

Chapter 1 : Becoming the Word

We are becoming as the gods. And with advancements such as brain hacking, tech implants, and genetic engineering, becoming like gods seems inevitable. Give us years or years or 10,

In many translations of the Bible , when the word LORD is in all capitals, it signifies that the word represents the tetragrammaton. It means "Wonderful Teacher" in the Punjabi language. Waheguru is also described by some as an experience of ecstasy which is beyond all descriptions. The most common usage of the word "Waheguru" is in the greeting Sikhs use with each other: General conceptions Main article: Conceptions of God There is no clear consensus on the nature or the existence of God. The dharmic religions differ in their view of the divine: Many polytheistic religions share the idea of a creator deity , although having a name other than "God" and without all of the other roles attributed to a singular God by monotheistic religions. Jainism is polytheistic and non-creationist. Monotheists hold that there is only one god, and may claim that the one true god is worshiped in different religions under different names. God is described in the Quran as: In Islam, God is transcendent and does not resemble any of his creations in any way. Thus, Muslims are not iconodules , and are not expected to visualize God. Theism , Deism , and Pantheism Theism generally holds that God exists realistically, objectively, and independently of human thought; that God created and sustains everything; that God is omnipotent and eternal; and that God is personal and interacting with the universe through, for example, religious experience and the prayers of humans. Some theists ascribe to God a self-conscious or purposeful limiting of omnipotence, omniscience, or benevolence. Theism is sometimes used to refer in general to any belief in a god or gods, i. God exists, but does not intervene in the world beyond what was necessary to create it. Common in Deism is a belief that God has no interest in humanity and may not even be aware of humanity. Pandeism combines Deism with Pantheistic beliefs. The contemporaneous French philosopher Michel Henry has however proposed a phenomenological approach and definition of God as phenomenological essence of Life. Non-theistic views See also: Evolutionary origin of religions and Evolutionary psychology of religion Non-theist views about God also vary. Some non-theists avoid the concept of God, whilst accepting that it is significant to many; other non-theists understand God as a symbol of human values and aspirations. Stephen Jay Gould proposed an approach dividing the world of philosophy into what he called " non-overlapping magisteria " NOMA. In this view, questions of the supernatural , such as those relating to the existence and nature of God, are non - empirical and are the proper domain of theology. The methods of science should then be used to answer any empirical question about the natural world, and theology should be used to answer questions about ultimate meaning and moral value. In this view, the perceived lack of any empirical footprint from the magisterium of the supernatural onto natural events makes science the sole player in the natural world. Both authors claim however, that it is possible to answer these questions purely within the realm of science, and without invoking any divine beings. Anthropomorphism Pascal Boyer argues that while there is a wide array of supernatural concepts found around the world, in general, supernatural beings tend to behave much like people. The construction of gods and spirits like persons is one of the best known traits of religion. He cites examples from Greek mythology , which is, in his opinion, more like a modern soap opera than other religious systems. In line with this reasoning, psychologist Matt Rossano contends that when humans began living in larger groups, they may have created gods as a means of enforcing morality. In small groups, morality can be enforced by social forces such as gossip or reputation. However, it is much harder to enforce morality using social forces in much larger groups. Rossano indicates that by including ever-watchful gods and spirits, humans discovered an effective strategy for restraining selfishness and building more cooperative groups. Isaac Newton saw the existence of a Creator necessary in the movement of astronomical objects. Arguments about the existence of God typically include empirical, deductive, and inductive types. Different views include that: Lewis , and the Ontological Argument formulated both by St. Famed pantheist philosopher Baruch Spinoza would later carry this idea to its extreme: In Query 31 of the Opticks, Newton simultaneously made an argument from design and for the necessity of intervention: For while comets move in very eccentric orbs in all manner of positions, blind fate could never

make all the planets move one and the same way in orbs concentric, some inconsiderable irregularities excepted which may have arisen from the mutual actions of comets and planets on one another, and which will be apt to increase, till this system wants a reformation. Thomas believed that the existence of God is self-evident in itself, but not to us. Now because we do not know the essence of God, the proposition is not self-evident to us; but needs to be demonstrated by things that are more known to us, though less known in their nature—namely, by effects. Thomas believed that the existence of God can be demonstrated. Briefly in the *Summa theologiae* and more extensively in the *Summa contra Gentiles*, he considered in great detail five arguments for the existence of God, widely known as the *quinque viae* Five Ways. For the original text of the five proofs, see *quinque viae* Motion: Some things undoubtedly move, though cannot cause their own motion. Since there can be no infinite chain of causes of motion, there must be a First Mover not moved by anything else, and this is what everyone understands by God. As in the case of motion, nothing can cause itself, and an infinite chain of causation is impossible, so there must be a First Cause, called God. Existence of necessary and the unnecessary: Our experience includes things certainly existing but apparently unnecessary. Not everything can be unnecessary, for then once there was nothing and there would still be nothing. Therefore, we are compelled to suppose something that exists necessarily, having this necessity only from itself; in fact itself the cause for other things to exist. If we can notice a gradation in things in the sense that some things are more hot, good, etc. This then, we call God Note: Thomas does not ascribe actual qualities to God Himself. Ordered tendencies of nature: A direction of actions to an end is noticed in all bodies following natural laws. Anything without awareness tends to a goal under the guidance of one who is aware. McGrath, argue that the existence of God is not a question that can be answered using the scientific method. Krauss and Sam Harris as evidence that God is an imaginary entity only, with no basis in reality. The assignment of these attributes often differs according to the conceptions of God in the culture from which they arise. For example, attributes of God in Christianity, attributes of God in Islam, and the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy in Judaism share certain similarities arising from their common roots. Names 99 names of Allah, in Chinese Sini script The word God is "one of the most complex and difficult in the English language. That the Bible "includes many different images, concepts, and ways of thinking about" God has resulted in perpetual "disagreements about how God is to be conceived and understood". One of them is Elohim. Another one is El Shaddai, translated "God Almighty". Many traditions see God as incorporeal and eternal, and regard him as a point of living light like human souls, but without a physical body, as he does not enter the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. God is seen as the perfect and constant embodiment of all virtues, powers and values and that he is the unconditionally loving Father of all souls, irrespective of their religion, gender, or culture.

