

I see that God has been declared alive again. Fifty
years and a well-known weekly magazine have front
page coverage to the story that God was dead. Even
Christians were saying that the whole idea
of God was a myth and that man in the western
world was on better without him. You could not
live in secular society and believe in God, they said.

THE REAL GOD

Now, the magazine has run a story on how
philosophers are beginning to re-believe in God. The
fiction has changed, it suggests, and now life has
been changed into the myth. Those who have always
believed that God is real are breath again and there
the religion is. It ought to be easier to be a
Christian - isn't the evidence there again and it
becomes unnecessary to believe once more. Perhaps
we have another fifteen years.

P.F. JENSEN

But what sort of God is this that we are now permitted
to believe in but who may not disappear? The Christian
believes in some kind of supernatural causal agency,
another name for God is the efficient cause, of
the cosmos in which we live. There is no fact to be
given, no reality, nothing to which a seeking person
clings.

Why is God so elusive? Why is he mysterious? It is
true, why can't we find him? Why isn't the whole
question absolutely plain?

Let's turn the point around. Who is elusive? Is God
to find, or are we hard to find?

"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

With great insight, the Bible portrays Adam and Eve
from God in the Garden of Eden. It was a scene of
and fear which drove them away from him.

I see that God has been declared alive again. Fifteen years ago a well-known weekly magazine gave front page coverage to the story that God was dead. Even Christian theologians were saying that the whole idea of God was out of date and that men in the western world got on better without him. You could not live in secular society and believe in God, they said.

Now, the same magazine has run a story on how philosophers are beginning to re-believe in God. The fashion has changed, it appears, and new life has been pumped into the corpse. Those who have always believed that God is real can breathe again and thank the philosophers. It ought to be easier to be a Christian - until the pendulum swings again and it becomes unfashionable to believe once more. Perhaps we'll have another fifteen years.

But what sort of God is this that we are now permitted to believe in but who may also disappear? One philosopher postulates 'some kind of supreme moral causal agency'; another suggests that God is the 'efficient cause' of the cosmos in which we live. There is no face to such a god, no humanity, nothing to which a seeking person may cling.

Why is God so elusive? Why is he mysterious? If he is real, why can't we find him? Why isn't the whole, vital question absolutely plain?

Let's turn the point around. Who is elusive? Is God hard to find, or are we hard to find?

With great insight, the Bible portrays Adam and Eve hiding from God in the Garden of Eden. It was a sense of shame and fear which drove them away from him.

The Bible declares that the knowledge of God is as clear as the noon-day sun. It suggests that you would have to be a fool to live in a world like this and still to puzzle yourself about whether God exists. But it immediately agrees that we are fools. Fear of God makes us suppress the truth about him; as a result we create and worship less demanding gods than the real One, gods like security, money and ourselves. We avoid him.

A man who worked in a saw mill once told me that if a worker sustained a serious injury to his hand, he would immediately put it behind his back rather than look at it. We have the same aversion to God - at least, that is, to the real God, since we know that he will insist on taking control of our lives.

But there comes the time for most of us when we realise how foolish we have been over this question, and we would find God if we could. Why, however, should he allow himself to be found? There is no reason; after all, years may have gone by, and you may have ignored and resisted him. And yet, so great is his mercy even now, that if you begin your search by studying the story of the life of Jesus, e.g. in John's Gospel, God may still be found. Why don't you come out from hiding and begin that search today?

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