

Gethsemane Epistemology Volitional and Evidential

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Many philosophers, among others, have misguided expectations for God. These expectations are misguided in their failing to match what would be God's relevant *purposes*, if God exists. The latter purposes include what God aims to achieve in revealing to humans (the evidence of) God's reality and will. Misguided expectations for God can leave one looking for evidence for God in all the wrong places. In failing to find the expected evidence, one easily lapses into despair, anger, or indifference toward matters of God. We find such regrettable attitudes among many philosophers and many people outside philosophy.

The needed antidote calls for reconsideration of our expectations for God. This antidote enables us to reorient religious epistemology in a way that does justice to the idea of a God worthy of worship. Expanding the volitional epistemology of *The Elusive God* (2008), *The Evidence for God* (2010) offers the needed reorienting in a manner that avoids the deficiencies of fideism and of traditional natural theology. It contends that the evidence available to humans from a God worthy of worship would not be for mere spectators, but instead would seek to challenge *the will* of humans to cooperate fully with God's perfect will. This would result from God's seeking what is morally and spiritually best for humans. The latter would include their reconciliation to (reverent companionship with) God and their redemption from such volitional corruption as selfishness, pride, lack of forgiveness, and despair into a new life of *agapē* and forgiveness toward others, even enemies.

What if God maintains God's supreme redemptive value by refusing to become a mere third party and instead offering second-person (I-Thou) access of God to humans? What if, in addition, God is elusive in hiding from people unwilling to cooperate with God's perfect will? Such "what if?" questions can shake up misguided expectations for God, and point us

in a new direction. If they point correctly, then all of the merely intellectual apologetics and all of the natural theological arguments in the world will fail to achieve God's redemptive purpose. An outline of a volitional, Gethsemane epistemology follows.

Talk about God

An important use of the term "God" concerns God as the supreme agent in reality, as the one who *merits* our utmost devotion. Many people thus use the term "God" as the *title of personal perfection* for one who is "worthy of worship." I use the term as a title in this normative way, regardless of the truth or the tenability of such monotheism. Armed with such an exalted title, we can speak of God even if we do not believe that God exists. A title can be meaningful, but lack a titleholder. In talking about God, we thus can give a fair hearing to proponents of atheism and agnosticism, without begging questions against them or otherwise dismissing them.

Unlike mere talk about God, one's actually being "worthy of worship" is no cheap and easy matter. It is demanding in requiring moral perfection, that is, freedom from any moral defect whatever. Compelling candidates, however, are few and far between, if there is *any* plausible candidate. Traditional monotheism has the audacity to propose that there is one worthy of worship, regardless of this one's actual name. In this proposal, worthiness of worship requires worthiness of unqualified commitment, or trust, with regard to being good, and therefore a candidate for being God must *merit* such unqualified trust. In particular, this candidate cannot have a defective moral character that recommends against such unqualified trust. Moral defects count against unqualified trustworthiness with regard to being good, and they therefore block worthiness of worship and hence being God.

The normative title "God" offers a moral criterion to adjudicate candidates, however powerful they are. God must *merit* being God on *moral* grounds. No big bad bully, therefore, will qualify as being God just in virtue of strength, power, or even omnipotence. An impeccable self-sufficient moral standing is needed, and this excludes all of the candidates who, however powerful, foster evil to get their way. Being God does not allow for getting your way however you wish, because moral perfection must be preserved. Even if we disagree about some of the details of moral goodness, moral perfection requires one's seeking what is morally best for all concerned. God, then, would have to go beyond mere kindness or even mercy to seek what is morally best for all concerned, not just for God's allies. This goal would be a divine purpose without which one would not be divine. God, then, is not to be confused with Satan.

In seeking what is morally best for all concerned, God would be morally caring toward all other persons, even toward enemies of God. This would

raise the moral bar for candidates for God. They could not hate their enemies by seeking their personal destruction; instead, they would have to seek the moral well-being of their enemies as well as their allies. This would take us beyond familiar human standards for handling enemies to a divine standard of universal moral care. This standard may seem foolish, given our typical selfish ways, but it is required by the moral perfection in worthiness of worship and being God. God, accordingly, could not be passive, but would have to be active toward all others for the sake of their moral and spiritual well-being. So, Aristotle's god in his *Metaphysics* is not the true God; likewise for many other candidates. None of this assumes a Christian theology.

