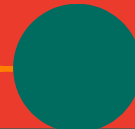




ELUSIVE GOD

**"Where is your
God?"**



Problem: "Divine Hiddenness"

Philosophical version:

"If God wants a relationship with people, God should do more to reach non-resistant non-belief."

Emotional version:

"Where is God? Why doesn't he show himself and make his will more clear?"

C.S. Lewis: Why are holy places dark places?

Definitions:

Hidden: Not evident to the seeker

Evasive: Hiddenness from avoidance

Elusive: Hiddenness from purpose

Christian Claim:

We humans are evasive.

God is elusive.

Some truths are hidden.

We accept elusiveness in actors

Nature

Romance

Politics

Parenting

Governance



We know that actors often do not speak and show everything- even everything we think we need now.

The Elusiveness Equation

U- amount of desire to understand, detect or experience the elusive

E- How elusive the subject is

S- Level of the elusive subject's superiority

J- Justification for the elusiveness

D- The level of emotional difficulty in the elusiveness

$$(U(S-E))J=D$$

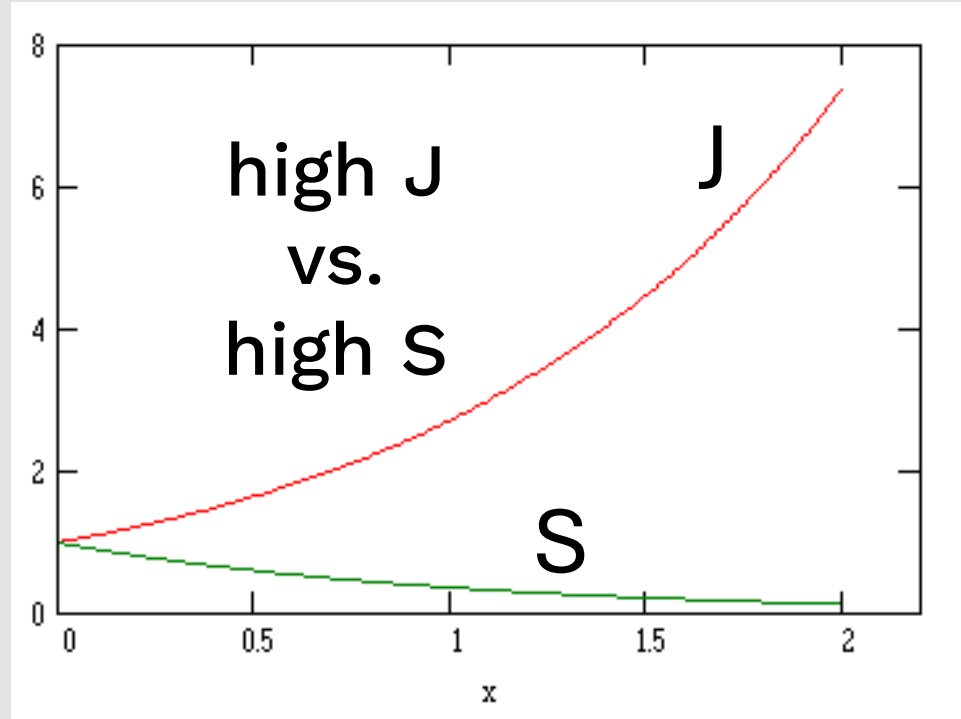
Note that “J” is the multiplier.

Tale of two lines

$$(U(S-E))J=D$$

S- Level of the e.
subject's
superiority

J- Justification for
the elusiveness



What we want is an E value that is 0

A struggle for every sort

The Irreligious- their justification

Vaguely Spiritual- proportionate response

Weak or nominal- their torture

Legalistic- their weakness

Mystics- their disappointment

Religious- their nagging longing or resentment

This has been the greatest problem of my life.

There is no exit.

The struggle is periodic

Avoidance- don't think about ultimate things

Episodic- we think about it when we feel it hurt

Existential- It is always present and with us.

I believe it is SUPPOSED TO BE existential.

(What moderns call existential, ancients would have called spiritual, moral, or 'of the heart')

**God being elusive
hurts and is hard**



Believing in God doesn't solve this

Modernity is worldly- advanced “disenchantment”

Feels like Heredity- fighting our nature

Mysticism doesn't work for most people

Spiritual Experiences are indefinite

- Providence
- Testimony
- Counter evidence and Rel. Diversity

Psalm 42:7-10

“Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. 8 By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me-- a prayer to the God of my life. 9 I say to God my Rock, ‘Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?’ 10 My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, ‘Where is your God?’”

Notice: His relief is not a direct divine action.

What should we do?



The Crux:

“There is a strange increase of nihilism in our time.”

Is giving up on God being realistic or avoidant?

Or: If you give up on the elusive God, are you willing to give up that good, truth, magnanimity, nobility and beauty that must be grounded in something like him?

The “Absurdity and Anxiety” trap

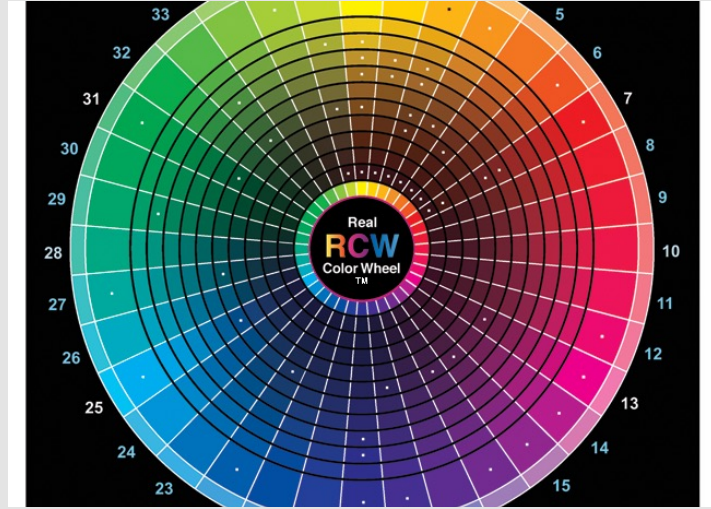
1. **Dignity/Divinity:** We have “eternity in our hearts” – longing for truth and goodness and perception of beauty
2. **Absurdity:** desire and longing + horror, randomness and pain.
3. **Anxiety:** There is no peace in seeing both of these at the same time.
4. **Crux:** rebellion or sacrifice

"Realism"



Is reality thin and clear as water, or strong and costly as blood?

Repentance



There is no wheel of value without the primary colors of divine dignity.

Spectator

Show me.

Why can't I?

If...He would...

There is something
wrong with him.

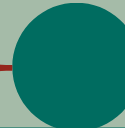
Attunement

How must I seek?

What is good?

If he doesn't...what am I
missing?

There may be something
amiss in me.



Key hints...

Proverbs 26:4-5

“⁴ Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself. ⁵ Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.”

Key hints...

Read all of: Matthew 7:5-11

Matthew 7:6-7

“⁶Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces. ⁷Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Jesus the Christ

Jesus was God more revealed and yet more elusive. He was incomprehensible to the spectators and understood by those willing to be attuned through repentance and faith.

Matthew 13:13-16

“This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. ¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise, they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’ ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.”

Jesus the Christ

Jesus is the ultimate stereogram of God's revelation. He is perfectly attuned to the Father, and the perfect tuner of the human will and soul.

We are forced to face ourselves and God's goodness without access to his direct presence and power. These are "sprinkled", but not the substance (since they would divert our attunement)

**Seek God's
attunement by
seeking Christ**





ELUSIVE GOD