Chapter 2 : God - Wikipedia

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The essay discusses the LDS doctrinal concept of becoming gods. It is found here: General Comments One of the main guiding principles of MormonThink is to evaluate claims made by the Church and see how that compares to historical facts and to what was taught by the Church. For the most part, we avoid truly religious faith issues like "did God have sex with Mary to create Jesus? We are only interested in examining historical issues about which there is some evidence to examine. Likewise, no one can provide any real evidence that men can become gods or that men cannot become gods. Therefore, we at MormonThink MT have not analyzed or critiqued this belief in any of the topics presented on our website. However, although MT does not object to the belief that men can become gods and does not use this as any sort of evidence for or against the truth claims of the LDS Church, we do take exception to this essay for omissions made and some misleading statements that give the belief more substance than perhaps it should have. Although many of us do not necessarily support the views of tradition Christian theologians, we think their views should also be given as many Latter-day Saints only know the LDS view of these issues and might be interested in what other Christians have to say on the topic. Errors and Misleading Statements 1 Bible support for men becoming gods and plurality of gods. Several biblical passages intimate that humans can become like God. The likeness of humans to God is emphasized in the first chapter of Genesis: Non-LDS theologians respond to this argument as follows: The Holy Spirit was active at the Creation, "hovering over the face of the waters" 1: Hence, when God spoke of "Us," He was referring to Himself and the other two members of the divine Essence [cf. The first term theotes differs from the third term theioteis "as essence differs from quality or attribute" Thayer, , p. In either case, the fact remains that the Bible presents a consistent picture that there is only one God, and that this divine essence includes three—and only three—persons. The essay goes on to quote Bible verses suggesting men can become gods: Later in the Old Testament, a passage in the book of Psalms declares, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. The King James Version says, "ye shall be as gods. In the first place, Satan made this statement—not God. In the second place, the uncertainty conveyed by the various English translations in their differing treatment of the verse i. This word is not to be confused with Yahweh, the formal name for God throughout the Old Testament. Elohim is a generic term used some 2, times in Scripture, and generally refers to the one true God, but also is used to refer to pagan gods, and even can refer to judges or rulers and, as noted previously, to angels Harris, et al. Though the word is plural in form, it is used in both the plural and singular sense [cf. English shares a similar phenomenon with its plural nouns like "deer," "seed," "sheep," and "moose. Hebrew, like most other languages, matched the number whether singular or plural of verbs and adjectives with the noun. In the case of elohim, with only rare exception, the verbs and adjectives used with it are either singular or plural in conformity with the intended meaning Ringgren, , p. Some Hebrew scholars maintain that the plural form used to designate the one true God is the pluralis majestatis or excellentiae—the plural of majesty—or the plural of intensification, absolutization, or exclusivity e. In the case at hand, Satan was tempting Eve with the prospect of being like God—Whom she knew, and from Whom she or at least her husband had received previous communication Genesis 2: She knew nothing of other "gods"—pagan or otherwise. Since the term elohim occurs 58 times in the first three chapters of Genesis and is consistently rendered "God," and since Satan himself used the term earlier in the same verse as well as four verses earlier vs. In fact, most of the major English translations properly render it "God" e. In this case, the prepositional prefix is the eleventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the kaph, and means "like" or "as. This realization brings us to a fourth point: In the very verse under consideration, an explanatory phrase clarifies what Satan meant: This meaning is evident from subsequent references in the same chapter. When they disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit, "the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew—" verse 7, emp. In other words, Adam and Eve became like God in the sense that they now were privy to a greater breadth of awareness, understanding, and insight: Confusion and

shame were engendered, because innocence was lost and guilt contracted" Clarke, p. As Keil and Delitzsch summarized: New Testament passages also point to this doctrine. When Jesus was accused of blasphemy on the grounds that "thou, being a man, makest thyself God," He responded, echoing Psalms, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? Mormons allege that Jesus here endorsed the notion that men can become "gods. On this occasion, He appealed to an Old Testament context to deflect the barb of His critics. In this sense, they were "gods" *elohim* "acting as God to men Barclay, , 2: Hebrew parallelism clarifies this sense: They did not share divinity with God "but merely delegated jurisdiction. This point is apparent throughout the Torah, where the term translated "judges" or "ruler" is often *elohim*. Take Moses as an example. Moses was not a "god. He meant that Moses would supply both his brother and Pharaoh with the words that came from God. Clarke summarized this point: Obviously, they were not "gods," since God could and would execute them! He made shrewd use of syllogistic argumentation by reasoning a *minori ad majus* see Lenski, , pp. In fact, "it is an argument which to a Jewish Rabbi would have been entirely convincing. It was just the kind of argument, an argument founded on a word of scripture, which the Rabbis loved to use and found most unanswerable" Barclay, , p. Jesus identified the unjust judges of Israel as persons "to whom the word of God came" John That is, they had been "appointed judges by Divine commission" Butler, , p. McGarvey summarized the ensuing argument of Jesus: By his defense Jesus does not renounce his claim to deity; but he argues that if the judges, who represented Jehovah in their appointed office, could be called "gods," in the Hebrew scriptures, it could not be blasphemy for him, who was the final and complete revelation of God, to call himself "the Son of God , pp. This verse teaches the exact opposite of what Mormons would like for it to teach! There are no other "gods" in the sense of deity, i. Jesus verified this very conclusion by directing the attention of His accusers to the "works" that He performed vs. No misunderstanding could be more wrongheaded than that" , p. Indeed, the Mormon notion of a plurality of gods is "wrongheaded," as is the accompanying claim that humans can become gods. The essay goes on to summarize: These passages can be interpreted in different ways. Many other Christians read the same passages far more metaphorically because they experience the Bible through the lens of doctrinal interpretations that developed over time after the period described in the New Testament. That is key as Of course neither side can be proven correct or incorrect. The essay states that there are references in The Holy Bible that seem to support the concept of men becoming gods and therefore multiple gods exist. That is one interpretation of some of the Biblical verses as shown above. However, there are also many verses from the Bible, not mentioned in the essay, that do not support the concept of multiple gods like these quotes from Isaiah emphasis added: You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servants whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He, before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me Isaiah I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: I am the LORD; and there is none else. Paul reminded the Galatian Christians of their pre-Christian foolish belief in other deities: By definition, the "gods" that people claim actually exist are not gods. In his lengthy discussion of whether Christians were permitted to eat foods that had been sacrificed to pagan deities, Paul clarified succinctly the Bible position on the existence of so-called gods: As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many, and lords many, But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Their reasoning continues; in this passage, Paul declared very forthrightly that idols, and the gods they represent, are, in fact, nonentities. The RSV renders the meaning even more clearly: Of course, Paul recognized and acknowledged that humans have worshipped imaginary, nonexistent gods in heaven like Greek mythology advocated and on Earth in the form of idols. He used the figure of speech known as "metonymy of the adjunct," where "things are spoken of according to appearance, opinions formed respecting them, or the claims made for them" Bullinger, , p. He spoke of "gods" as if they existed, simply because many people of his day had that opinion. But Paul knew "there is no God but one. Paul continued his discussion of idols two chapters later, and again affirmed the nonexistence of any deities besides God: That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? For Paul, it was technically permissible for a Christian to eat food that had

previously been used in a pagan ceremony as an offering to a "god. Because such "gods" did not, and do not, actually exist—except in the mind of the worshipper cf. Thus, the food used in such ceremonies was unaffected. However, the person who really thinks there are "gods," and who then worships these imaginary "gods," is, in actuality, worshipping demons Paul said there are only two possibilities: You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons" Paul envisioned no class of beings known as "gods. This bifurcation of the spiritual realm i. The Bible simply admits no knowledge or possibility of "gods.

