean?

You are the vivacious presence
saturating all things with joy –

landscapes, oceans, and wild meadows,
statuesque trees, croaking frogs, and
a skylark's bubbling aria of delight
...sunshine transfigured into sound



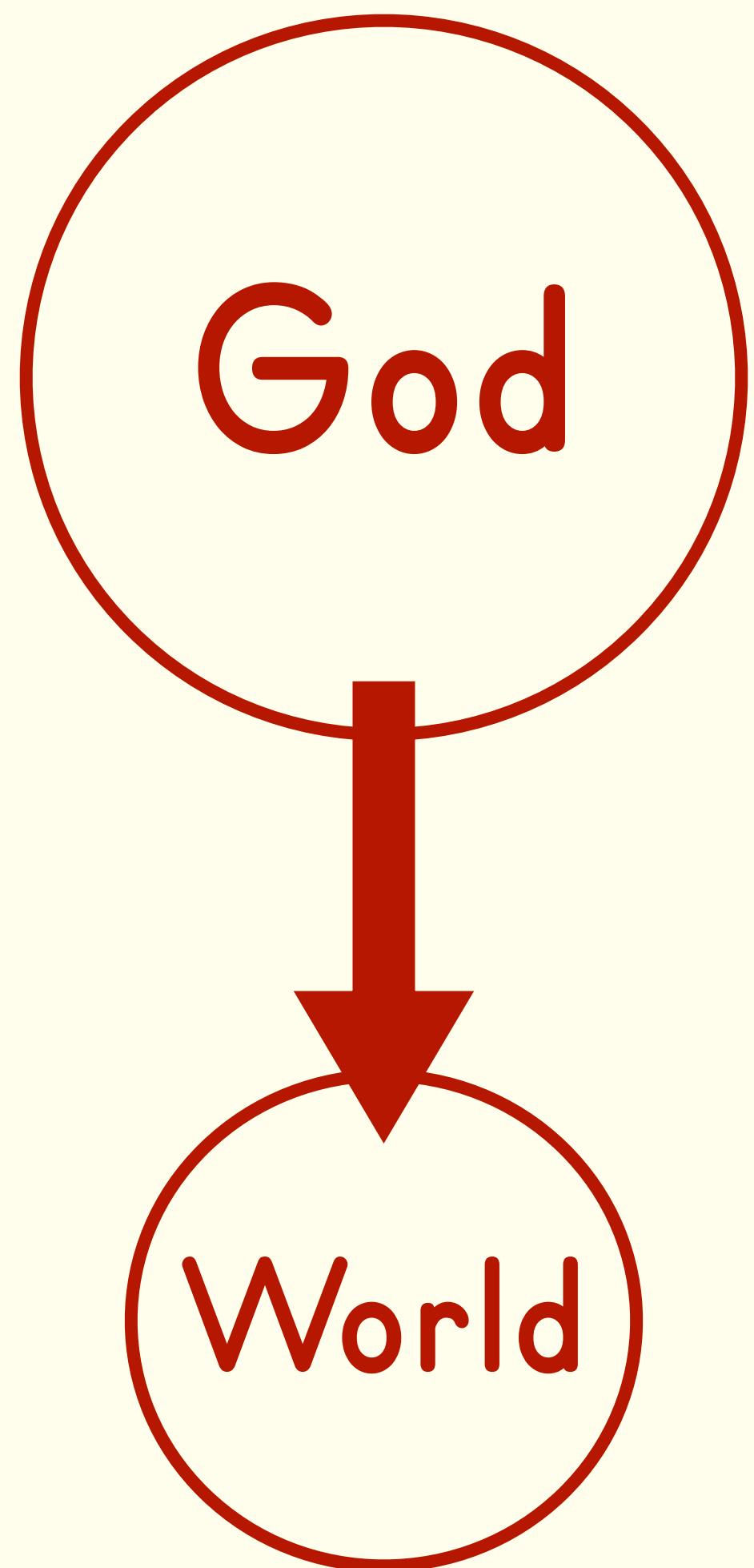
May we find contentment in knowing
that you are indeed utterly ours
and utterly everyone else's –

the breath we share,
the longing in our soul for goodness and love,
the beauty and wisdom which all traditions
aspire to express,

you are the Ultimate Concern of
all our best desires and yearning,

you are God beyond 'God'!

