The mature Wittgenstein is less reticent about God than the Tractarian Wittgenstein. God may, and even ought to be, spoken of, even affirmatively, and not just negatively as is the case with the Tractarian Wittgenstein. Yet speaking about God is not like speaking about any being, but more like speaking about the mind. “God is not a nothing, but not a something either”—this Wittgenstein does not explicitly say, but in effect says so nonetheless. The characterization “not a nothing but not a something either” is ascribed by Wittgenstein to mind *per se* (PI §304). But since he likens the concept of sensation—or mental or inner processes in general—to the concept of colour (RC III-71), which, in turn, he likens to the concept of God (CV, 82e), the characterization might as well apply to God. The presentation of this chapter goes as follows. Section I discusses how, according to Wittgenstein, the mind can be meaningfully referred to. Section II draws a parallelism between speaking of the mind, of colour and of God. Section III deals with some likely objections to the position drawn in the previous section. Section IV discusses further the point suggested in the previous section which is that God is referred to only via the universe.

I. *Speaking of the mind*

It is crucial that one should be sufficiently clear about what it means to be “not a something.” What he is suggesting, apparently, is that they are not sensically spoken of substantively—i.e. spoken of as a thing or entity of sorts. To be a something is to be an entity (or ens). Anything material is an entity. But ghosts and the like are also regarded as entities; some contend that numbers are. So there should be such notions as “spiritual entity” and “metaphysical entity.” That something has extension in space (a material object), or that it has sentience or will (a ghost), or that it exists somehow in some realm of reality distinct from the material universe (a number?) seems to be the qualifying mark
for that something to be spoken of substantively. And anything that
can be spoken of substantively is a substantive or entity.¹ That which
can be spoken of substantively is that which is ostensible or inferable.
An ostensible object or entity is that which can be presented to the
senses and the sensor can then refer to it by, especially, pointing to it
in one way or another. An inferable object or entity is that which can-
not be presented to the senses directly but whose presence can however
be inferred from other objects or phenomena that are presented to the
senses, and the sensor can then refer to it.² Wittgenstein argues that,
unlike ostensible and inferable objects, mental processes—in effect the
mind per se—is in the natural human way of speaking neither referred
to by ostension nor by inference but by some other way.

It is via bodily behaviour that mind can be referred to. Bodily
behaviour is conceptually integrated with mental or inner processes
(henceforth M/I-processes):

The inner is tied up with the outer not only empirically, but also logically.
The inner is tied up with the outer logically, not just empirically.
“In investigating the laws of evidence for the mental, I am investigat-
ing the essence of the mental.” Is that true?
Yes. The essence is not something that can be shown; only its features
can be described. (LW, 63e–64e)

If one sees the behaviour of a living thing, one sees its soul. (PI §357)

¹ The OED defines substantives as [h]aving an independent existence or status; not
dependent upon, or subsidiary to, or referable to something else. For ‘entity’ the OED
has the definition “the existence, as distinguished from the qualities or relations or
anything,” or “that which constitutes the being of a thing: essence, essential nature;”
and ‘ens’ is “an entity regarded apart from anything predicate but that of mere exis-
tence.” One can suppose that ens is perhaps one of those hard-to-define-but-you-
know-it-when-you-see-it thing. In ordinary language, events attributes, feelings, and
impersonal force (e.g. electromagnetic) are not recognized as entity. One can go on
to enquire what makes these different from those recognized as entity, but one can-
not necessarily expect a once-and-for-all definition of ‘entity’ or ‘ens’ here: after all
Wittgenstein did not feel it incumbent upon himself to define once and for all certain
notions such as ‘game’ (PI §§71–77).

² The phrase ‘inferable from something else’ should not be confused with ‘referable
to something else’. On the one hand, poltergeists and electrons, for example, are infer-
able from something else: when stones are hurled by an unseen force from a yard to
the rooftop of a nearby house and the dogs nearby are spooked by nothing in particu-
lar, and when streaks are registered on a cloud chamber, the presence of a poltergeist
and electrons are inferred respectively. To infer to a poltergeist and to electrons is
to refer to supposed entities that are said to be responsible for the phenomena from
which they are inferred. On the other hand, to certain behaviourists (see e.g. Gilbert
Ryle 1949), mental or inner processes are referable to something else: i.e. to bodily
behaviour. Thus, when one purportedly refers to a mental or inner process, one is
actually referring to no more than a set of bodily behaviour.