

Worldviews

1. **Theism.** Theism views God as being beyond the world. God created the world and is infinite. God can act in the world in a supernatural way as He chooses and reveal Himself to individuals personally and through Scripture. He is both beyond the universe and in the universe. Theism is represented by traditional Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.
2. **Finite Godism.** Finite godism is similar to theism in that God is both beyond the universe and active in the universe (unlike deism). However, God's power is viewed to be limited. God is loving and desiring good, but also finite and incapable of bringing the desired good about. The age-old question of theodicy (Greek for "God's justice") drives this worldview. The logic in this view states that God being all powerful, God being all good/loving, and the fact of the existence of evil in the world can not all be true at the same time. So since evil exists, then God is either unable to stop it and is therefore not omnipotent, or is unwilling and therefore not all loving/good. Finite Godism explains evil by retaining God's love and goodness at the expense of his power. William James, Edgar Brightman and Peter Bertocci are proponents of this view.
3. **Deism.** Deism is similar to theism without the supernatural interaction by God. God is the creator and is beyond the universe but not in the universe. A materialistic world view is held because God is not presently interacting with His creation. Some deists believe that God cannot do miracles, but most believe God does not do miracles. Deists reject the claims of specific revelations by God to individuals and those proclaimed by institutional churches and religions. Men such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, Ethan Allen, and Voltaire were deists.
4. **Pan-en-theism.** This view says God is in the universe and is growing to achieve his potential beyond the universe. It is similar to finite godism in that it views God as limited, but it is different in the sense that God is potentially infinite as he develops. There is the idea of God occupying two opposite poles: infinite and finite and is dynamically becoming all that is potential. Further people, as part of God are understood as partners in this process of "becoming." Adherents include Charles Hartshorne and Shubert Ogden.
5. **Polytheism.** Polytheism believes that there are many finite gods in the world who actively influence the world. They are unlike theism in that there is no infinite God. They are unlike deism in that there is supernatural activity in the world. They are unlike finite godism in that there is no God beyond the universe. Some pantheists are also polytheists in that many gods are representative expressions of the god that is everything. Hinduism is an example of this and is technically called henotheistic, meaning that there is one transcendent god (Brahman) who is then manifested as many other gods. Some examples of modern polytheistic churches would be, Mormon, Scientology, Unification Church. The ancient Greeks and Romans and other ancient near-eastern religion of the days of the New Testament were also polytheistic.
6. **Pantheism.** Pantheism views God as being active in the universe but not beyond the universe. In fact, God is seen as being the universe or that the universe (all material existence) is actually God's body. There is no creation and Creator, only one reality. God is everything and everything is God. Pantheism is found in forms of Hinduism, Zen Buddhism and Christian Science. It is very prevalent among eastern religions, and all nature-based, pagan or neopagan religions such as Wicca, Druidism, etc.
7. **Atheism.** Atheism denies the existence of God, either in the universe or beyond the universe. All that was, is and ever will be is the universe, which is self-sustaining. Famous atheistic philosophers include Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche and Jean Paul Sartre.

A sub-form of atheism is agnosticism. Agnosticism says that the existence of God is not/cannot be known. Agnosticism falls into two groups, the soft agnostic, who says that God may possibly be known to exist but that that knowledge is not yet proven, and the hard agnostic, who says that it is simply impossible to know whether God exists, either for the individual or for humankind in general.