Theism



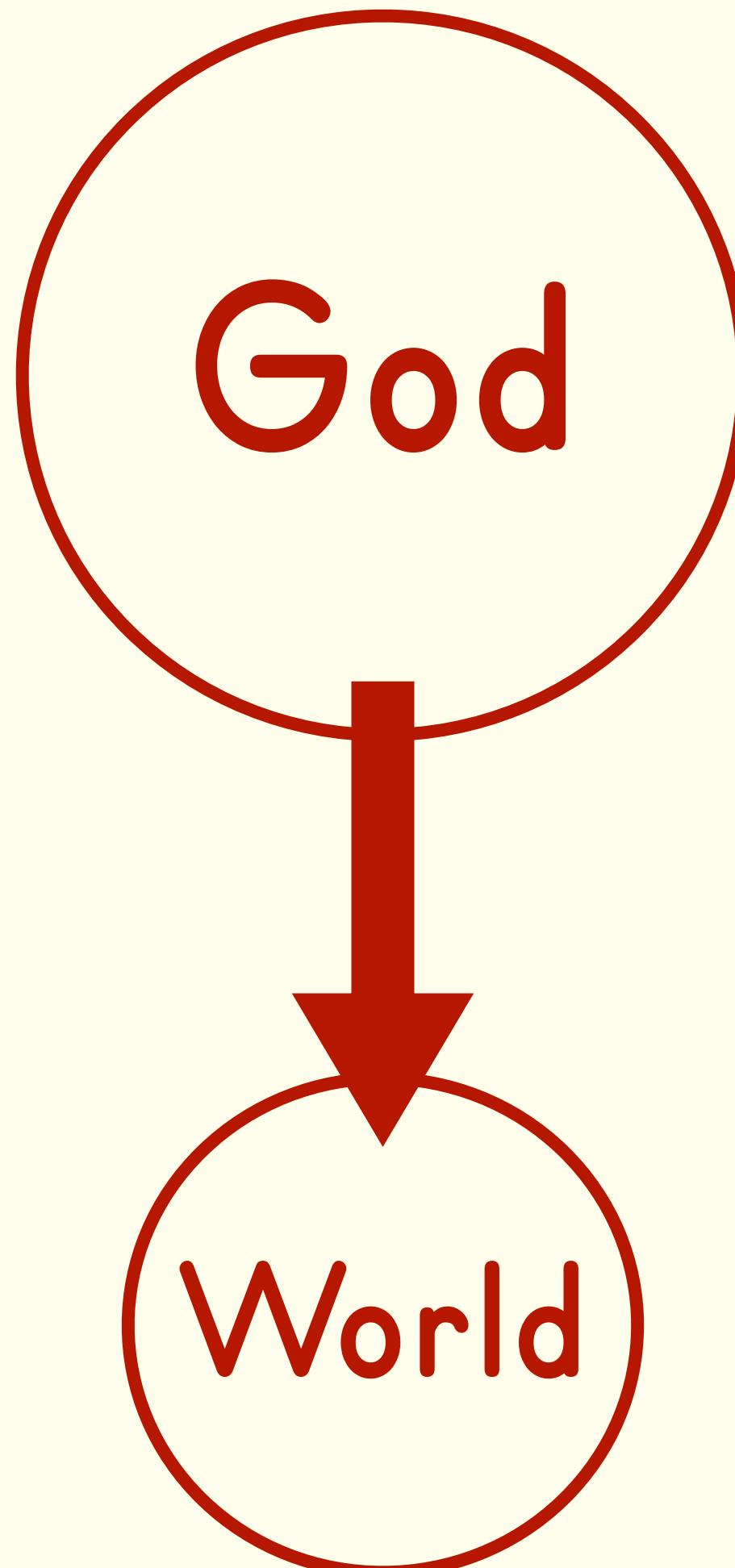
Pantheism



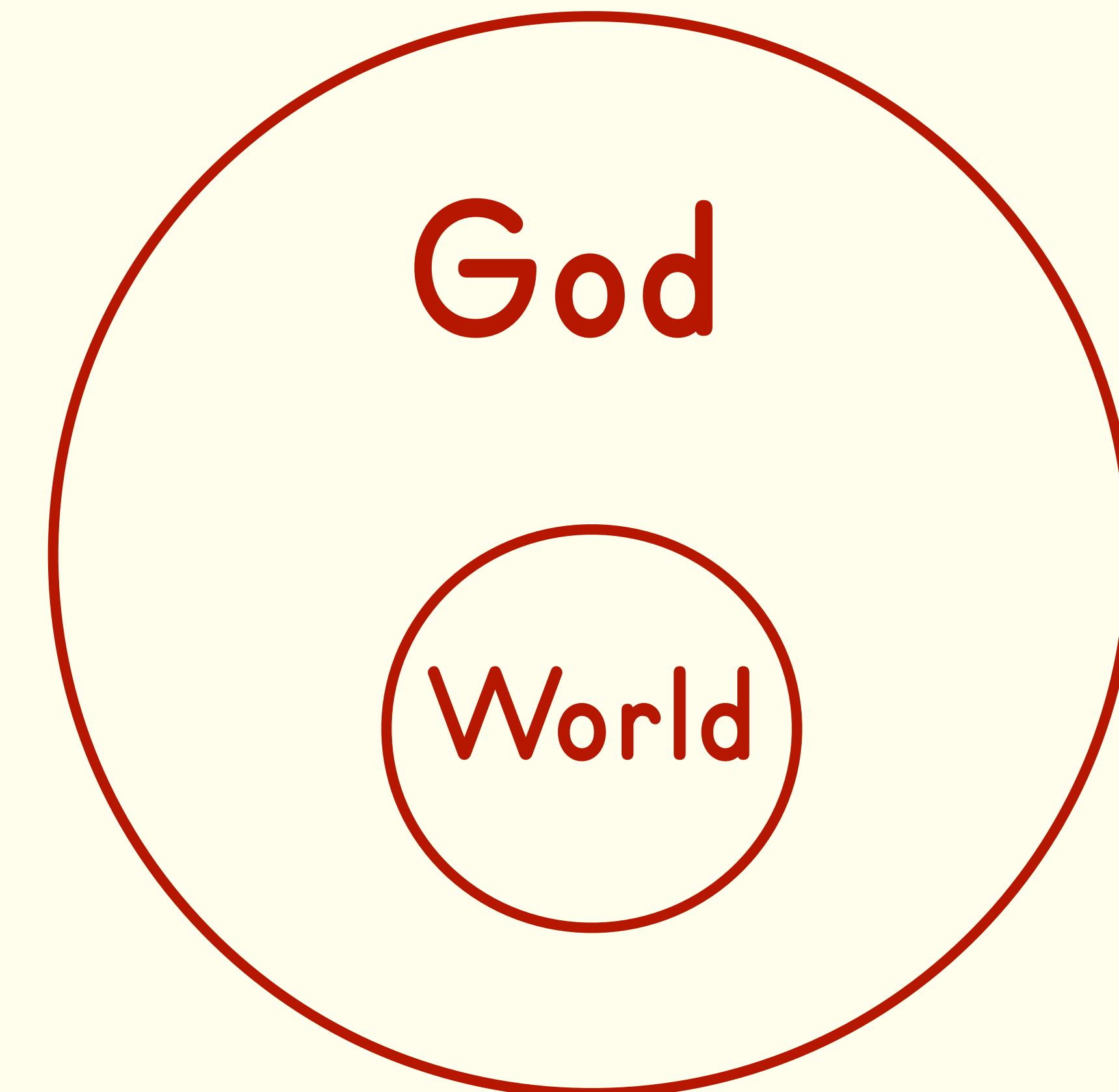
Atheism



Theism



Panentheism



In God we live and move
and have our being

Constant Divine Interaction

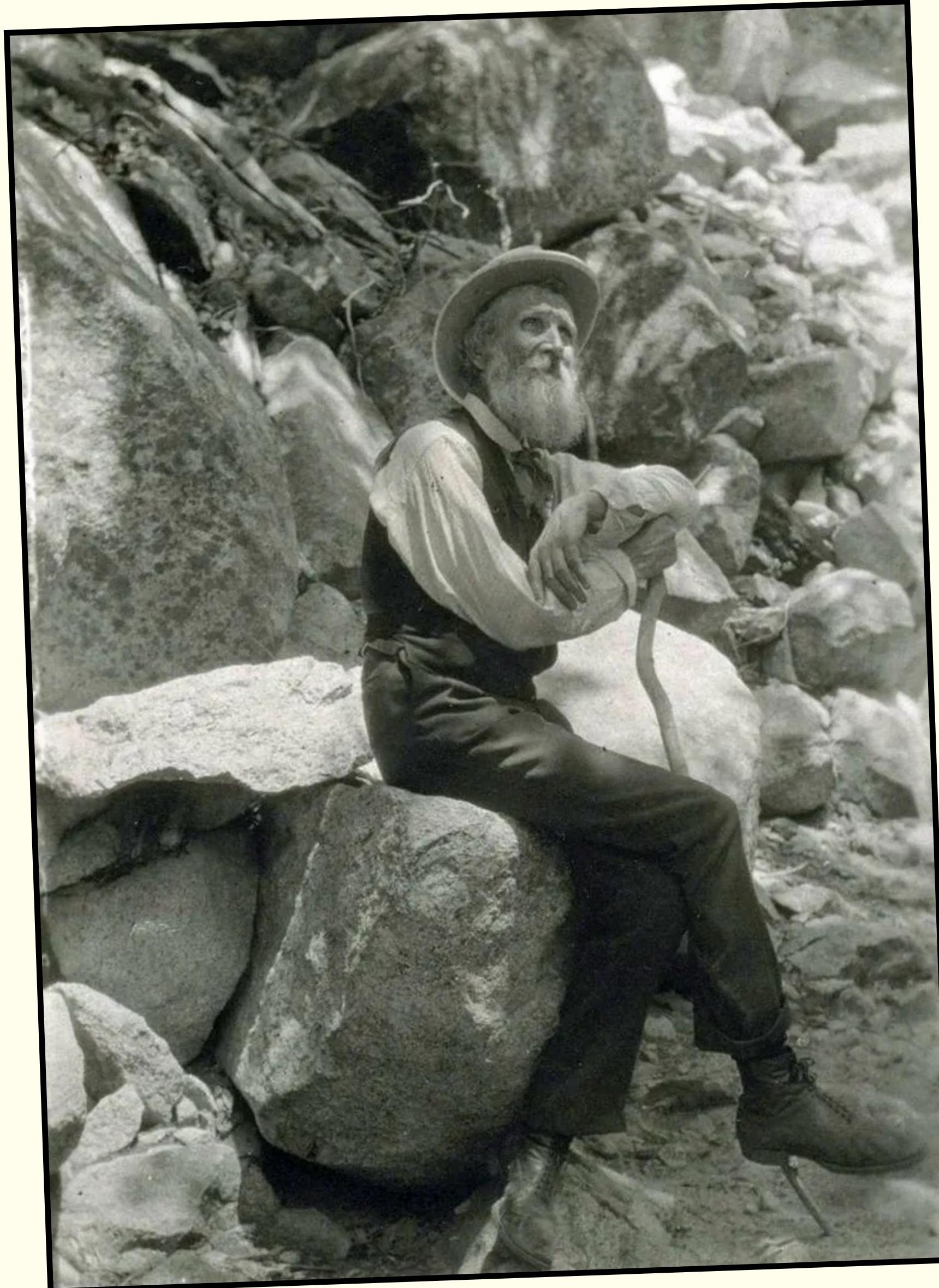


In God we live and move and have our being

Constant Divine Interaction

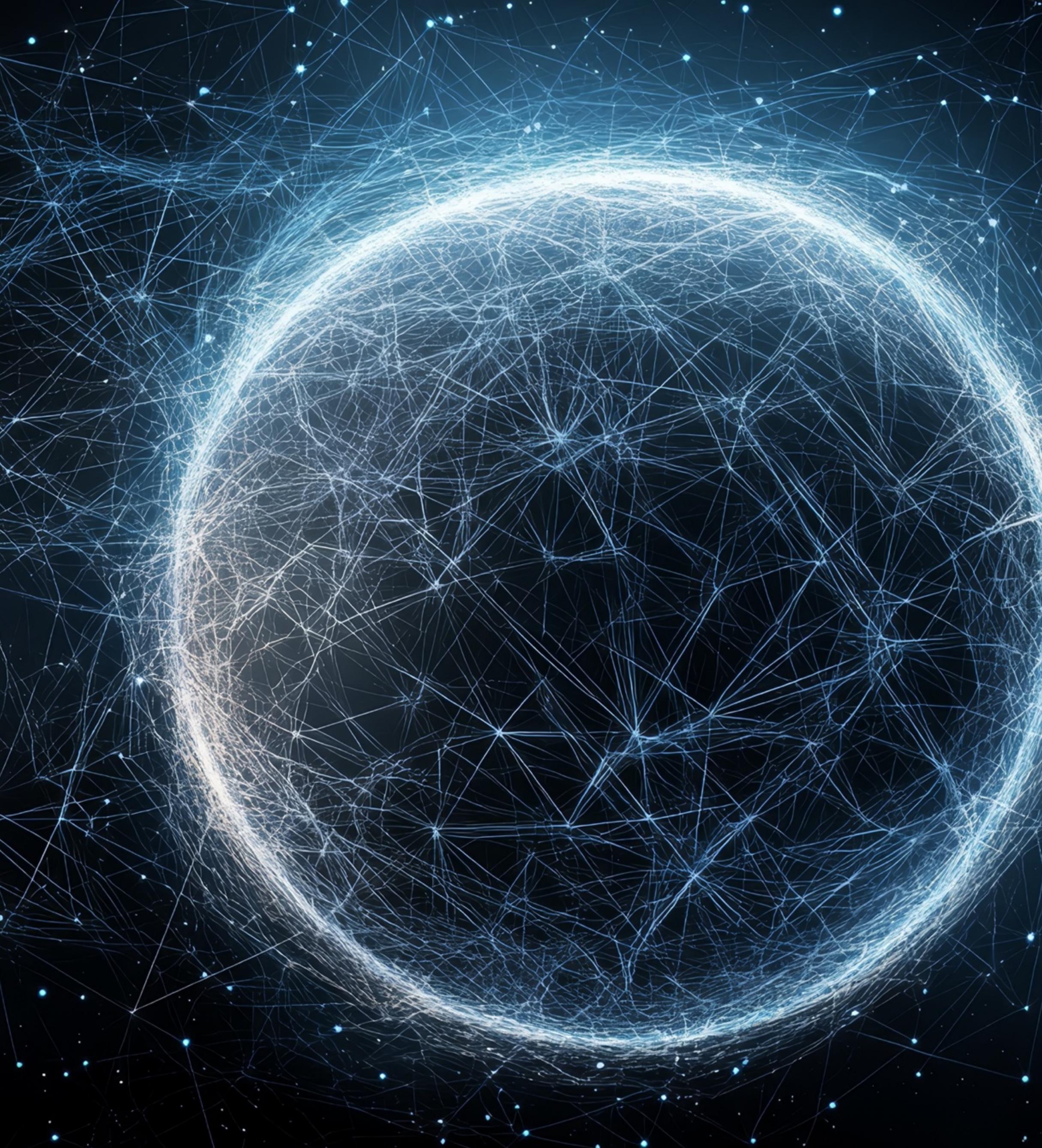


In God we live and move and have our being

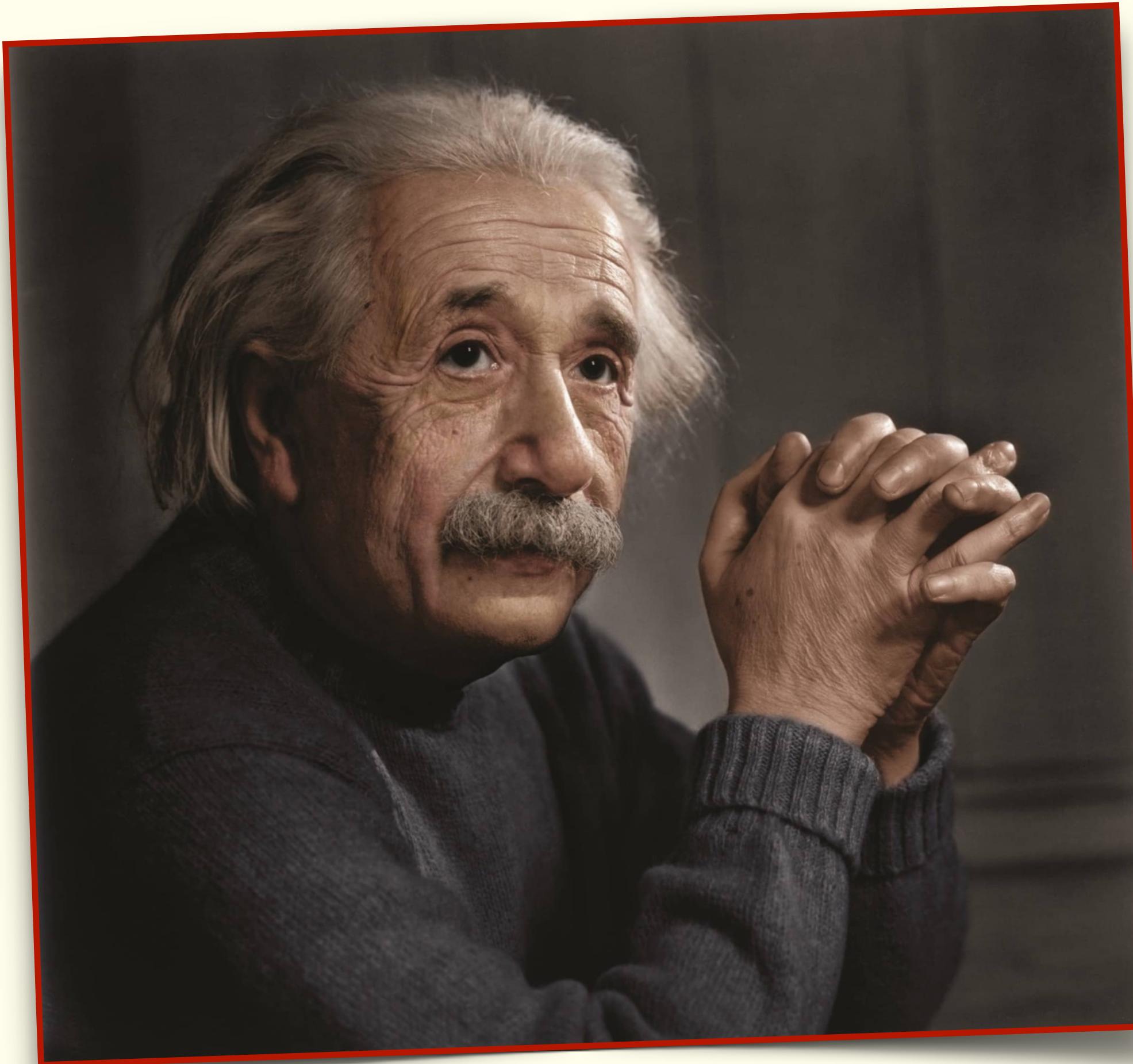


As soon as we take one
thing by itself, we find
it hitched to everything
else in the universe

John Muir



Everything in the
universe is...
ENTANGLED
hitched
implicated
interconnected