Chapter 3 : Divinization (Christian) - Wikipedia

The becoming god was a religion created by warforged who did not have a god to call to their own as many of the race believe. With no claim to a religion of their own besides the Lord of Blades, some warforged have begun a pilgrimage to create their own god by building one.

Other attributes of God will be considered later. All forms of monotheism are not the same. There are different varieties of monotheism. The first type of monotheism is that of a monad monotheism. This understanding views God as a singular, unitary monad, i. The Judaic understanding of Jehovah is that of an unextended monad. The central creed of Judaism is the Shema statement of Deuteronomy 6: The Lord our God is one Lord. The Islamic understanding of Allah is also that of a single monad deity. In the early church there were some ex. Arius who sought to retain the Jewish concept of monad monotheism rather than accepting Trinitarian monotheism, and there are still some contemporary groups ex. Jehovah Witnesses who promote monad monotheism. A second form of monotheism is that identified as monistic monotheism. This understanding of God views everything to be incorporated in a singular and unitary God-reality comprised of, and expressed in, the whole universe. Such an understanding of a monistic oneness impinges upon the distinction of the Creator and the creation. Monistic monotheism is also evident in some forms of oriental religious philosophy, as well as in Unitarian forms of monism in Christian Science teaching and in the so-called New Age philosophy. Some have attempted to express Christian teaching as a monistic monotheism, misusing such verses as Isaiah The third form of monotheism is Trinitarian monotheism, which has been the historic Christian understanding of the oneness of God. The oneness of God is not conceived of merely as a singular, mathematical oneness, i. Christians also often see intimations of relational Trinitarianism in the plural pronouns that refer to God cf. Trinitarian monotheism is unique to the Christian understanding of God. This is not an idea that Christians concocted to complicate the understanding of God. Jesus was praying that His followers, all Christians, would function in a relational oneness in the one Body of Christ, in like manner as He and the Father functioned in relational oneness in the Oneness of the Trinitarian Godhead. What we are emphasizing here is that the oneness of God must not be viewed as merely a mathematical oneness, a static numerical integer, for this creates at best a monadic concept of God as an isolated individual deity. To illustrate this relational oneness, I will employ an admittedly inadequate analogy. My wife and I are married. Now, obviously, this is not a mathematical oneness. Paul employs this relational oneness of the marital union as an analogy of the oneness between Christ and the Christian. Quoting the Genesis 2: The oneness of husband and wife, and the oneness of Christ and the Christian are not mathematical onenesses of essentiality, but they are both relational onenesses. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he again quoted Genesis 2: The entire context of the passage has to do with the relational oneness that is established in sexual union. Like the marriage union, the spiritual union between Christ and the Christian is a relational oneness. Not a monistic oneness, or an organic oneness, or a merged oneness, or an absorption oneness; but a relational oneness. It would not be the marital union of relational oneness. Those who cannot, do not, or will not differentiate between the relational oneness of God and other concepts such as merged oneness, absorbed oneness, or universal oneness, or any other form of mathematical oneness, cannot maintain a Christian understanding of the Trinitarian relational oneness of God. It took a while for the Christian community of the first few centuries to think this through and explain such, but this Trinitarian monotheism was clearly advocated at the Council of Nicea in A. Allow me to interject an interesting side note here: Those who adopted the Arian concept of a mathematical monad monotheism, those areas ex. North Africa of Christendom capitulated and were overcome by the Islamic conquest of the 7th and 8th centuries. Without a Trinitarian understanding of the relational oneness of God, their God was no different, and had nothing more to offer, than the Muslim monad of Allah. Those without a Trinitarian theological foundation are susceptible to accommodating the Islamic Allah as equivalent to the Christian God. It is not that we are mathematically merged, or that we are integrated into a single integer union, but we participate in a relational oneness with God, in Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit. Thereby we have a relational oneness and unity with all other Christians who are likewise so

joined in relational oneness with God. Not an abstract oneness of monism. Not a single integer oneness of a divine monad. Then, our first presuppositional premise is valid: Is it any wonder that the relational oneness of Christian unity in the Body of Christ has been so lacking? We have not understood that it can only be produced by the relational oneness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at work in His people! No, we want to consider how it is that God is the essence of all being. The Greek word, *ousia*, was used by Greek philosophers in this abstract sense, as was the Greek word *hypostasis*, indicating foundational existence. The Latin words *essentia* and *substantia* were also used in the sense of total existence. This will be a perfect, heavenly expression of His Trinitarian relationality of Being. In the progressive revelation of Himself in the new covenant, God reveals Himself more fully as Relational Personal Being. Revealing Himself as the incarnate Son of God, Jesus continues the self-revelation of God in His corollary statements: Such statements of Self-revelation required that the early Christians develop an understanding of God that went beyond their previous understanding. As noted earlier, such a concept of God is not something that Christians dreamed up, for human reasoning would never have postulated the intricacy of a Trinitarian God. The Trinitarian understanding of God is determined by the fact that God has revealed Himself as such. The early Christians pondered and evaluated this Triune Self-revelation of God as Relational Personal Being for approximately three hundred years before a stated clarification of this Christian understanding of God was drafted at the Council of Nicea in A. The three persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, relate and function together as the same divine Being. God is Triune, Relational, Personal Being. Collectively, this relational personal Being of God in Christians will be the basis of our interpersonal relationships with one another as we interrelate in community, the common-unity of personal, relational beings expressing the Being of God. But the monadic concepts of God in Judaism and Islam also claim that God is personal, so how is the Christian understanding of a personal God in Trinitarian monotheism different from these other views of God? Nor are we declaring that God is an individual person patterned after a created human being, for we cannot argue backwards from man to God. We are certainly not saying that God is the personification of an idea, ideal, or universal concept of abstract Being, whether individuated or universal. It is not even sufficient to say that God is personal, rather than impersonal. And we obviously mean more by this statement than the general observation that God is personable, amicable and likeable. Later, the Latin word *persona* was applied to the actor himself, the role-player who was wearing the mask. As the language evolved as all languages do the word *persona* designated an individual human being. This is not how Christian theology has defined God as Person for the last years. The Council of Nicea A. God, as Person, is not defined by psychological function, but by relational function or social function. The answer from all that has gone before is clear: He is personal as being three persons in relation, of having His being in what Father, Son and Holy Spirit give to and receive from each other. Relatedness, relationality, sociality is at the root of personhood. Trinitarian relational Personhood is distinctive to the Christian understanding of God. The particular uniqueness of Trinitarian monotheism is that the tri-personalism of the persons of the Trinitarian God is such that their persons can only be defined in relation to one another. Their personal relations mutually constitute each other. The person of God the Father can only be defined in relation to the person of God the Son, and both of their persons can only be defined in relation to the person of God the Holy Spirit. Allow me to employ another inadequate human analogy. I am the father of five children. But, we must make a careful distinction at this point. We do not want to get caught in the logical absurdity of indicating that God is three Persons in one Person. The historic statement of the Triune understanding of God has been that God is three Persons in one Being. This preserves the distinction that avoids logical absurdity. The Trinitarian relational Oneness of God in the inter-relations of the three Persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, constitute and comprise a God who is the essence and source of all relational personhood. It is that perfectly harmonious interpersonal interaction of relationship that the Triune God wants to impart to and actuate in the created relational persons of mankind; i. Jesus took upon Himself the death consequences of sin, that by His Spirit He might impart the divine life of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to receptive mankind. The divine provision of the presence and function of the Triune God in Christians is the sole basis for harmonious interpersonal relationships in the Christian community. What God is, only God is. Jesus was not defining God by the privation or absence of human ocular visibility. To do so

