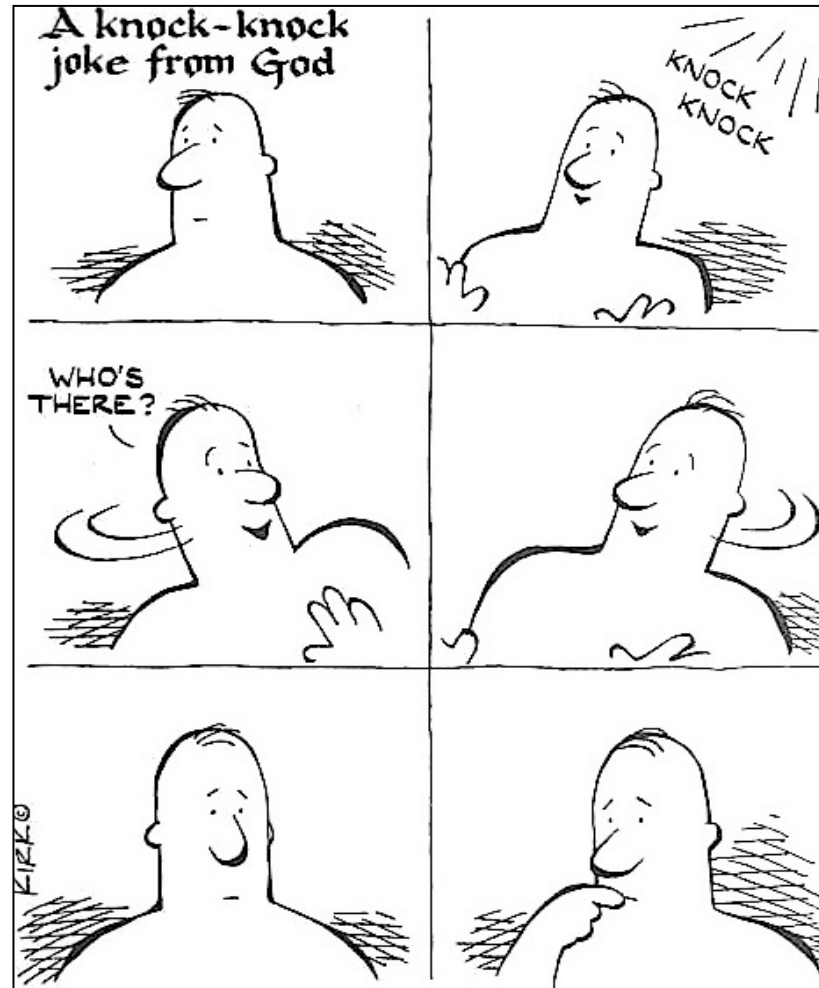


Religious Experience

The Hiddenness of God



The Not-So-Hiddenness of Jesus



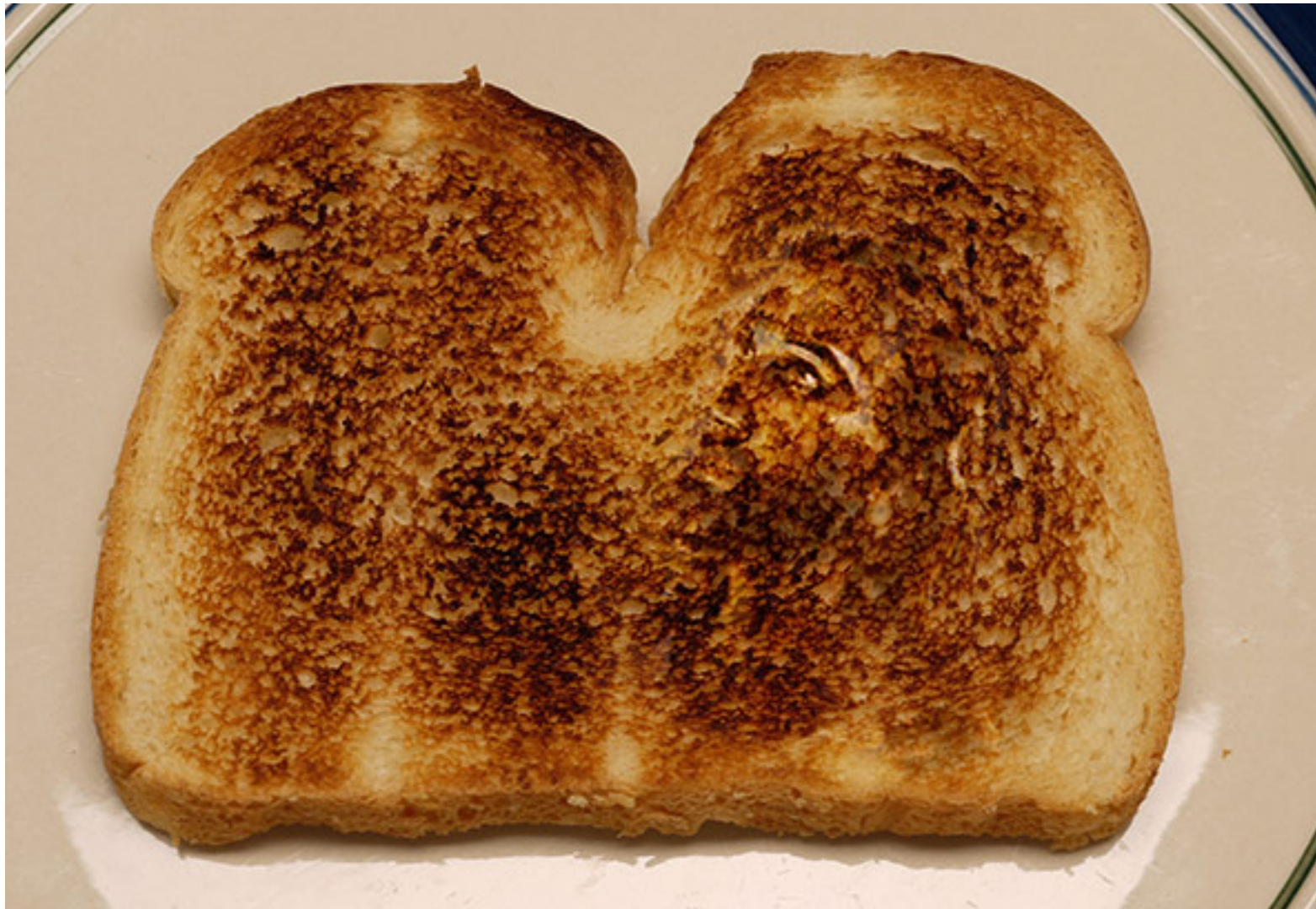
The Not-So-Hiddenness of Jesus



The Not-So-Hiddenness of Jesus



The Not-So-Hiddenness of Jesus



The Not-So-Hiddenness of Jesus



The Not-So-Hiddenness of Jesus



The Not-So-Hiddenness of Jesus



Pareidolia is the phenomenon of seeing faces where none exists. We have an area of the brain that is specialized to process