

**DO WE NEED A  
NEW IDEA OF  
GOD?, PP. 1-213**

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Do We Need a New Idea of God?, pp. 1-213 by Edmund H. Reeman

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A New Idea of God**

By  
**EDMUND H. REEMAN**



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## Preface

THAT there is need for a reinterpretation of life and a restatement of religious faith in the light of democratic outreach and impulse would seem unquestionable. There is a whole world of difference between the philosophy and world-view of the ages that gave us the historic creeds of Christendom and the philosophy and world-view of the present day. We live, indeed, in an entirely new world of thought; science has reconstructed the story of creation and written it anew in the language of the most thrilling romance, and democratic triumphs have gone far toward revolutionizing the social aims and conceptions of the world's politics. And yet in spite of these facts conventional religious teachers for the most part persist in proclaiming their message in the language and thought-forms of the early and darker ages, with the

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result that instead of interpreting life in a way that gives men courage and enthusiasm to face its responsibilities, the teaching of religion more often serves to confuse their thoughts, muddle their minds, and dissociate their common activity from the great life struggle of the universe.

If religion is to remain a vital force in the lives of men, some sort of a restatement of its leading ideas in the terms of democratic outreach and in harmony with the modern world-view is imperative, and any such restatement that does not show a vital relation between every man's heart throbs and the master struggle that has brought him to manhood must be pronounced inadequate. Both within and without the churches there is a growing dissatisfaction with conventional forms of credal belief and a consequent lack of reality in the forms of worship which depend upon them. Not only do many people not find spiritual inspiration, help, and vision in religious forms and services intended to promote these ends,

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but there are not a few who find themselves in a state of open revolt against what to them are the insincerities which a conventional worship forces upon them,—that many of these are people of true earnestness and passionate moral enthusiasm does but serve to make more serious the problem. That of the great number who own a nominal allegiance to their faith there are all too many who are insincere in the utterance of the beliefs which the creeds force upon them and repeat the most definite words of belief with all sorts of mental reservations is a most serious problem for the churches of Christendom to-day.

The author of this little book has sought to address himself as simply and directly as his subject permits to the growing multitude of men and women who find but little meaning in the conventional terms of religion and who are rather confused than helped by their use. He has sought to talk rather than write, as one might talk with a group of friends; and to make his words the more personal and direct

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he has deliberately thrown his arguments as far as possible into question form.

It is out of a sense of the need for a frank review of the sanctions of our common religious beliefs that the pages which follow have grown. The purpose of the book is, therefore, practical rather than controversial.

EDMUND HENRY REEMAN.

*Trenton, N. J.,  
January 18th, 1917.*

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