would be to create a static and impersonal concept of God as but some nebulous, abstract, intangible, incorporeal, immaterial, non-physical anti-matter. The context of the statement is the subject of worship. Real worship is relational, personal, and spiritual. It is not just throwing accolades at God up above. If we are to understand the depths of Christian worship we must come to appreciate how it is that we are drawn into the inter-relationality of the Triune Spirit-God. Worship becomes a far greater privilege than we ever imagined as we participate in the inter-relational expressions of worship within the Trinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit can worship one another through us. The Son worships the Father through us, and the Spirit worships and glorifies the Son through us.

Chapter 4 : Apologetics Press - Can Humans Become Gods?

Mormons Hope to Become Gods of Their Own Worlds Procreating Endless Numbers of Children (Quotes from LDS Leaders) By Sandra Tanner. The LDS scriptures declare that the ultimate goal of a Mormon is to become a god and procreate for all eternity.

But the Bible shows that not everyone will become a child of God. To receive this awesome gift, what is God looking for in us? What is a child of God? Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. The apostles understood this. God wants us to be His sons and daughters. What an amazing objective to work toward! God wants to welcome us into His family. However, God will not give this awesome gift to just anyone. God has to be sure of us—sure of our love for Him, sure that we will obey Him and be faithful to Him through thick and thin. God created everyone with free moral agency, the ability to choose. He wants us to choose the way that brings benefits to us and those around us—the way that develops His righteous character. He does not want us to choose the way that makes us and those around us miserable. So God will not accept anyone into His family who may decide he or she no longer needs to obey God, and who may choose to go his or her own way. Trust plays an enormous part in this process. Before giving us eternal life on the God-plane level of life, God must know that He can eternally trust us percent. God is not real to them. In other words, He is a mystery. If we are to become children of God, we need to know what God is like. First, God is our Creator. He is the Creator of the universe and, of course, of human beings. Why did He do this? Because God is also the great Giver. His whole nature is based on the concept of giving rather than getting. And it was in His power to give the greatest gift of all: To God, the well-being of His creation us is of paramount importance. But selfishness is the way of the world: His character consists of justice, fairness and mercy. In a word, we can say that God is love 1 John 4: What must we do to build a relationship with God? Jesus tells us a few basic things: In order to do these things, we really need to get to know God better and strive to become like Him. How should we go about doing this? How do we get better acquainted with anyone? We get to know someone by spending time with him or her. We spend time in conversation and in doing things together. Thus, to build a relationship with God, we need to talk to Him. We need to pray to God. God has created us; we are His potential children. It is delightful to God to hear our prayers. He appreciates having us communicate with Him, and it surely pleases Him to see us do things that help us draw closer to Him. God has promised in Matthew 7: It is called the Holy Bible. Never underestimate the importance of Bible study. It can give us insight into our Heavenly Father: We talk to God in prayer. He talks to us as we study His Word. As we talk to God and study the Bible, we will learn all sorts of things. In short, we need to meditate about them. The Bible also places emphasis on fasting. For more details on building a relationship with God, read our articles on prayer, fasting and meditation. Holy, righteous character God wants to see us seeking His perfect, holy and righteous character in order to be in His family. Righteous character is the ability to recognize and differentiate between right and wrong, and the conscious decision to do the right. The process of conversion God intends His family to be made up of children who think and act as He does. To many human beings, becoming like God seems out of reach, completely impossible! Yet that is what God wants and expects. Though we might worry that it is impossible for us to be saved, Jesus Christ tells us: When God gives us His Spirit, we receive the spiritual strength we need in order to replace our old wrong habits of selfish living with the righteous and godly way of living exemplified by the life of Jesus Christ Ephesians 4: To do this, we need to first commit our lives to God. Jesus set the scene in Mark 1: It is not just being sorry for our sins, but it is also a total change and commitment of heart to being absolutely determined to turn our lives around—be converted Acts 3: Belief is another word for faith. God wants us to have a firm belief in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—whose blood paid for our sins—and in the gospel of the coming Kingdom of God. It is a test—it is a sign of our willingness to obey God and make a lifelong commitment to Him. Baptism represents a covenant agreement between ourselves and God, in which God agrees to give us His Spirit and make us members of His own family. In return, He wants us to place ourselves in His hands and to commit to obey His commandments. This is a total commitment of heart that must lead to a total change of life for us. From this point on, we agree to put God

first and do everything with a view to pleasing Him. In our present human state, this is not easy. But after baptism we have the Holy Spirit to help us. This is the way God works in us, converting us, shaping us, making us more like Him! Therein lies the key: God has given us a mammoth task, but He has made it possible for us to work toward becoming like Him by asking for His aid through the Holy Spirit. Let us be your guide as you spend a week discovering who God is and what He has in store for youâ€™ in this life and the next.