faces. This same area is what is activated when people see a face pattern inside visual noise, such as this dog's backside.

Kinds of Religious Experience

Feeling:

Friedrich Schleiermacher: ego being swallowed by the infinite.

Rudolph Otto: experiencing the numinous...

William James: the primary source of all religions

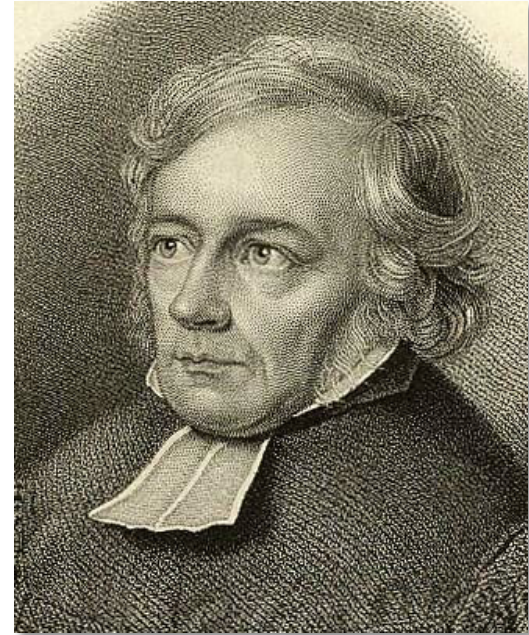
Perceptual: (**William Alston**) Identifying a non-sensory experience of God by comparing with how we experience sensible things.