God's activity would be *purposive*, that is, guided by a purpose or goal regarding others. This purpose involves a divine aim to give lasting *morally impeccable life* to others noncoercively, in their companionship, reverence, and worship of God. The giving of such life would include (a) God's delivering people from what obstructs a morally good life and (b) God's empowering the killing of anti-God behavior, without extinguishing human wills. If God extinguished human wills, this would extinguish humans themselves as agents who are candidates for genuine moral relationships with God, thus undermining God's purpose. The grand purpose in question is God's aim to give *deep deliverance* to humans. Such deliverance is deep in its serious moral and spiritual concern, and it includes a cooperative rescue from human moral and spiritual shortcomings that block a good life with God. It frees humans from their selfishness and lack of forgiveness for the sake of a life in reverent companionship with God and in *agapē* and forgiveness toward others, even enemies.

By analogy, consider a lifeguard at a Lake Michigan beach. In rescuing a drowning person, the lifeguard draws from personal power beyond the drowning person, but the drowning person needs to cooperate with the rescuer. So, the *source* of the rescuing power does not belong to the drowning person, but the drowning person still must exercise his power of cooperation with the lifeguard. Likewise, if God has the power to rescue humans in moral trouble, they still may need to cooperate with the rescuing power on offer. Humans may need to cooperate with a rescue *on God's morally perfect terms*, instead of assuming that they can set the terms of their rescue. This lesson should be no surprise if God is morally perfect and we are not. Even so, many humans presume that they can set the terms for God's rescue of humans and for suitable evidence of God's reality, but this false presumption obscures the evidence and the reality of God for them. It obstructs human apprehension of God, given God's purposes.

God's deep deliverance of humans would differ from an ordinary lifeguard rescue. It would require the moral transformation of a human, and not just the extension of a human life. We might think of the *moral quality* of our personal characters as a big part of our problem, at least from the perspective

of a morally perfect God. What, then, would such a God do with humans like us? This question is important, but it rarely gets attention from philosophers, especially if they are distracted by the arguments of natural theology.

Perhaps inquirers about God are typically, if unknowingly, too *world-bound* in their thinking and living to give a fair hearing to the evidence and the reality of God. By “worldbound,” I mean one’s being directed away from God’s morally perfect character to worldly attitudes and behaviors, including selfish, unforgiving, or despairing decisions, which conflict with God. One result would be human distortion in the assessment of the evidence and the reality of God. This would include a human tendency to look for the evidence of God in places that may meet *human* expectations of God, such as worldly power and success, but conflict with God’s actual moral character.

Human religion and the human assessment of religion are often not *deeply experiential and volitional* in the way suited to God’s morally perfect character. Being deeply experiential and volitional in the right way would open one to direct confrontation, including in one’s conscience, with the convicting God who seeks to give deep deliverance. This God would bring serious *conflict* to deep human experience and volition: a conflict between God’s morally perfect will and human ways at odds with God’s will. God, then, would *not* be one who gives humans *mere* affirmation, tranquility, or amazement, or even mere kindness or mercy. Instead, corrective reciprocity from God would be experienced by receptive humans, and this reciprocity would be *agapē*-oriented toward God’s moral character. Much discussion of God suffers from consideration of an inferior counterfeit, and thus misses the high mark regarding the God worthy of worship. As suggested, the previous remarks do not demand Christian theology.

Gethsemane

The reality of deep experiential and volitional conflict has a name and a historical location: *Gethsemane*. A deficiency of religious life and thought, including in Christian and Jewish variations, is their failure to give due import to Gethsemane and its disturbing God. In shunning Gethsemane, people become worldbound, and thereby obscure any distinctive evidence of God in themselves; hence, the spiritual flatness among many human, even religious communities. Indeed, we humans are experts at fleeing or otherwise avoiding Gethsemane.

Gethsemane is no picnic garden; instead, it is a context of human struggle with the presence of God’s morally perfect character and will. The best example is Jesus of Nazareth in a place actually called “Gethsemane.” Bent on obeying God, for the sake of introducing God’s kingdom, Jesus found himself called by God to offer his life in self-sacrifice to God for the sake of others. This was moral struggle between Jesus and God, where Jesus

anticipated his arrest and crucifixion by Roman officials as part of God's seemingly foolish plan of redemption. God invites and nudges people toward Gethsemane; they do not have to find it on their own.