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One of the more eye-opening beliefs of Mormonism is the polytheistic notion that humans can become gods. They were preceded by other humans who themselves progressed to the status of gods. Of course, this doctrine was not presented initially by Joseph Smith, but was developed after the production of the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon actually contradicts later Mormon revelation, in that it affirmed in the biblical doctrine of the oneness of God in three persons, i. Observe the conversation between Ammon and King Lamoni: And then Ammon said: Amulek contended with the diabolical Zeezrom: The Book of Mormon also affirmed that Jesus was God in the flesh: And now Abinadi said unto them: Joseph Smith affirmed the same thing in the Articles of Faith: These teachings certainly are in harmony with the Bible. The Bible repeatedly and frequently affirms the doctrine of monotheism and the unity of God: But by , Joseph Smith had begun to advocate a very different understanding of deityâ€”in direct contradiction to the Book of Mormon. He began to promulgate the idea that God had, in fact, previously been a man Himself Who had become exalted, and that all men were capable of the same progression see Tanner, , p. This shift was expressed formally in the Pearl of Great Price where, in the Book of Moses, God is spoken of in the singular throughout. And then the Lord said: And the Gods called the light Day, and the darkness they called Night And the Gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed And the Gods took counsel among themselves and said: Let us go down and form man in our image, after our likeness And the Gods planted a garden, eastward in Eden, and there they put the man, whose spirit they had put into the body which they had formed 4: Anyone who is familiar with the King James Version cannot help but be struck with the fact that the author of the Book of Abraham had before him a copy of a KJV and merely paraphrased the text. It is used sixteen times in chapter five! Polytheism now so thoroughly permeates Mormonism that one Mormon apostle asserted that humans are the offspring of the union between an Eternal Father and an Eternal Mother McConkie, , p. Does the Bible give credence to the notion of multiple gods? However, various verses have been marshaled in an effort to defend the Mormon viewpoint. In either case, the fact remains that the Bible presents a consistent picture that there is only one God, and that this divine essence includes threeâ€”and only threeâ€”persons. In the first place, Satan made this statementâ€”not God. In the second place, the uncertainty conveyed by the various English translations in their differing treatment of the verse i. This word is not to be confused with Yahweh, the formal name for God throughout the Old Testament. Elohim is a generic term used some 2, times in Scripture, and generally refers to the one true God, but also is used to refer to pagan gods, and even can refer to judges or rulers and, as noted previously, to angels Harris, et al. Though the word is plural in form, it is used in both the plural and singular sense [cf. Hebrew, like most other languages, matched the number whether singular or plural of verbs and adjectives with the noun. In the case of elohim, with only rare exception, the verbs and adjectives used with it are either singular or plural in conformity with the intended meaning Ringgren, , p. Some Hebrew scholars maintain that the plural form used to designate the one true God is the pluralis majestatis or excellentiaeâ€”the plural of majestyâ€”or the plural of intensification, absolutization, or exclusivity e. In the case at hand, Satan was tempting Eve with the prospect of being like Godâ€”Whom she knew, and from Whom she or at least her husband had received previous communication Genesis 2: This realization brings us to a fourth point: In the very verse under consideration, an explanatory phrase clarifies what Satan meant: This meaning is evident from subsequent references in the same chapter. In other words, Adam and Eve became like God in the sense that they now were privy to a greater breadth of awareness, understanding, and insight: As Keil and Delitzsch summarized: Forty years later, in his stirring challenge to the Israelites to be firm in their future commitment to God, he reminded them: During the days of Joshua, some of the Israelites exclaimed: However, one cannot really study the Bible and come away with that conclusion. The Bible presents a thoroughgoing monotheistic view of reality. Humans throughout history have conjured up their own imaginary gods to justify freedom from restriction and to excuse relaxed moral behavior. When God gave the Ten Commandments to the

Israelites, the very first one said: Liberal higher critics of the Bible like Wellhausen have alleged that this dictum advocated only monolatry exclusive worship of Yahweh rather than actually denying the existence of other gods. Many additional passages clarify the point. For example, the psalmist declared: However, the next verse sets the record straight: Notice carefully the contrast the psalmist was making. The people made their gods; but the one true God made the heavens i. As God Himself announced:

Chapter 6 : God | Definition of God by Merriam-Webster

That's how we can fulfill God's purpose for our lives and become a child of God. For more about what it means to become a son or daughter of God, see the article " Children of God." Another resource that can be helpful is " Knowing God," our free seven-day Journey.

Pinstriped suit, neatly trimmed grey beard, stormy eyes and a very large, dangerous lightning bolt. Sometimes he travels the world in disguise, so be nice to everyone! You never know when the next person you meet might be packing the master bolt. In the old days, Zeus ruled over his unruly family of Olympians while they bickered and fought and got jealous of each other. Not much different than today, really. Zeus always had an eye for beautiful women, which often got him in trouble with his wife, Hera. Usually prefers classic Greek dresses and a simple silver crown, though she can blend in as needed. She usually appears as a beautiful older woman, and enjoys turning into birds when she needs to hide or spy. She hangs out where family life is strongest: That strange woman you saw at Laser Quest, serving pizza and singing Happy Birthday? Yes, that was probably her. Hera has no patience with demigods, the children of godly affairs. She was the enemy of Heracles and many others, though she did have a soft spot for mortal heroes, like Jason. If an old woman asks you to carry her piggyback across a river, do it. You might win the favor of a goddess! Hawaiian shirt, shorts, flip flops, and a three-pointed trident. Poseidon walks the beaches of Florida, occasionally stopping to chat with fishermen or take pictures for tourists. Poseidon was always a moody guy. On his good days, he did cool stuff like create horses out of sea foam. On his bad days, he caused minor problems like destroying cities with earthquakes or sinking entire fleets of ships. The goddess prefers simple dresses of green or gold, though you can often find her in gardening clothes. Demeter divides her time between the upper world, where she oversees the growing season and produces commercials encouraging people to eat more cereal products part of a balanced breakfast! Demeter was one of the quieter goddess. As long as the crops were growing and the farmers were happy, Demeter was content. When Hades stole her daughter Persephone, Demeter stopped all plants from growing, and people started starving. Hard to make a cheeseburger with no grain for bread and no grass for the cows. Torch, Corn plant though popcorn works, too Roman name: Biker leathers, Harley Davidson, sunglasses and a stinking attitude. Can be found riding his Harley around the suburbs of LA. One of those gods who could pick a fight in an empty room. Back in the day, this son of Zeus and Hera used to be inseparable from his shield and helmet. Fought on the side of the Trojans during the war of Troy, but, frankly, has been involved in every minor skirmish since Goldilocks told the three bears that their beds were a little uncomfy. A bloody spear, a wild boar the animal with the nastiest attitude Roman name: Athena is always accompanied by at least one owl, her sacred and fortunately housebroken animal. So start working on that revolutionary new bread slicer! Athena was one of the most active goddesses in human affairs. She helped out Odysseus, sponsored the entire city of Athens and made sure the Greeks won the Trojan War. The owl Roman name: Minerva Apollo God of archery, music, poetry, prophecy, medicine, and later on the god of the sun. He typically looks like a movie star with the fashionably shabby clothes, the laid back attitude, the brilliant smile, and the Ray Ban sunglasses. His sun chariot morphs into a fine Maserati. Do NOT ask him to recite his poetry. You can find Apollo cruising down Sunset Avenue looking cool, or hanging out at parties chatting with writers or rock stars. He likes to be the center of attention wherever he goes. Apollo was into everything, from music to medicine, probably because he thought he was better at everything than anyone else. When the old sun god Helios retired, Apollo took over that job too, though he was mostly thought of as the god of poetry and music. Her eyes are silver like the moon, and she tends to dress in white and silver. Artemis can be found roaming the countryside with her handmaidens, the Hunters of Artemis. Imagine an immortal, very deadly Girl Scout troop, on a permanent camp out, hunting monsters. Artemis enjoyed hunting with her handmaidens and basically kept to herself unless she was bothered. Once a male hunter tried to spy on Artemis while she was bathing. The goddess turned him into a deer and her hunters tracked him down and killed him. The moon, the deer Roman name: Ugly face, scraggly beard, massive powerful hands. The god likes to hang out in his workshop fixing cars and building inventions. You want a robot to do your homework, or a life-sized metal