Interpretive: (**Wayne Proudfoot**) Experience as an interpretive account that, from the perspective of the subject, requires a religious explanation. What matters is “how it seems at the time” and not “how things are in reality” (= nonrealism)

Schleiermacher on R.E.

Religious experience is “a feeling of absolute or total dependence upon a source or power that is distinct from the world.”

Religious experience is entirely affective:
non-cognitive, non-conceptual.



Friedrich Schleiermacher
(1768-1834)
(Halle, Berlin)

[Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Der christliche Glaube* (1821)]

Otto on Religious Experience

God's essence can be grasped only by way of feeling — intuitively, not conceptually.

God as “tremendous mystery”

Numinous experience takes three forms:

- (1) Utter creaturely **dependence**.
- (2) **Dread/awe** of the divine power.
- (3) Intense **longing** for God.



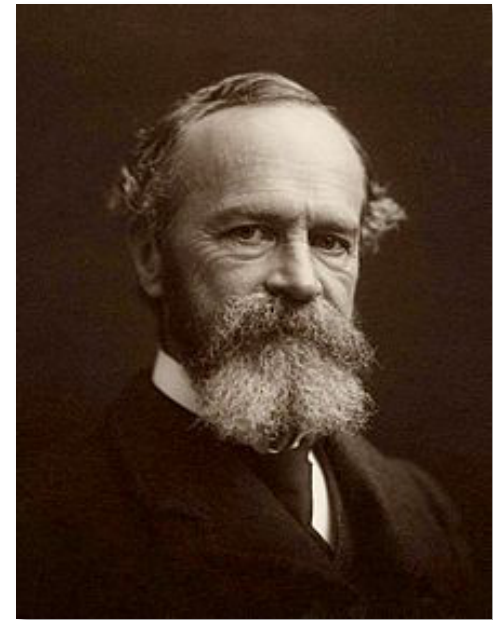
Rudolph Otto
(1869-1937)
(Marburg)

[Rudolph Otto, *Das Heilige* (1917)]

James on Religious Experience

A religious experience is:

- (1) **Ineffable**: it cannot be adequately expressed in words (more like a feeling than thought).
- (2) **Noetic**: the subject feels that she has learned something from the RE.
- (3) **Transient**: the RE is temporary
- (4) **Passive**: the RE just happens to the subject; the subject can engage in a practice that might encourage an RE, but otherwise has no control over it.



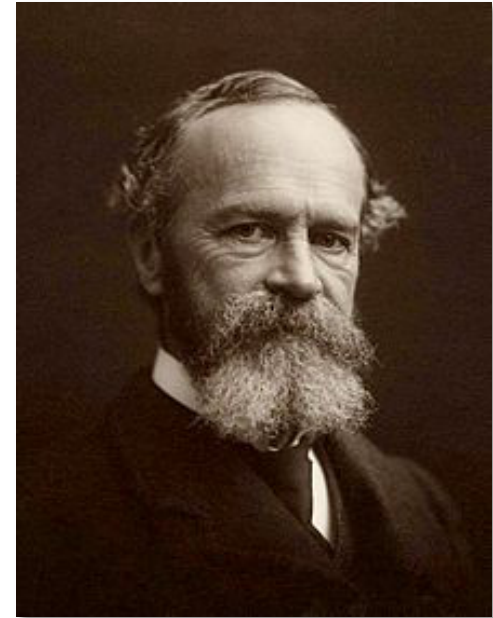
William James
(1842-1910)
(Harvard University)

[William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902)]

James on Religious Experience

The **epistemic authority** of religious experience:

- (1) Absolute authority over the subject.
- (2) No authority over 3rd parties.
- (3) Lessen the authority of non-religious experience.



William James
(1842-1910)
(Harvard University)

[William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902)]