Mark's Gospel sketches a portrait: "[Jesus and his disciples] went to a place called Gethsemane. . . . He said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death. . . .' [H]e threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour [of his arrest and crucifixion] might pass from him. He said, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup [of suffering and death] from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want'" (Mark 14:32–6).¹ Gethsemane, then, begins with a humanly experienced conflict between a human want and a divine want, but ends with a resolution: a human plea to God in favor of God's will. The proper human approach to God likewise puts God's perfect will first, even when a serious human want must yield to God. We can find the God who hides, not in mere reflection, but instead in the experiential and volitional conflict of Gethsemane, where God offers deep deliverance to humans on God's perfect terms.

Gethsemane is a personal context for a divine-human relationship that challenges worldbound human ways. Following Jesus in Gethsemane, humans can begin to apprehend God *as God*, as the one with morally perfect authority over human desires and intentions. In that context, modeling Jesus, humans allow God's moral character, will, and reality to emerge in their experience, in the manner God desires. They thereby allow salient evidence to emerge for the God who, being morally perfect, merits supremacy in human struggles with God. Gethsemane is where humans should allow God's moral *power* to be apprehended for what it is: *divine* rather than human. Humans then properly receive God's power, and thereby welcome and even *become* salient evidence of God's moral character and reality, aside from the speculations of philosophers and natural theologians. Humans thus can participate in God's unique moral character and even become personified evidence of God.

Albert Schweitzer pointed in the right direction: "No personality of the past can be transported alive into the present by means of historical observation or by discursive thought about his authoritative significance. We can achieve a relation to such a personality only when we become united with him in the knowledge of a shared aspiration, when we feel our will is clarified, enriched, and enlivened by his will and when we rediscover ourselves through him. . . . Only thus does Jesus create a fellowship amongst us."² A Gethsemane fellowship is anchored in the union of human volitional cooperation with the will of God in Jesus. Schweitzer adds: "[Jesus] says the same words, 'Follow me!', and sets us to those tasks which he must fulfill in our time; He commands. And to those who hearken to him . . . he will reveal

1. All references to the Bible are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.

2. Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, 2nd ed., trans. John Bowden, et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 486.

himself in the peace, the labours, the conflicts, and the suffering that they may experience in his fellowship . . . and they will learn who he is.”³

Outside of Gethsemane, humans lack adequate parameters for receiving salient evidence of God’s moral character, will, and reality. Outside we fail to apprehend firsthand the powerful evidence of God’s redemptive work for us, including that through Jesus as our forerunner, companion, and intentional guide in Gethsemane. Outside of Gethsemane, it is too easy to conjoin so-called evidence of God (such as supposed evidence of a First Cause) with other evidence and end up with a false God. This is a serious, if widely overlooked, threat to much natural theology. The Gethsemane model is no mere moralism just about what is morally good or bad; it requires human responsiveness and volitional conformity *to God*, who intervenes and aims to prompt and to sustain divine-human interaction toward deep deliverance. Faith in God, then, is not a leap in the dark; instead it is the affirmative *response to God* of yielding oneself to (participating in) God’s experienced moral character and will. Clearly, such faith is no merely intellectual response of assent to a proposition.

The Archimedean Point

Philosophers have long looked for an Archimedean point to perceive the world aright and then act accordingly. The best kept secret is that Gethsemane is that Archimedean point whereby one can confront God directly, with due human receptivity. This is a “secret” mainly for volitional rather than intellectual reasons, because many humans are *unwilling* to go to Gethsemane and experience, obediently, the powerful evidence of God’s reality. We should expect, however, that God intervenes only *as God* and therefore only on the divine end of a Gethsemane interaction.

In our selfishness and pride, we naturally prefer not to be on the yielding end toward God. I prefer to advise God in Gethsemane: *My* will be done, God, *not* yours. This reverses the model of Gethsemane offered by Jesus as God’s perfect representative. God, however, will not offer God as a pawn for humans, lest what humans need—a morally perfect rescuer and companion—be destroyed. Indeed, God’s purpose behind many human difficulties is to encourage us to cooperate sincerely in Gethsemane. This fits with the following insight from the apostle Paul: “the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it [namely, God], in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:20–1). Such life-giving freedom is on offer in Gethsemane, in deep deliverance by God.

3. *Ibid.*, 487.