giant to stomp on your enemies. Hephaestus can have one ready in a matter of hours. Hephaestus is a jealous husband, always on the lookout for that scoundrel Ares and anyone else who might want to flirt with his wife which is basically every man with a pulse. The anvil and hammer Roman name: Any of them might be Aphrodite in disguise. She promised Prince Paris the most beautiful mortal woman in the world if he judged Aphrodite the fairest goddess in a contest, and Paris readily agreed. When he got Helen for his wife, it started the Trojan War and thousands died, but hey, at least Aphrodite got what she wanted! Did you have a question about his activities as god of thieves? Hermes got started young as a troublemaker. When he was one day old, he sneaked out of his crib and stole some cattle from his brother Apollo. Apollo liked it so much he forgot all about the cows. The lyre made Apollo very popular with the ladies, which was more than he could say about the cattle. Leopard-skin shirt, walking shorts, purple socks and sandals, the general pasty demeanor of someone who has been up partying much too late. He can usually be found playing pinochle with a group of terrified satyrs on the front porch of the Big House. If you want to join the game, be prepared to bet large. Dionysus invented wine, which so impressed his father Zeus that he promoted Dionysus to god. The guy who invented prune juice, by contrast, got sentenced to the Fields of Punishment. Dionysus mostly spent his time partying it up in Ancient Greece, but once a crew of sailors tried to kill him, thinking the god was too incapacitated to fight back. Dionysus turned them into dolphins and sent them over the side. The moral of this story: Do not mess with a god, even a drunk one. He sits on a throne of bones. Hades rarely leaves his obsidian palace in the Underworld, probably because of traffic congestion on the Fields of Asphodel freeway. He oversees a booming population among the dead and has all sorts of employment trouble with his ghouls and specters. This keeps him in a foul mood most of the time. Hades is best known for the romantic way he won his wife, Persephone. Really, though, how would you like to marry someone who lives in a dark cave filled with zombies all year round? Hypnos appears as a young man with wings sprouting from his brow, probably to keep him from doing a face plant whenever he falls asleep. Sometimes he is seen carrying an upside-down torch. Probably because the flames keep him awake. Hypnos lives in Erebus, deep in the Underworld, but can often be found trying out the mattresses at the Sleep Shop. He is the son of Nyx Night and loves putting people to sleep. He is the brother of Thanatos Death. But unlike his brother, Hypnos might let you wake up eventually. Hypnos could be good or bad in ancient times. He brought rest and dreams, but he could also sneak up on you and cause you to doze off at bad moments. In his Roman form of Somnus, the god liked to make sentries fall asleep on duty which was an automatic death sentence or make ship navigators fall asleep at the wheel. Nike has the wings of an angel and rides a chariot. She usually has a golden laurel wreath handy to give to the winners of major battles, sports competitions, and the state lottery. The goddess does not find it amusing to be confused with footwear. You are likely to meet Nike at the World Series, the Superbowl, and most other major sporting events, where she will be hovering overhead, deciding which team to grant victory. She values bravery and skill, though she also likes a good halftime show. Nike was very popular, since everybody wanted victory. Olympic athletes would sacrifice to her, as would soldiers before a big battle.

Chapter 7 : What Does the Bible Say About Being A Part Of The Family Of God?

Becoming Like God. Becoming Like God Ye are gods; and all of you are What exactly the early church fathers meant when they spoke of becoming God is open to.

Why is it our most important duty to share the gospel with others? What blessings have you received from accepting and fulfilling this duty? He also described the blessings available to those who would proclaim the gospel and assist others in coming unto Christ. What blessings come to those who seek to bring forth Zion and publish peace? Students should understand the following principle: Tell students that Abinadi quoted Isaiah and explained what it means to publish peace and why we should seek to share the gospel see Isaiah Invite a few students to read aloud from Mosiah What does it mean to publish peace and salvation? Why does salvation need to be declared to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people? Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: These are among the ultimate blessings that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings a troubled world and the troubled people who live in it, solutions to personal struggles and human sinfulness, a source of strength for days of weariness and hours of genuine despair. In what ways is the gospel of Jesus Christ a message of peace? Romney “ of the First Presidency: Where he is, peace can never be. Further, peaceful coexistence with him is impossible. If one man lives it, he has peace within himself. If two men live it, they each have peace within themselves and with each other. If the citizens live it, the nation has domestic peace. What are some ways in which we can effectively share the gospel? Encourage students to consider whether they know someone whom they can help to experience the peace that comes from the gospel. Invite them to begin making a plan to share the gospel with that person, and encourage them to think about how they can apply the principles they learn as the lesson progresses. What can these items do in the hands of someone skilled in their use? Invite a student to read Alma What can we learn from the example of the sons of Mosiah about how to become instruments in the hands of God? As students respond, write the following principle on the board: Explain that the Book of Mormon contains many other examples of what Alma and the sons of Mosiah did to become effective instruments in the hands of God. Write the following scripture references on the board without the accompanying summaries in parentheses. Assign one or more passages to each student. Were willing to patiently suffer for the cause of Christ. Taught the gospel in various settings. After sufficient time, ask students to share what they learned. How do the principles recorded in these passages apply to other callings or to being a good friend or neighbor? Invite students to summarize what they discover as a statement of principle. Help students identify the following: To help students see the effect of helping others come to a knowledge of the truth, invite the class to silently read Alma Ask students to look for what happened to the Lamanites as they came to the knowledge of the truth. What words or phrases describe the effect that the preaching of the gospel had on the Lamanites? What principle can we learn about what can happen when we bring others to the knowledge of the truth? Students should identify the following truth: When we bring others to the knowledge of the truth, we help them become converted to the Lord. Explain that both Ammon and Alma bore testimony of these truths. Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud Alma What impressed you about the feelings summarized by Ammon and Alma? Invite students to share what they have experienced as they have shared the gospel with others. Encourage students to ponder the opportunities they have to help others learn the gospel and become converted. Invite them to consider how to incorporate the principles and practices they have learned in this lesson into their daily efforts to share the gospel.

