



But It Is There, by Kent Nerburn

We are all born with a belief in God. It may not have a name or a face. We may not even see it as God. But it is there.

It is the sense that comes over us as we stare into the starlit sky or watch the last fiery rays of an evening sunset. It is the morning shiver as we wake on a beautiful day and smell a richness in the air that we know and love from somewhere we can't quite recall. It is the mystery behind the beginning of time and beyond the limits of space. It is a sense of otherness that brings alive something deep in our hearts.

Some people will tell you that there is no God. They will claim that God is a crutch for people who can't face reality, a fairy tale for people who need myths in their lives. They will argue for rational explanations of the origin of the universe and scientific explanations of the perfect movements of nature. They will point to evil and injustice in the world, and cite examples of religion being used to start wars or to hurt people of different beliefs.

You cannot argue with these people, nor should you. These are the people the Chinese philosopher Chuang Tzu spoke about when he said, "A frog in a well cannot be talked to about the sea."

If you have any sense of the mystery of the universe around you, you are hearing the murmur of the sea. Your task is to leave the well, to step out into the sun, and to set out for the sea. Leave the arguing to those who wish to discuss the size and shape of the walls that close them in.

If you hear the call of the distant sea, do not be turned away by the naivety and contradictions of the beliefs around you. There are many paths, and the sea looks different from each of them. Your task is not to judge the paths of others, but to find a path that will lead you ever closer to the murmurings that you hear in your heart.

Begin by accepting where you are.

--Kent Nerburn