Many philosophers seek an Archimedean point via an epistemology. Before a God worthy of worship, however, our epistemology must be inherently *volitional* and not merely intellectual: an epistemology of Gethsemane. We should expect to need God's specific evidential help, via self-revelation, in coming to know God. No program of human self-help, intellectual or otherwise, will deliver what Gethsemane offers: God's presence and challenge to humans in their receptive conscience toward God. We should not expect, then, to come to know God solely via non-God premises. God would play a direct experiential and volitional role at the very beginning of an epistemology of Gethsemane. So, God would not be acknowledged *just* in the conclusion of a merely propositional argument; otherwise, a crucial *de re* factor would be omitted. This factor would include God's *meeting* one directly, for the sake of challenging one to cooperate with God as Lord and Friend. In addition, we should not presume to be able to *think* our way into God's presence; instead, Gethsemane would call for our volitional resolve to accommodate God's will over time, diachronically as well as synchronically. Even so, we have no recipe for control over the timing of divine intervention in our lives; we humans still need to "wait on the Lord," for the suitable times of intervention favored by God. To this extent, at least, divine self-revelation involves some mystery from the perspective of our limited human cognition.

Perhaps we should not even ask about God's existence if we are unwilling to undergo Gethsemane with sincerity, because we then are probably inclined to ask about a false god. We are probably interested in a god who reflects our own wills rather than the perfect will of God. Judicious truth-seeking requires, however, that we be sincerely open to a God who meets us directly, person-to-person, in a Gethsemane context of our willingness to yield to God. Accordingly, we should be open to God's wanting to be known by us in the second person, in an I-Thou Gethsemane relationship, and not merely in the third person, as he, she, or it. After all, God would seek to have humans share in the morally perfect divine character, given our need of moral transformation toward God's character.⁴ For this reason, according to Abraham Heschel, "the test of [deep personal] truth can take place only through the soul's confrontation with God, . . . confronting oneself as one is confronted by God."⁵

A God worthy of worship, being morally perfect, would be a *personal* agent who may choose to be known by humans only via human acquaintance with God's personal character and will. This acquaintance would emerge in the conflict of Gethsemane, as God reveals via human conscience the ultimate futility of life without God. Only God can show us God directly, but we must allow for the needed time and attention. For the sake of deep deliver-

4. Cf. 2 Pet. 1:3–4.

5. Abraham Heschel, *A Passion for Truth* (New York: Farrar, 1973), 165.

ance, then, God would aim to show us God in Gethsemane, in an I-Thou-based transformation of humans.

Evidence for God must be evidence for a personal agent worthy of worship. So, not all of God's effects as creator (for instance, the purely physical world) are evidence for God. Only God's personal moral character and will can give salient evidence of an agent worthy of worship, and Gethsemane is the fitting context for apprehending this evidence. To avoid any such personal challenge, many people clamor instead for merely *de dicto* arguments (involving only propositional information) for God's existence, but God may prefer to meet these people directly, in an I-Thou interaction in Gethsemane. This God has no cognitive need, in human knowledge of God, for the arguments of traditional natural theology or the abstract speculations of philosophers.

Divine and Human Hiding

We now can approach the question of why God is not more obvious, if God seeks the deep deliverance of humans. Admittedly, divine hiding is sometimes too stressful for us, and prompts us to move toward agnosticism, atheism, or even despair about human life. Limited humans should not expect a complete explanation of divine hiding, but we can identify a key consideration. God would want to uphold the supreme *value* of God's character and power, including for humans, and therefore would challenge human tendencies to diminish this value. If *casual* human access, such as merely intellectual access, to God would diminish God's value for humans, God would avoid such access. We thus might think of divine evidence as "live it or lose it." Correspondingly, God would be elusive in some cases for good redemptive reasons.

Because we are morally frail and not God, we need hopeful direction from the God who rescues willing humans. Without this direction, we have no enduring hope against despair, whatever our short-term hopes. We need divine direction that is not a mere suggestion or proposal but includes a *command* for our deep deliverance. God hides in Gethsemane with the command to let God be God, authoritative over human wills, and this command emerges in receptive human conscience. To the extent that we hide from (the divine challenge of) Gethsemane, God may hide from us. To the extent that we welcome God's moral power and companionship in Gethsemane, we eventually receive God's salient presence and deep deliverance. One's personal will thus matters in apprehending evidence of God's reality, given God's purpose for the deep deliverance of humans.