Chapter 8 : Mormons Hope to Become Gods of Their Own Worlds

Paul Tillich was critical of the view of God as a type of being or presence. He felt that, if God were a being, God could not then properly be called the source of all being (due to the question of what, in turn, created God).

But we are informed that the Word has been from the beginning. God was the Word from the very beginning. The Word existed before the flesh creation. Since nothing existed before the Word, we can safely say that the Word is God the Father, the origin of all things. The Word then was the Spirit of life in the beginning, the origin of all things. When we leave out those words, this Scripture reads: Grace is the "divine influence in our lives that reflects the life of God through us. John goes on to say: Jesus was not that grace and truth, He was only the vessel God used to bring grace and truth to His creation, man. God manifested the Spiritual Word in Jesus when the Word became flesh and came and dwelt among men. Jesus became the Word made flesh. We, too, are to become the living Word of God. In his second letter to Timothy, Paul revealed a truth that is hard for the finite, carnal mind to understand, and we can only accept it as a revealed truth through the Spirit. Our pre-existence in God was in Christ Jesus. When Paul wrote to the Romans, he shed more understanding in this unlimited realm of God and how God established all things from the beginning in Himself, and how we were predestined and foreknown by God. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: We can be assured that God did not predestine us to do the job He has for us to do without first preparing us to do it. For we were called of God to be and to do. If we yield ourselves to His purpose for our lives, He will accomplish that job through us. As we allow His life, and His truth to be manifested through us, He will provide the way - - and the way is through the Word that was from the beginning. The Spiritual became one with the flesh. The Spirit of God was then manifested through the flesh of Jesus. What does all this mean to us? Jesus was born in sinful flesh, yet He was without sin. He is our example of the Spirit being manifested in the flesh and becoming the Word. Many believe Jesus was born perfect and was perfect from birth, needing to change nothing in His life. Yet, the writer of Hebrews tells us: The writer of Hebrews also informs us: Though He was tempted, He never allowed the temptation to become sin in His life. Jesus was tried in every area of His life, but because He did not fall into sin, He became our example of living a sin-free life. Jesus did not allow the temptations of this life to alter the direction the Father had predestined for His life. We also need to stand against those temptations that the world has placed in our paths. What are the temptations of the world? The beloved John wrote: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. We are tried through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. When the Holy Spirit revealed that Jesus was tempted tried in all points as we are, He was tempted in these three areas. There is one important lesson we must learn here: Jesus was not tested until He was filled with the Spirit. Do you wonder why some Christians never seem to be tested or tried, why they go along without change in their lives? They just seem to be existing in God. These are good, moral, upright, honest people who would not think of missing a church service; but God never seems to require anything of them. They serve on all the committees and belong to all the organizations, but they never have any testings in their lives. The answer is very simple: They have not come into the Baptism of the Cloven Tongues of fire that was given to cleanse, change, and purify us that we may be acceptable in the beloved. Many will say, "God does not speak to me. As we begin to come into the knowledge of truth in these areas in which Jesus was tempted, we then see why Peter wrote that Jesus was our example. And in those days He did eat nothing: And the devil said unto Him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. Up until the time we receive the Holy Spirit anointing in our lives, we only have a mental knowledge of God, and a verbal faith. But when the Holy Spirit comes, we know without a doubt who we are, and so does satan. Satan is always there to bring doubt and fear. These are the tools of his trade, and he uses them very well. It was not until Jesus was very hungry that satan tried to tempt him with food, knowing that eating is the most natural thing to do to fulfill the lust of the flesh. Many who claim to be Spirit-filled have no control over the appetite of the flesh: They give into every whim and desire of the flesh. Until we overcome the lust of the flesh we can never state as Jesus, "The prince of this

world cometh, and hath nothing in Me. We must learn not to fulfill the lust of the flesh by the word of satan. If satan could have overcome Jesus with the lust of the flesh, He would have been as Esau, who sold his birthright for a bowl of beans. God stated of Esau: Jesus could have sold his birthright for a piece of bread. Satan will give us no more than necessary to pervert our way of life. What is your price? And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. They desire everything the world has: They teach that prospering means a full wallet, a new car, a bigger house, and a new wardrobe. This is not the message of the Word. Maybe God wants all to be poor? We need to learn that prosperity in God does not come with a dollar sign in front of it. There are two places we can come to in God. The first place is when we become His child. God has obligated Himself to meet all our needs according to His riches in glory, Philippians 4: The second place is: When we pray and believe, then we will receive what we desire. This is where most would cease to search the Scripture and begin confessing and professing all their lustful desires of this life. If God does not supply their desires, they rush out and fulfill that request to God by their own hand, proclaiming, "God has given this to me! The Scripture that most Christians seem to be willing to overlook is: The only way we can do this is to understand His will as Paul related to the Ephesians: We need to understand the Holy Spirit never operates through the lust of the eyes. Those who proclaim that God wants them to have all these things are giving in to the lust of the eyes. If we lust after the things of this life, it is a sin against God, as His Word declares. Satan tried to tempt Jesus by offering Him all the kingdoms of the earth. Jesus did not argue with satan when he said they were his to give, because the kingdoms of this world are his to give. Satan reigns over worldly governments, but not over the earth. Do not sell out for a piece of bread, a pot of beans, or for all the kingdoms of the world. For it is written, He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee: And in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. They are so proud of their gifts of the Spirit and how God mightily moves through them that this is all they talk about. The proud need to heed the words of Paul to the Corinthians: And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? And if we got it from someone, why are we so proud, as if it was something we obtained in ourselves? God is no respecter of persons, Acts If God gave it to us, He can give it to someone else; and probably will, if we are lifted up in ourselves because we have it. He does not do things for us because we are better in His sight than anyone else. He does these things because He loves us. Satan was trying to get Jesus to prove who He was in God.

