

☞POINTS TO PONDER

What do we believe about God?

☞WHAT GOD IS NOT:

☞Mormon Doctrine: God used to be **a man on another planet**. God is married to his goddess wife and has spirit children. The trinity is three separate Gods.

☞Baha'i views Jesus as merely **one of many manifestations** or prophets **of the divine**.

☞For Jehovah's Witnesses, "**Michael the archangel** is no other than the only begotten son of God, now Jesus Christ."

In the Far East where the major religions are Buddhism, Shinto, Taoism and Confucianism,
☞Jesus is considered to be **just another character in Western religious mythology**, on a par with Thor, Zeus and Osiris.

☞Some think God is **nothing but love**, kindness and gentleness. They often refer to the NT for this claim.

☞Some think God is **nothing but judgment**. They often refer to the OT for this claim.

☞8 VIEWS OF GOD

by Michael J. Vlach, Ph.D.

☞**Monotheism** is the view that there is only **one God**. For monotheists, other supernatural beings may exist such as Satan, angels and demons but there is only one God. Monotheism is found within the religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

☞**Trinitarian Monotheism** is the view that there is only **one God**, but within this one God are **three** distinct yet equal **persons**—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Only biblical Christianity affirms Trinitarian Monotheism.

☞**Polytheism** is the view that there are **many gods**. Polytheism is an ancient view found in some of the earliest religions and tribes. The ancient Egyptian religion held to multiple gods as did many of the tribes of Africa. Ancient Greek mythology is known for its pantheon of gods.

☞**Henotheism** (similar to polytheism) is the view that there is **one** god who is **supreme** but there are also **other deities** as well. This perspective has been found in several Native American religions.

☞**Isaiah 45:5** (*response to polytheism*)

I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God.

☞ **Pantheism** is the view that God is nature and **nature is God**. With this perspective, there is no personal God who exists apart from the universe. Thus, any statement about nature is a statement about God and vice versa. (the Avatar movie)

☞ **Genesis 1:1** (*response to pantheism*)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

☞ **Deism** is the view that an extremely intelligent and powerful being created the universe, but this being no longer has any contact with the universe. Nor does this being respond to the prayers and concerns of people. He is **disconnected** from creation. With deism, this cosmic creator is akin to a watchmaker who makes a watch, winds it up, and then walks away from it forever.

☞ **John 3:16** (*response to deism*)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. --NKJV

☞ **Atheism** is the view that there is **no God**. Atheists do not believe in any supernatural metaphysical beings. Major defenses of atheism can be found in the writings of the philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche and Bertrand Russell.

☞ **Psalms 14:1** (*response to atheism*)

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

☞ **Agnosticism** is the view that **knowledge of God is impossible**. Whereas atheists boldly claim no God exists, agnostics claim that we cannot know anything about God if He indeed does exist. Another form of agnosticism is the claim that we simply do not have enough information to know for sure whether a God exists. The two forms of agnosticism can be seen in these statements:

- "If there is a God, he cannot be known."
- "I don't know if God exists or not."

☞ **1 John 5:20** (*response to agnosticism*)

We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true.

☞ **THE TRUTH:**

We believe there is one God. In the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and attribute, fulfilling distinct but complementary roles in the great work of redemption. (Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 John 5:7.)

☞ **GOD THE FATHER**

We believe in God the Father, the co-Creator with the Son and the Holy Spirit, who is the eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere-present, and unchangeable Creator of all. (Deuteronomy 32:6; Psalms 103:13; Isaiah 63:16; Matthew 6:9; John 3:1, 5:19-23, 17:1-11; Acts 17:28; Romans 8:14-16; Ephesians 4:6.)

Mark 10:27 (*all-powerful*)
all things are possible with God.

1 John 3:20 (*all knowing*)
God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

Psalms 139:7-10 (*everywhere present*)
Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? 8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. 9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, 10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

☞ **GOD THE SON**

Graffiti found on a wall of St. John's University: Jesus said unto them: "Who do you say that I am?" And they replied: "You are the eschatological manifestation of the ground of our being, the kerygma in which we find the ultimate meaning of our interpersonal relationships." And Jesus said: "What?"

☞ **We believe in God the Son, co-Creator with the Father and Holy Spirit, who took upon Himself human form, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and given the name, Jesus. His death by crucifixion and His bodily resurrection reconciled the human race to God. He ascended to heaven where He is seated at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us as the King of kings and Lord of lords.** (Isaiah 53:1-5; Matthew 1:21-23; John 1:1-3, 11:25-26; Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:1-6; 1 Timothy 2:5.)

--A. W. Tozer... *Christ is not one of many ways to approach God, nor is he the best of several ways; he is the only way.*

--C. S. Lewis... *A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn't be a great moral teacher. He'd be either a lunatic - on a level with a man who says he's a poached egg - or else he'd be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse.*

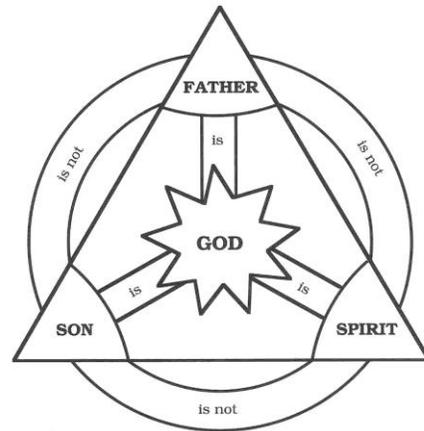
John 8:58 (*claim to deity*)
"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

☞ **GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, co-Creator with the Father and Son, who is now sent by the Father through the Son to convict the world of sin, lead us into all truth, and empower and equip the Church to carry on Christ's work on earth. (Genesis 1:2; John 14:26, 15:26, 16:8; Acts 1:8.)