Our questions now become personal, too personal for a merely academic setting. Maybe we need deep deliverance from a *merely* academic setting. At any rate, are we ourselves now in Gethsemane, or have we been

available and willing to go there, ever, to reverence and worship God? Have we given the needed time and attention to this place of vital challenge and opportunity? If not, why not? Are we fleeing or otherwise avoiding Gethsemane, for the sake of our own short-lived will and purpose? Most of us are, quite clearly, and this is the downside of the human predicament of moral failure and despair. We can test our answers with a simple question: when, if ever, did we sacrifice our time to be fully available to reverence God, if God should call us? Part of the difficulty of Gethsemane for us is its requirement that we acknowledge our own selfishness and pride, and thus engage in self-judgment. This is painful, and hence personal interaction with God is never cheap and easy. We rarely, if ever, set aside the time for this needed interaction, and therefore we miss out on vital evidence for God. We blithely demand salient evidence for God's presence, but we resist being *present to God*, on God's terms. Humans often hide from God, and then complain that God is not available to them. Something is seriously wrong with this picture.

Are we *willing* to live for the long haul in Gethsemane, in the obedient mode represented by Jesus as our ongoing model and intentional guide for relating to a morally perfect God? Our lives typically offer an answer, in terms of how we spend our time and respond to our tendencies toward selfishness, pride, despair, and lack of forgiveness. We easily fall into a life-mode other than Gethsemane, perhaps because it feels like the path of least resistance, especially relative to our peers. Moral *resistance*, however, is exactly what we would need in the presence of a morally perfect God, lest we ourselves play God and destroy ourselves. We have considerable skill, not for the better, in playing God on various fronts, given our resistance to Gethsemane.

The Good News is that God is resolutely *for* all people, and that all people willing to live in Gethsemane will find God eventually and come to know God as Lord and Friend, because God has called them to Gethsemane. They will find deep deliverance by God from the selfishness, pride, and despair that kill humans and their vulnerable communities. This deliverance is a divine work in progress, and not perfected yet, but deep deliverance it is. It is a deeply experienced, lived reality for some, and no mere theory subject to merely academic assessment. We can study it *on God's terms*, but we cannot control it on human terms. It is person-engaging, or it remains hidden from holdouts. For good reason, God will not be governed by familiar human ways. God will not sacrifice God's goodness, and for this we should be grateful.

When the Gospel of John remarks that "the life was the light of all people" (1:4), the writer has in mind the life of Jesus of Gethsemane. His yielding in Gethsemane, as our prototype and guide, made deep illumination *available* to all humans, but humans still must *appropriate* this by following suit in Gethsemane, to let God be God. Gethsemane, then, is a practical cognitive model to live by, constantly, and not just to talk about. (People are

always free to try it to test its veracity.) It thus counters our cheap and easy talk about God, for our own good, and opens a vital path to God. Gethsemane puts our priorities and our use of time in right order, thereby bringing integrity and peace to our fragile lives before God. It takes us beyond a merely intellectual “worldview” to reverent companionship with God as Lord, an urgent need for all humans.

Agape Re-Creation

Salient evidence of God in Gethsemane includes, as we yield, evidence of God’s deep deliverance of us from temptation to disobey. This evidence emerges in Paul’s epistemologically important remark: “Hope [in God] does not disappoint us, because God’s *agapē* has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom. 5:5). (This is one of the epistemologically most important statements in the New Testament and in all of religious literature, but its importance is widely neglected. *The Evidence for God* tries to correct for this, as does my book *The Severity of God*.) Paul would endorse a similar view about the foundation of *faith* in God. He has in mind the *agapē* of God as the humanly experienced compassionate and merciful supernatural will, exemplified in Jesus, to bring lasting good life to receptive humans, including enemies of God. Such *agapē*, according to Paul, is the salient *evidential* antidote to epistemic disappointment in God. Gethsemane is the challenge for humans to appropriate divine *agapē* as actually life-forming in reverent companionship with God as Lord, in contrast with selfishness, pride, despair, and lack of forgiveness. This *agapē* is reportedly experienced widely by humans, and it offers a distinctive experiential foundation for knowledge of God.

