

REFLECTION

Every hair on my head is counted

What is your view of God? I would love to see a whole series of descriptions by different people explaining how they understand how God interacts with them and with creation. Jesus says that God is extremely close to us, but close in what way if we are limited physical, mental and spiritual beings?

David White reflects on his growing understanding of the immensity of God's love for each person.

be very aware that on top of my head, I am, as they say 'follically challenged'. My message read: 'Today's gospel reading is that God loves us so much he counts the hairs on our head. On reflection, I wonder if he decided that he wanted an easier time counting mine!'

When I was younger, I used to think that God was someone who created something and then let it go, leaving it so it had a relatively independent life of its own, be that for people or for planets. A bit like the adverts on TV which show mechanical toys being powered by different types of batteries, setting off in a race to see which one could last the longest. As well as this, one of my older relatives used to say to me, 'How can God listen to all these people praying all over the world at the same time, and even if God could, why would God want to listen to everyone?'



I am now much more aware of the limitations of my mental framework. For example, I struggle to comprehend the size and distances of the planet we inhabit or the solar system it orbits in. Beyond this it is truly difficult to take in what a galaxy or group of galaxies mean, when viewed from the human scale. The expansion of my thought has not just been about the immensity of space, but also the atomic scale and the sub-atomic world, full of strange sounding elements such as quarks. Likewise, my image of God has changed slowly year by

year. The nature of God, the creator who called himself the 'I am', the 'I was, I am and I will be' has expanded and developed in my thinking. So I ask like the psalmist 'What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?' (Psalm 8: 9) and as Job said similarly, 'What is mankind that you make so much of them, that you give them so much attention?' (Job 7: 17). At one level it seems ridiculous that the creator

person. In my logic, if God is so immense, so limitless then I believe God sustains each quark, each atom, each molecule, protein, cell, organ, creature, brain, ecosystem, planet and each galaxy, moment by moment. So, in effect, yes, God does know each hair on my head, but also each breath I take, each thought I have, each emotion I feel and each action I undertake. The very existence of the body, the mind and spirit I call 'David' is created, sustained and continued in the Mind (with a capital M) of God. It then only makes sense, if this God who is limitless, all knowing, all seeing, all powerful and in such an intimate relationship to the very created essence of my being, would also be the God who wants to relate with me, and me with him. To answer my relative – it is precisely this God who wants (and has capacity) to listen to all people in prayer, who simply keeps in Mind all people in every moment, as well as effortlessly sustaining every atom in the universe.

It is also slightly terrifying to become aware of the utter dependency we have on God, not just for our food and shelter, but for the very existence of each atom, each molecule, each moment of time that makes us who we are and provides the life we have. It only makes sense that all we are, our very being, emanates from the Heart, the Mind of God who was, who is and who will be. Perhaps on the human scale, the nearest experience we have is the thorough dependency of a baby on their

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of all the universe, a universe which stretches from the subatomic to the inter-galactic, should have any connection with any individual human, as each one of us, in this hierarchy and scale of things, is truly insignificant.

However, I don't now subscribe to the God who set off creation and then sat back and watched the show, or went off and became involved in other things. This is not the God that Jesus spoke of, the 'Father' who loves us and wishes to have an ever deeper relationship with each

mother. To me, when Jesus said: 'For your Father knows what you need before you ask him' (Mt. 6: 8), God knows, like the mother of a very young baby, what we need before we know it ourselves.

This perspective on the intimacy of God who is present in my very being, obviously means that every person is also sustained by the same personal love of the creator. Seen in this way it is impossible not to then conclude in God's eyes, we are all brothers and sisters in his immense family. 

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