



**Only Two Religions?
Introduction to Worldview Evangelism
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Section 1B

All Is Two (Twoism)

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All Is Two (Twoism)

Oneism is defined as the worship of creation, where all is one when creation is worshipped and served as divine. In Oneism all distinctions are eliminated and through “enlightenment” Oneism proclaims that man is *also* divine.

Twoism is defined as the worship of the divine Creator of all things. In Twoism God *alone* is divine and is distinct from His creation, *yet* through His Son, Jesus, God is in loving communion *with* His creation.

The Christian religion is the only one that truly believes in a God who is separate from and not dependent upon his creation and yet has an intimate relationship with it.

A Transcendent God

In Christianity, God and his creation, including humans, do not share the same essence or nature. God is of a completely different kind of existence from us, what is called **transcendent**.ⁱ In fact, there are only two basic kinds of existence: God and everything else, all of which he created. Of course, humans are like God in some ways, but there are qualities that only God possesses. In what ways is God completely different from anything in his creation?

Theologiansⁱⁱ call these characteristics God’s “**incommunicable attributes**.”ⁱⁱⁱ That doesn’t mean he can’t communicate to us about them. It simply means that none of us can ever *possess* these attributes. Here are some of God’s incommunicable attributes:

- God has no beginning and no end.
- He is absolutely powerful (omnipotent).
- He knows everything.
- He can be everywhere at once.

ⁱ **Transcendent:** In Theology, this word means that God is above and outside of the universe and time and cannot be entirely contained in our knowledge or understanding. .

ⁱⁱ **Theologian:** Someone who studies the person and work of God.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Incommunicable Attributes:** Characteristics that only God can have, such as being all Powerful.

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- He never changes.
- He is totally pure and just.
- He is absolutely loving and compassionate.
- He spoke the world into existence.
- He created everything that exists, whether heavenly beings or all that is in or inhabits the universe.
- He is three in one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Dr. Peter Jones was once lecturing on these “incommunicable attributes” of God. Jokingly, he offered a free book to anyone in his audience who could claim to have one of these qualities. A man approached him after the lecture to ask for a free book. Surprised, Dr. Jones asked him, “So which of God’s incommunicable attributes do you possess?” The man responded, “Well, my wife told me I should get a free book because she says *I never change!*”

All humor aside, it is clear that we can never be God! These and many other qualities belong to a God who is way above us and rules over us—a truly “transcendent God.” The Bible has a variety of ways of expressing God’s transcendence:

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. ([Isaiah 55:9](#))

Who is like the Lord our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down on the heavens and the earth? ([Psalm 113:5–6](#))

It is he [God] who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness. ([Isaiah 40:22–23](#))

An Immanent God

But God is not a solitary, remote principle, so high above us that we have no way of knowing him. He is also a God who is “near us,” who makes himself known to us and who loves us—what is called “**immanent**.”^{iv}

For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ([Deuteronomy 4:7](#))

For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. ([Isaiah 54:5](#))

^{iv} **Immanent:** In theology, this term means a God who dwells in time and space. A God who is close to his people and even lives in them through his Holy Spirit, and doesn’t remain hidden or distant.

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For thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out.....I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down," declares the Lord God. ([Ezekiel 34:11, 15](#))

God lets us know who he is in several ways:

1. By revealing some of his characteristics in the created world;

I did not speak in secret, in a land of darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, "Seek me in vain." I the Lord speak the truth; I declare what is right. ([Isaiah 45:19](#))

For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ([Romans 1:19–20](#))

2. By coming to us in the form of a real, historical man, Jesus, who took on himself the judgment of the Holy Father and died to bring us into a relationship of love with him;

No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ([John 15:15](#))

3. And by communicating who he is to us in a trustworthy message, written in the Bible.

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. ([2 Timothy 3:14–17](#))—Instructions from the Apostle Paul to Timothy

God also lets us know that he loves us in several ways:

1. By telling us so in language that he created especially for us;

Then the Lord said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak." ([Exodus 4:11–12](#))

2. By making a way for us to be forgiven, sacrificing his Son for us;

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ([John 3:16](#))

3. And by taking us as his treasured possession to live with him forever.

[Jesus' prayer to his Father] O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these [believers] know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them. ([John 17:25–26](#))

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See also "They shall be mine," says the Lord of hosts, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him."
([Malachi 3:17](#))

God is the very definition of love! He is love not because he was cosmically lonely and decided he just had to have some human beings to talk to, but because he is three persons in one God. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit have forever been in a relationship of pure, intense, joyous love. God loves before he creates the world or any humans. We cannot fully understand the mystery of a three-persons-in-one-God, who creates humans (male and female) in his own image and then becomes a man, taking on human flesh. We can never finish "counting the ways" that God loves us.