☞ Picture of the Trinity

God is a trinity of persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is not the same person as the Son; the Son is not the same person as the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is not the same person as the Father. They are separate persons; yet, they are all the one God. They are in absolute perfect harmony consisting of one substance. They are co-eternal, co-equal, and co-powerful. If any one of the three were removed, there would be no God. A further point of clarification is that God is not one person, the Father, with Jesus as a creation and the Holy Spirit as a force (Jehovah's Witnesses). Neither is He one person who took three consecutive forms, i.e., the Father who became the Son who then became the Holy Spirit (United Pentecostal). Nor is the Trinity an office held by three separate Gods (Mormonism).



The word Trinity not only means a quantity of three, but also implies a unity of three.

Deuteronomy 6:4 (*3 in 1*)

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

"Our God" is the plural Elohim

"One" = "*echad*," which means united. It is a compound one.

☞ God's Names reveal who he is... Samples from the booklet, **GOD IS**

Elohim – Elohim is the first name for God found in the Old Testament and it is the most common name that is translated as "God." It comes from a root that means "strength, might, power." Elohim is unusual since it is plural. (Genesis 1:1)

El – El comes from the same root as Elohim. It means the first, the strong and powerful Lord. (Genesis 14:19)

El-Shaddai – The All-powerful or Almighty God. It comes from a root word meaning burly. (Genesis 17:1)

El-Elyon – The Lofty One. The God who is above all. (Genesis 14:18)

El-Olam – The God who always was and always will be; the Eternal One. (Genesis 21:33)

Jehovah or Yahweh – This name comes from the Hebrew verb which means "to be." He has life and being inherent in Himself. Everything else derives its being from Him. The Lord is the source of all existence and all reality. He is without beginning and without end because He always was, He is, and He always will be. (Genesis 2:4. Exodus 6:2-3)

Jehovah-Jireh – The-LORD-Will-Provide. (Genesis 22:14)

Jehovah-Shalom – The-LORD-Is-Peace. (Judges 6:24)

Jehovah-Shammah – The-LORD-Is-There. (Ezekiel 48:35)

Jehovah-Rophe – The LORD that heals. (Exodus 15:26)

Jehovah-T'sidkenu – The LORD our righteousness. (Jeremiah 23:6)

Jehovah-Rohi – The LORD my Shepherd. (Psalms 23:1)

Theos – The one supreme supernatural being. (John 1:1) "Theology"

Kurios – The God who is in control and has supreme authority. (Matthew 1:20)

Father – The Creator God. As father he is the protector, nourisher, and helper. He is the one who combines aspects of supernatural authority with care for his people. (Matthew 5:16)

God Of The Beginning (Deuteronomy 33:27)

God Of Justice (Isaiah 30:18)

God Who Is Near (Jeremiah 23:23)

God Of My Strength (Psalm 43:2)

God Of My Salvation (Psalm 18:47, 25:5)

God Of Forgiveness (Nehemiah 9:17)

God Of The Heavens (Psalm 136:26)

God Who Sees (Genesis 16:13)

God Of Glory (Psalm 29:3)

God Of Knowledge (1 Samuel 2:3)

God Of The Universe (Genesis 21:33)

God Of Truth (Psalm 31:6)

God Of My Life (Psalm 42:9)

God Of Compassion (Deuteronomy 4:31)

God Of Gods and Lord Of Lords (Deuteronomy 10:17)

Holy God (Leviticus 19:2)

Living God (Jeremiah 10:10)

Faithful God (Deuteronomy 7:9)

Gracious God (Jonah 4:2)

Righteous God (Isaiah 45:21)

All-Sufficient God (Genesis 17:1)

Most High God (Genesis 14:18)

Mighty God (Isaiah 9:6)
God who is with us (Isaiah 7:14)
Upright One (Isaiah 26:7)
Redeemer (Psalm 19:14)
Deliverer (Psalm 144:2)
Savior (Isaiah 45:15)
Light (Psalm 27:1)
Dwelling Place (Psalm 90:1)
Fortress (Psalm 91:2)
Refuge (Psalm 46:1)
Shield (Psalm 18:30)
Hiding Place (Psalm 32:7)
Rock (Habakkuk 1:12)
Potter (Isaiah 64:8)
Husband (Isaiah 54:5, Jeremiah 31:32)
Shepherd (Genesis 49:24)
King of Glory (Psalm 24:7)

--A.W. Tozer... God's infinitude places him so far above our knowing that a lifetime spent in cultivating the knowledge of him leaves as much yet to learn as if we had never begun.

☞ **He's the one true God. There is no other like him.** He is the **creator** of the universe, nothing would exist without him. He is **all-powerful**, no other power can challenge him; he is **eternal**, without beginning or ending; he is the **most high**; others may be impressive, but none come close to comparing with God; he has absolute authority, his word is final; he is in charge, no one can overrule him; he can never be fully understood, but he can be known; he is our **Father** who wants a relationship with us. He alone is God. **He's living and active today and you can know him!**

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

How great is our God