John Baillie remarks:

I just cannot read the Gospel story without knowing that I am being sought out in *agapē*, that I am at the same time being called to life’s most sacred task and being offered life’s highest prize. For it is the *agapē* God has shown me in Christ that constrains me to the love of my fellow men. If there be someone who is aware of no such constraint, I cannot of course hope to make him aware of it by speaking these few sentences. That would require, not so much a more elaborate argument as something quite different from any argument.⁶

Arguably, the human experience of *agapē* is God’s call to reconciliation and companionship in Gethsemane. At any rate, the experienced power of *agapē* is not merely imaginary or wishful thinking. It is as real, and as good, as anything on offer. Our welcoming (or neglecting) it is our welcoming (or neglecting) God and salient evidence of God.

6. John Baillie, *A Reasoned Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), chapter 14.

No claim or subjective human experience is self-authenticating for God's reality.⁷ Even so, *God* can be self-authenticating, self-attesting, or self-witnessing, in virtue of making God known directly to humans. God can self-manifest to humans an *agapē*-filled moral character and will, as in a Gethsemane challenge to humans. With corrective reciprocity in human experience, the Source of humanly experienced *agapē* can self-reveal (to receptive humans) to be beyond *merely* human or natural processes, thus indicating the mistake of human self-credit for *agapē*. God, in short, can "prove" himself to humans with his perfect character and will.

We should expect personal self-authentication from a morally perfect God seeking human redemption. After all, there seems to be nothing else as morally great as God to authenticate divine reality. That is, we have no clear alternative for a source of authentication for God. This consideration fits with the following question of Isaiah 40:25: "To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal?, says the Holy One." It also fits with the report of Isaiah 44:24–6: "I am the Lord, . . . who confirms the word of his servant, and fulfills the predictions of his messengers." Likewise, it fits with Isaiah 45:22–3: "I am God, and there is no other. By *myself* I have sworn" (italics added). Even if one deploys an abductive argument in support of divine reality, the foundational evidence includes *de re* confrontation with an experienced perfect will. More accurately, the confrontation is *de te*, owing to its being I-*Thou*, given that God is an intentional agent, and not a mere thing.

One can *claim* a fictional object to be self-authenticating, but a mere claim does not evidence make. (We cannot generate evidence or defeaters of evidence quite so easily, and this is a good thing for the discerning pursuit of true beliefs.) The critical question concerns the evidence for the reality of the corresponding moral character and will. Nothing analogous to the good power of *agapē* has been poured out in receptive human wills by a fictional object, and nothing analogous to divine corrective reciprocity is found in human experience of a fictional object. Arguably, then, the God of *agapē* is unique, and the remaining question is whether we inquirers are sincerely welcoming toward this God. Here we move, for the better, from anything like natural theology to existential, truly volitional epistemology, the epistemology of Gethsemane.

Deep deliverance by God begins to make us morally new, in reverent companionship with God. This is moral and spiritual *re-creation* by the God of *agapē*. When we follow Jesus in Gethsemane, we apprehend God's unmatched *power of agapē* (no mere talk), and we begin to appreciate the following wisdom from G. K. Chesterton:

7. Paul Moser, *The Elusive God: Reorienting Religious Epistemology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 149. See also Moser, *The Severity of God* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), and *The Evidence for God* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

After one moment when I bowed my head
And the whole world turned over and came upright,
And I came out where the old road shone white,
I walked the ways and heard what all men said,
Forests of tongues, like autumn leaves unshed,
Being not unlovable but strange and light;
Old riddles and new creeds, not in despite
But softly, as men smile about the dead.

The sages have a hundred maps to give
That trace their crawling cosmos like a tree,
They rattle reason out through many a sieve
That stores the sand and lets the gold go free:
And all these things are less than dust to me
Because my name is Lazarus and I live.⁸

8. G. K. Chesterton, "The Convert," in *The Collected Poems of G. K. Chesterton* (London: Palmer, 1927).

I presented an earlier version of this paper at Harvard University, in 2011, and benefited from the lively discussion. I also presented a version to the Philosophy of Religion Group Symposium on *The Evidence for God* at the APA central division meetings in Chicago, February 2012. I thank Charles Taliaferro and Kate Waidler for serving as engaging symposium-session commentators, and Brad Seeman for chairing the session and editing this symposium. Thanks, too, for helpful comments by Tom Carson, Doug Geivett, Chad Meister, and Brad Seeman. I also thank Harold Netland for contributing to this symposium.