Unlike Other Religions

Christianity is the only religion that has a truly transcendent and truly immanent God. Other religions do not have a God who is both way bigger and more awesome than we are, and yet relates to us in love and intimacy. **Buddhists**^v have no such God. They seek solutions to their problems by purifying their minds to develop infinite love and perfect understanding. Their god is ultimately a god within. **Hindus**^{vi} believe in the god **Brahma**, an entity that inhabits every portion of reality and is thus both impersonal and unknowable. Likewise, in **Islam**,^{vii} God is singular, impersonal and unknowable, a god who never comes down as did the Christian God, to love, identify with and rescue his people. Even in **Judaism**^{viii} (which believed in God as Creator and should have recognized Jehovah when he came in the form of his Son), God becomes impersonal, because Jesus was the "image of the invisible God" ([Colossians 1:13](#)). By rejecting God when he came to earth, the Jews refused any chance of having intimacy with God. As Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except through me" ([John 14:6](#)). It is obvious, then that we don't get to know God just by picking and choosing things from every religion and putting them all together. That would never create the amazing God we have!

We long for a God who is faithful, "always the same"; a God who is both just and awesome, yet also personal and compassionate—a God who knows what we need, who instructs us, who loves us, speaks to us, guides us and protects us and who values us as his precious treasure. If this is the "unknown god" (the phrase the Apostle Paul used in order to connect with his Greek

^v **Buddhism**: a religion of eastern and central Asia that is based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha. It holds that life is full of suffering caused by desire and that the way to end this suffering is through enlightenment that enables one to halt the endless sequence of births and deaths to which one is otherwise subject.

^{vi} **Hinduism**: the main religion of India which includes the worship of many gods and the belief that after you die you return to life in a different form.

^{vii} **Islam**: the religion which teaches that there is only one God and that Muhammad is God's prophet : the religion of Muslims

^{viii} **Judaism**: In this context, we mean the religion that was originally revealed to God's chosen people in the Old Testament but which now depends on tradition and bloodlines in addition to the first five books of the Scriptures (the Torah) for its sense of meaning and purpose. The religion of present-day Jewish people who have not accepted Jesus as Messiah.

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audience), then let's get to *know* more and more of him! The God of the universe, who is so far above us and utterly unique, makes himself known to us in love. No other religion has a God like that, who is utterly transcendent and powerful, yet intimately related in love to his children. Christians have *communion with God*, without *becoming* God or sharing his essence. We come full circle to the first sentence in this section: God is separate from and not dependent upon his creation and yet has an intimate relationship with it.

Optional Exercises

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Bible Research

1. Consider the following texts, which show how *awesome*— even terrifying—and “other” God is. Discuss them in your class or group and find similar texts.

- Know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. [Deuteronomy 4:39](#)
- And the scribe said to him [Jesus], “You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other beside him.” [Mark 12:32](#)
- Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? [Exodus 15:11](#)
- Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens. You who have done great things, O God, who is like you? [Psalm 71:19](#)

2. Now consider the following texts, which show how God makes himself *accessible* to us and shows how near he is for us. Discuss them in your class or group and find similar texts.

- I bring near my righteousness; it is not far off, and my salvation will not delay; I will put salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory. [Isaiah 46:13](#)
- Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. [Exodus 33:11](#)
- And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. [Isaiah 30:20](#)
- And I will not hide my face anymore from them, when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord God. [Ezekiel 39:29](#)
- For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. [Isaiah 54:5](#)

Challenge Question

3. What “Twoist” principles must “Oneists” borrow in order to live in God’s creation?