

## EIGHT VIEWS ON GOD

---

*Here are eight people saying what they think about the existence of God. Read them through on your own, and then discuss the opinions with the person next to you.*

*Which of these opinions is closest to your own view about God? If none of them are at all close, that's okay – say that. Are there any you strongly disagree with? Do you have any objections to any of these views?*

**Angela:** I firmly believe in God because of the way I was brought up. I was raised as a Christian, and I was taught that the Bible is the word of God. Maybe I would believe in Allah if I was born in a Muslim family, or the God of Judaism if I was brought up Jewish. Maybe there's even some truth to other religions. But I think Christianity is the truth. My upbringing has shown me that.

**Bertrand:** I am an atheist. I just don't see why we need God to explain anything. People used to believe that God caused storms and solar eclipses. Well, thanks to science, we now know that's not true. Maybe there's some stuff we don't understand yet, like what caused the Big Bang or whether there's life on other planets. But I trust science to figure it all out eventually. Just saying 'God did it' doesn't explain anything.

**Calvin:** I believe in God because I think it's the best way to live a moral and purposeful life. People don't have religion in their lives are missing out. I can't imagine what it would be like to get up every morning thinking that you're nothing more than a sack of flesh and bones, and that when you die, that's the end. What about values like love, truth, and honesty? I just don't see a place for them in a secular lifestyle. So that's why I believe.

**Daria:** I really don't know why people care about religion so much. None of us can ever know if God exists, or what happens when you die. People who claim that they do know are just kidding themselves. The best we

can do is try to be good people and get on with our lives. And if there's a heaven, great. But I'm not banking on it.

**Elijah:** I believe in God because I think it's the rational thing to do. Clearly, the universe is a work of unimaginable complexity. There's just no way it could have come into being from nothingness or pure chance. Thinking about time, space, reality, consciousness – all of it points in one direction to me, and that is that we're not alone in this universe. Someone is watching over us.

**Fara:** When people talk about God, I think they imagine some powerful being in the sky, watching over us. I don't buy that for a second. But I do think there's some kind of powerful force in the universe that we don't understand, that unites all living things. You can call that God if you like, but I prefer to think of it as a shared spirit that exists in all of us.

**Greg:** I don't know how anyone can deny the existence of God! His work is all around us. At my church, there are many, many people who have experienced God's miracles. People who recover from seemingly fatal illnesses, former criminals who see the light and become wonderful human beings, and people who pray for something every day until God gives it to them. The signs are all around us. You just have to look for them.

**Horatio:** Religion is just an artefact of evolution and primitive cultures. Sure, you can tell everyone there's a big fairy in the sky who punishes you if you're bad – it might help keep people in line. Sure, you can tell people that there's a magic ghost who listens to their prayers and will look after them when they die. But these are just like the stories we tell children about Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny. We're not children any more, we're grown-ups, and it's time we stopped believing in fairy tales.