

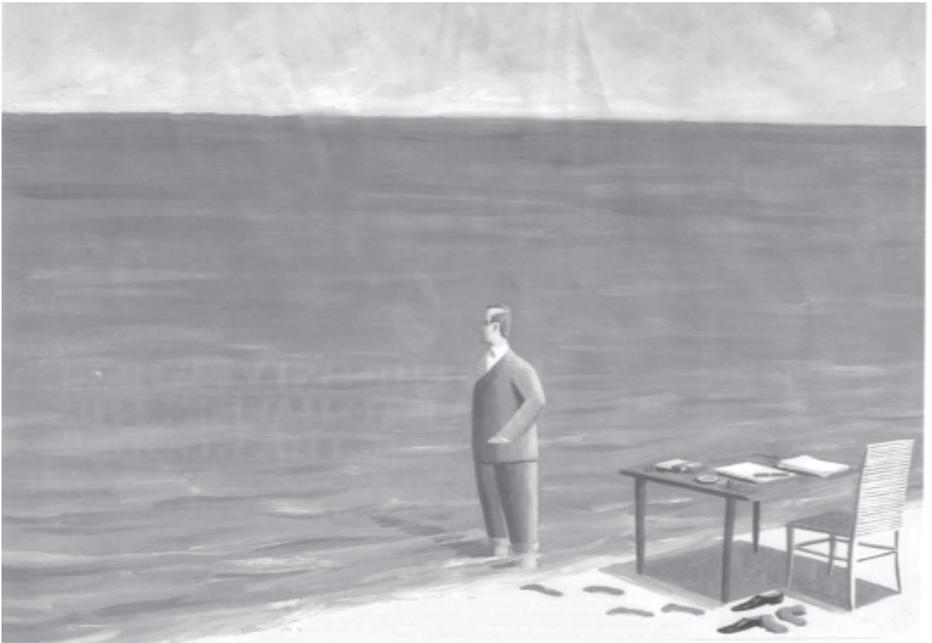
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## Week 2: Examining the Ways We Know

### Introduction

Last time we looked at the human propensity to pose questions about the meaning of existence, and began considering the question of God in this context. The question of God reveals humanity's natural desire to know beyond what we can see with our eyes. In this session we will explore more deeply the ways in which we come to know and/or believe in things which ultimately lie beyond our full comprehension.



Cover Art for *The New Yorker*, June 24, 1991

1. What do you think is going on here? What might the man be thinking? Attempting? Pondering?

2. How does the picture represent different ways of knowing about the ocean?
3. What is the difference between knowing someone and knowing about someone? How might the image point to this distinction?
4. What types of things must we do in order to get to know a person, and not just know about him or her?
5. If God is personal, and not just an impersonal life-force or energy field, what types of things might we do to come to know this God?

## **Optional Reading for Further Reflection**

For further reflection on the analogy of an infinite ocean applied to God and the spiritual life, see the quotes from the Christian tradition in Appendix A.

## **Conclusion**

With the help of the image of the man at the seashore, we have reflected on some of the different ways we know things. Words, arguments and logic can point us in the right direction, but often fall short of delivering the whole truth. The ocean is more than facts and statistics on a page. People are known best through relationships, not biographies. And if God exists, God is surely more than we can say or believe about him. The one who truly desires to know something of God must become open to seeking the experience of God.