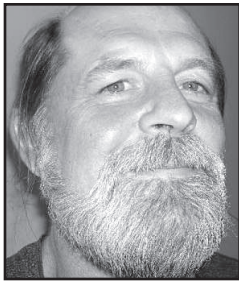


My Concept of God



*Fellowshipian
Murphy Cutler
shares this
“Concept of
God” by her
friend Michael,
a member of
her Emmett Fox
prayer group.*

*What is YOUR
“Concept of God”
and how does it
affect your life?
Please send your
contribution
(preferably 750
words or less)
to Janet Skole.
jawskole@hotmail.com*

*(If you have a PHOTO
of yourself, digital, or
a hard copy for Jane to
scan, that would be nice,
too, but is not required.)*

By Rev. Michael Smith

In order for us to understand what God is, we first need to get a firm grasp as to what God is not. God is not some white-haired, white-bearded guy that sits up in the clouds and tosses the occasional lightning bolt, conjures up a plague now and again, and watches out for the chosen ones — a punishing God, one that you have to fear. That kind of God exists only in the mind of some deluded religious persons; and if we are ever to move forward as humans, we need to dispel that kind of thinking ASAP. We need to quit this anthropomorphizing of God.

God is an infinite being...

...so it stands to reason that we humans, with our finite minds, cannot completely grasp the concept of God in its entirety. The accepted idea that God created man in his own image was referring to the only part of the human that God is really concerned with, and that is the soul.

The everlasting soul is created in God's image.

The body, is merely a shell that houses the soul while it is here on this plane. I know that these are pretty strong statements, but if you stop and think about them for a moment, they make sense. Please do not think me so callous as to say God does not care about our human forms, God does; it is just that our souls take precedence over all.

So why all the suffering in the world?

It is not because God does not care; it is because man does not. We have free will, so if you choose to harm another human, God will not intervene. However, by harming another human, you only harm yourself and all of mankind. And, if you would like to take it one step further, if you intentionally harm any living creature, you harm all, just as when you help another, you help all.

There have been instances of enlightenment throughout history. One example is the Buddhist practice of mindfulness. Being mindful of everything teaches us to live in the moment, cherish that moment, to be thankful for everything (it is, after all, a gift), and to do no harm. The Native American people, who lived with the land and the animals, gave

thanks for everything. True Christians who practice the teachings of Jesus love as Jesus did, forgive as Jesus taught, and practice The Golden Rule. The Hindus believe that we are all one and therefore cannot harm anything without harming ourselves. *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz teaches the Toltec system of belief: to be impeccable with your word, to not take anything personally, to not make assumptions and to always do your best.

I personally believe it is time for man to stop his hating and killing and to embrace his fellow man and all the good of all religions — to evolve, if you will, to a universal religion, one that has room for all. “Acts of God” — all kinds of horrible incidents have been labeled thusly. When God set up creation, he set it up according to the Laws of Nature. You are born to die; and as birth and death are just concepts — concepts that need to be discarded before you enter the Kingdom of Heaven, or Nirvana, or whatever — should it really matter how? If you are born into poverty, it is your turn to experience it, just as if you were born into riches. If you die in a plane crash, in an auto accident or from cancer, it is all death. If, however, you lose your concepts of both birth and death, become childlike and experience them both, you will be free.

A child has no concept of anything until it is taught, with the exception of unconditional love. In that state of total acceptance, a child is born with the ability to experience everything, with no reservations or judgments.

We Christians can be arrogant, believing that our God is the only God. Nonsense. God or Spirit, Creator, Universal Mind — whatever you choose to call it — is there for all of mankind: Christian, Buddhist, Toltec, whatever religion you choose to follow. I will go one step further. God is there for every living thing, God created everything, and being perfect love, will not abandon any of it.

In summation, God is all loving, all kind and good. ■

Rev. Smith is founder and pastor of Divine Thought Ministries Inc., which serves the homeless and those suffering from addictions. He lives in Thornton, CO.