

Review of: "God's characteristics as reported by near-death experiencers"

Ian Wallis

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This stimulating article left me with a number of questions or comments, including:

- 1) Were the only search terms for interrogating the NDERF Database 'God' and 'Jesus'? If so, a significant number of relevant testimonies may have been missed. For example, experiencers from non-Christian religions are more likely to use the names of deities within their faith traditions. Also, Christians are likely to refer to Jesus as 'Christ,' etc.
- 2) What is unclear from this study is whether the experiences of light, unconditional love, non-duality, non-judgement and so forth are exclusively associated with God and/or Jesus or whether similar experiences are found in the testimonies of those who do not make a theological identification.
- 3) It would be interesting to know what led experiencers to interpret their experiences as experiences of God or Jesus. It would also be interesting to know what led experiencers to associate some experiences with God and others with Jesus.
- 4) It is questionable whether experiences that are interpreted as experiences of God/Jesus tell us anything about the existence or nature of God. This is not to undermine the veridicality of the experiences, but to question their cause - a key question which is not addressed.
- 5) The comparison with main religious traditions section does not compare like with like. Surely, a more enlightening comparison would sample not theological statements, but confessional/devotional testimonies.
- 6) As noted, the study draws heavily on experiencers from the US where there is a strong Christian influence. It would be interesting to discover whether the study's findings would be replicated across different countries/nationalities and religious traditions.

Thank you.