



## *Religious Truth* in Antoinette Brown Blackwell (1825–1921)

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After a crisis of faith in her life, Antoinette Brown Blackwell sought a basis for religious truth not in revelation but in metaphysics and physics. In her study of Nature and science, Blackwell discovered an understanding of the universe and the role of God in it. To know God and thus religious truth is to inquire into creation. Blackwell came to believe that God established and designed the universe. Man is designed to continue to “make the universe” in its evolution. The processes of change in nature reflect unity and harmony that indicate an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God. Indicating God’s design are the processes of consciousness in nature which reside in the subjective consciousness of plant-mind, the objective consciousness of animal-mind, and the consciousness of the advanced human-mind capable of volition and social behavior. In all, “God has embodied in His universe the entire system of universal truth.” For Blackwell, all truth is one with many phases and presentations. Knowledge is truth, and truth is reality, an inseparable property of Being and Being’s state of ever changing. In *The Social Side*, Blackwell summed up her main religious truths: 1. God is self-existent, total of Being; Force and Duration His Infinite properties, 2. God is Universal Nature and its innate laws, and the embodiment of good will and wisdom, 3. Nature individualized by internal correlations, 4. Mankind is free to obey Nature’s laws or not, 5. God, mankind’s direct inheritance. Blackwell established her belief in immortality on her understanding of the laws of physics. After being the first woman to be ordained minister, Blackwell became a Unitarian. She left the Orthodox Congregationalist Church because of its opposition to the truths of social change, i.e. abolition and public speaking for women, for she determined that “God is Father of us all.”

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