Chapter 9 : What does the Bible mean by "you are gods" / "ye are gods" in Psalm and John ?

The Hebrew word translated "gods" in Psalm is Elohim. It usually refers to the one true God, but it does have other uses. It usually refers to the one true God, but it does have other uses. Psalm says, "God presides in the great assembly; he gives judgment among the gods."

For a 5-part Viewpoint on Mormonism series on this topic, please visit: Hunter wrote in a manual used as a Melchizedek Priesthood manual: All things were created through Him and for Him. Likewise, Joseph Smith taught that the material world has eternal roots, fully repudiating the concept of creation ex nihilo. God organized the universe out of existing elements. Nobody has tackled this issue with more success than philosopher William Lane Craig. Consider two important resources that are located offsite: A Critique of the Mormon Doctrine of Creation Joseph Smith continued to receive revelation on the themes of divine nature and exaltation during the last two years of his life. He used the occasion in part to reflect upon the death of a Church member named King Follett, who had died unexpectedly a month earlier. Human nature was at its core divine. The process would be ongoing and would require patience, faith, continuing repentance, obedience to the commandments of the gospel, and reliance on Christ. Three months later, a mob stormed Carthage Jail and martyred him and his brother Hyrum. What has been taught in the Church about divine nature since Joseph Smith? Since that sermon, known as the King Follett discourse, the doctrine that humans can progress to exaltation and godliness has been taught within the Church. As God now is, man may be. There are some significant differences in your beliefs. As God is, man may become. Little has been revealed about the first half of this couplet, and consequently little is taught. When asked about this topic, Church President Gordon B. We believe in eternal progression. Snow, a Church leader and poet, rejoiced over the doctrine that we are, in a full and absolute sense, children of God. Expressing that truth, Eliza R. As Elder Dallin H. Our highest aspiration is to be like them. A Proclamation to the World. This makes no sense. Does belief in exaltation make Latter-day Saints polytheists? For some observers, the doctrine that humans should strive for godliness may evoke images of ancient pantheons with competing deities. Such images are incompatible with Latter-day Saint doctrine. This is a straw man argument. We have correctly reported what the LDS leaders have taught, which is there would be many worlds manned by LDS families, as I will document below. Our progression will never change His identity as our Father and our God. Latter-day Saints also believe strongly in the fundamental unity of the divine. They believe that God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost, though distinct beings, are unified in purpose and doctrine. How do Latter-day Saints envision exaltation? Since human conceptions of reality are necessarily limited in mortality, religions struggle to adequately articulate their visions of eternal glory. For example, scriptural expressions of the deep peace and overwhelming joy of salvation are often reproduced in the well-known image of humans sitting on their own clouds and playing harps after death. I maintain that Mormon 7: What does this say? And he hath brought to pass the redemption of the world, whereby he that is found guiltless before him at the judgment day hath it given unto him to dwell in the presence of God in his kingdom, to sing ceaseless praises with the choirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, which are one God, in a state of happiness which hath no end. This idea is not taught in Latter-day Saint scripture, nor is it a doctrine of the Church. This misunderstanding stems from speculative comments unreflective of scriptural doctrine. We have the incomprehensible promise of exaltation"worlds without end"within our grasp. This doctrine is known as eternal increase. A church manual declares, Mortal persons who overcome all things and gain an ultimate exaltation will live eternally in the family unit and have spirit children, thus becoming Eternal Fathers and Eternal Mothers. Indeed, the formal pronouncement of the Church, issued by the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve, states: You will need to develop yourself and grow in ability and power and worthiness, to govern such a world with all of its people. Presidents of the Church Student Manual: Religion , 90 Citing Kimball, Apostle L. Tom Perry said, Peter and John had little secular learning, being termed ignorant. But they knew the vital things of life, that God lives and that the crucified, resurrected Lord is the Son of God. They knew the path to eternal life. This they learned in a few decades of their mortal life. Their

righteous lives opened the door to godhood for them and creation of worlds with eternal increase. For this they would probably need, eventually, a total knowledge of the sciences. Secular knowledge, important as it may be, can never save a soul nor open the celestial kingdom nor create a world nor make a man a god. If this is so, is the Mormon Elohim also dissimilar from the Gods who preceded him? In other words, if every generation of gods lacks in any degree the power, might, and dominion of the gods who preceded them, then it must be assumed that the God worshiped by present-day Mormons is also lesser in power, might, and dominion than the myriad of gods who were exalted before him. This means that the Mormon God is subordinate as well as inferior to the gods who preceded him. A cloud and harp are hardly a satisfying image for eternal joy, although most Christians would agree that inspired music can be a tiny foretaste of the joy of eternal salvation. Likewise, while few Latter-day Saints would identify with caricatures of having their own planet, most would agree that the awe inspired by creation hints at our creative potential in the eternities. Latter-day Saints tend to imagine exaltation through the lens of the sacred in mortal experience. They see the seeds of godhood in the joy of bearing and nurturing children and the intense love they feel for those children, in the impulse to reach out in compassionate service to others, in the moments they are caught off guard by the beauty and order of the universe, in the grounding feeling of making and keeping divine covenants. But this is not the case. For tons of more references, please see: [Offsite How important are teachings about exaltation to Latter-day Saint beliefs overall?](#) The teaching that human beings have a divine nature and future shapes the way Latter-day Saints view fundamental doctrine. Perhaps most significantly, belief in divine nature helps us more deeply appreciate the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Latter-day Saints believe that it is only through the Atonement of Jesus Christ that we can have a sure hope of eternal glory and that the power of His Atonement is fully accessed only by faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end in following the instruction and example of Christ. For example, even in societies where casual and premarital sex are considered acceptable, Latter-day Saints retain a deep reverence for the God-given procreative and bonding powers of human sexual intimacy and remain committed to a higher standard in the use of those sacred powers. We would never argue that Mormons cannot be moral people. This is not the point. After all, atheists and other nonbelievers can also live moral lives. Truth should not be judged on its pragmatic benefits. Indeed, just because it can be argued that being a Mormon makes a person a better individual is not good support to show that this religion is true. **Conclusion** All human beings are children of loving heavenly parents and possess seeds of divinity within them. In His infinite love, God invites His children to cultivate their eternal potential by the grace of God, through the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. What has been accomplished in the publishing of this article? For more responses to the Gospel Topics Essays, [click here](#).