

**Do not despise your situation; in it you must act, suffer and conquer. From every point on earth we are equally near to heaven and the infinite.**

**Henri Frederic Amiel**

From the time I was a little kid, I've been fascinated with the cosmos. I used to look at the night sky and wonder where the edge of the universe was and what was on the other side. I thought that maybe the universe was surrounded by a wall. Then I asked myself, what's on the other side of that wall? Hey, maybe there's a rose garden there! But then, what's on the other side of that rose garden? Questions like these twisted my child's mind because there were no answers, and as I grew older, I learned that cosmologists, astronomers, astrophysicists, theoretical physicists, and philosophers also wonder where the edge of the universe is and what it is like.

(<https://www.swinburne.edu.au/news/2021/08/Is-space-infinite-we-asked-5-experts/#:~:text=The%20observable%20universe%20is%20finite,since%20the%20universe%20is%20expanding>). Some claim that maybe the universe might not even HAVE an edge, that it might go on forever. The math supports this possibility, yet theories like that twisted my grown-up mind too.

My questions didn't and don't stop there. I recently decided to ask Google where the center of the universe is. Google answered that an event that happened around 13.7 billion years ago called the Big Bang marked the beginning of spacetime and universe as we know it (<https://www.space.com/13347-big-bang-origins-universe-birth.html>), and that a common misconception about that Big Bang event is that it was an explosion with a central point of detonation. However, space didn't explode INTO something. Instead, space ITSELF expanded equally in all directions from an infinitely small point called a singularity. This expansion, known as cosmic expansion, continues today, and with no point of reference and no central explosion, a center to the universe simply does not exist (<https://www.wtamu.edu/~cbaird/sq/2013/09/17/where-is-the-center-of-the-universe/>).

But there's an ironic twist. Because of cosmic expansion (<https://www.space.com/52-the-expanding-universe-from-the-big-bang-to-today.html>), every single point in space is moving away from every other point. Since we ourselves are a point in space, from our point of reference, everything in our observable universe is receding away from us. This means that no matter where we are, WE are always at the center of our observable universe, and this holds true if we're at home, worshipping at Holy Trinity, in our car, or in a galaxy far, far away. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDg2-ePQU9g>).

It's easy to feel inconsequential in this incomprehensible creation which has no center and yet where every point is center. Nowhere is special because there is no center, and nothing is unique because everyone and everything is. Yet, we ARE special. God

calls us each by name in this possibly infinite universe because we have a savior who died for us. Like the universe he created, God's love has no center. He loves all of us. Yet, no matter where we are, physically, emotionally, or spiritually, whether we're taking our first breath or expelling our last, God's love centers on us, and "from every point on earth we are equally near to heaven and the infinite."

There are no words to describe God's limitless creation, the work of God's fingers. Even the math falls short. Yet when our Lord Jesus said in John 14.3, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am," he is promising that when we leave this fleeting 3-dimensional existence in God's astounding creation, we will be with him in paradise, forever.

What is it like in paradise? I look at the sky and I wonder, and I have no answers. Yet, I know that when our time comes to see God, we will finally discover what's on the other side of that rose garden.

**God, thank you for this universe you created and for the love you showed us by sending your son, Jesus to prepare a place for us in paradise.**

**Amen**

**Lisa Frankenfeld**