The greatest illusion in
this world is the illusion
of separation.

Albert Einstein

What is Your Real Name, God



Are you really bothered about
being 'omni' this or 'omni' that, God?
I doubt it.

You are surely far too busy
checking on the turtle doves
and tree sparrows,
the nightingales, which have flagged
by 90% since England won the World Cup.

Your name isn't really 'God',
that's just a tag we gave you
long before the Bible was a thing.

Your name is the sound of a baby breathing,
the last gasp of Sandra
who departed life too soon but
managed to meet Rae,
her only grandchild,
before leaving,

You are the rustling in the cherry trees,
the wind whistling around the eaves
when we lie in bed feeling mortal.

You are the twinkle in the eye of
the beggar who always says
'Thank you' even when no one
puts anything in the hat.

You are the freedom we sense
on top of a hill looking over the fields,
the bulb lighting up in our brain
when a good idea dawns,
the satisfaction of a job well done.

I don't care how many omnis
you have to your name,
how many creeds to celebrate
your almighty ness,

I prefer to know you,
God of small things,
in the seeming insignificant
bits of life where I think
you often hide,
holding the world in
your everlasting arms..



PRAYER

Opening
to divine possibility

Aligning
with divine purpose

Channelling
divine light & energy

A Footnote to All Prayers

by C.S. Lewis



He whom I bow to only knows to whom I bow
when I attempt the ineffable Name, murmuring Thou,
and dream of Pheidian fancies and embrace in heart
symbols (I know) which cannot be the thing Thou art.
Thus always, taken at their word, all prayers blaspheme
worshiping with frail images a folk-lore dream,
and all men in their praying, self-deceived, address
the coinage of their own unquiet thoughts, unless
Thou in magnetic mercy to Thyself divert
our arrows, aimed unskillfully, beyond desert;
and all men are idolaters, crying unheard
to a deaf idol, if Thou take them at their word.
Take not, O Lord, our literal sense. Lord, in thy great
unbroken speech our limping metaphor translate.

SAY YES TO LIFE

I long to learn the healing practice
of pausing and noticing,
of turning aside,
of not hurrying by on the other side
but paying attention to the countless
miracles of ordinariness.

I don't know what to believe about angels,
but I do know the world is overflowing with
presence, with numinous dispatches of
hope and empowerment
urging us again and again
to say 'YES! YES!
to this one
beautiful,
irrepressible life
of which we are a part.

