

Questions About Whether Brahman Can Have a Personal Relationship and If Bhakti Is Just Ritual

By Pastor Ed Anderson

If Brahman (the ultimate reality) is impersonal and formless, how can I have a personal relationship with God? If God is an impersonal force, how can I know Him or be loved by Him? Is devotion (bhakti) just emotional ritual or is there a way to truly connect?

Answer:

This is a profound question, and it goes to the heart of what the gospel offers to a world full of spiritual longing:

The Question:

“If Brahman is impersonal and formless, how can I have a personal relationship with God? Is devotion (bhakti) just emotional ritual, or can I truly connect with God?”

The Gospel Response: God Is Not an Abstract Force—He Is a Loving Person

In contrast to the idea of Brahman as an **impersonal** force, the God of the Bible is **personal, knowable, and deeply relational**. He is not distant energy. He is **love itself** (1 John 4:8).

1. God Came to Us in Person

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” — John 1:14

Jesus Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). God didn’t just send prophets or texts—He **became one of us**, walked among us, and called us His friends (John 15:15).

This answers the longing of the heart: “Can I know God?”

Yes. Through Jesus, you can know God **personally**, not just philosophically.

2. Love Is Not Possible with a Force—Only a Person Can Love and Be Loved

“We love because He first loved us.” — 1 John 4:19

If God is only an energy field or cosmic truth, you can't love Him in return. You can only revere or dissolve into Him.

But the gospel says: **You are not a drop in an ocean—you are a child in the arms of your Father.**

3. Devotion (Bhakti) Is Not Empty Ritual—It Can Become Intimate Relationship

“This is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.” — John 17:3

Jesus invites you into relationship, not religion.

In John 14:23, He promises:

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

That's not mystical language. That's **deep intimacy**. God wants to live **with you and in you**.

4. You Don't Have to Climb to God—God Climbed Down to You

Most religions, including many forms of Hinduism, teach that **you must ascend to the divine**—through yoga, meditation, karma, or reincarnation.

But the gospel says:

“While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” — Romans 5:8

You don't have to be reincarnated a thousand times or purify yourself through lifetimes of striving. **Jesus took your burden on Himself**, and offers you peace today.

5. You Can Talk to God—And He Hears You

“Call to Me and I will answer you.” — Jeremiah 33:3

God is not a law of the universe. He's not a concept. He is **a Person who listens**. You can cry out to Him in joy, in pain, in confusion—and He promises to be near (Psalm 34:18).

Final Thought:

You were made for love—not just union with the Divine, but relationship with the **Lover of your soul**.

The gospel doesn't discard your hunger for devotion (bhakti). It fulfills it by revealing the **face of God in Jesus Christ**, who loved you enough to die for you, and now lives to walk with you.

“Taste and see that the Lord is good.” — Psalm 34:8