

Imagine the dexterity of God

by [Jeffrey Munroe](#) in the [September 9, 2020](#) issue

Four generations assemble for a picture: a baby, his mother, grandfather, great-grandfather, and what none of them notice is the other picture of four generations on the wall just behind them. The almost-ninety-year-old man in today's picture is the baby in the other picture, being held by his father, while his grandmother and wizened great-grandfather look on. That kindly old gentleman fought against Lee at Gettysburg, took a rebel bullet in the shoulder outside Antietam, and was there at the end near Appomattox.

I see all these generations at once and don't know what time is. All I know are clichés: time runs out and marches on and stands still and flies by. We buy it and spend it and save it. And time will tell. Here's what it tells today: somehow this baby boy is also a mostly blind bearded old man who fought in the Civil War. All those genealogies in the Bible suddenly make sense: everyone is alive at once and time is that trick you do with mirrors where the image bounces back and forth into infinity. Time can't just be a line; it must be a circle, a wild uncontrolled loop that keeps crashing into and onto itself, or better yet a winding spiral staircase where you can see everything at once. Time is thin as thread and thick as rope. The Greeks had two words, there should be a hundred. And now imagine the dexterity of God, who stands both in and out of time. Consider that it cost God everything to have a foot in our world and a foot in eternity. It may cost God still.

Imagine a God who keeps choosing to do so despite the cost, a God who keeps saying yes.