

## The All Powerful Partition Algorithm

Members deal with difficult problems with history or doctrine by stating that everything good and wonderful done or said by leaders or members is motivated by God and is evidence of the truthfulness of the LDS Church while everything that falls short of some God-like ideal is considered the failings of man (e.g., “speaking as man” or “the church is perfect but the people aren’t”) or was merely meant to [test the Saints and make them stronger](#).

This process of attributing some actions to God and others to man, or good actions as blessings and bad actions as tests, may be viewed as an extremely powerful [partitioning algorithm](#). The LDS Church comes out looking divine—no matter what difficult history a person may be exposed to—*by algorithmic definition*. The good things are from God and the bad things are either the mistakes of men or are merely God testing (and strengthening) his people. With this algorithm in place, no bad things can *ever* be associated with the LDS Church itself.

The problem with this algorithm is that it may be *too* powerful—any institution to which we apply it will also suddenly appear divine. For instance, a Jehovah’s Witness defends their organization in similar terms:

Every person in this organization—every one of Jehovah’s Witnesses including the governing body—we’re all imperfect and thus we are subject to making mistakes. Which means that if you look hard enough, all you will see instead of seeing these amazing things that Jehovah is accomplishing and our tremendous privilege of being part of it, all we are going to see is the errors of men. But when we focus on the good, on the guidance and loving support that we’ve received, aren’t we moved with appreciation to cleave to this body of fellow worshipers. And just look at what Jehovah is accomplishing by means of his imperfect servants. There is no other organization on earth providing spiritual food like the one that we belong to. When we look at all of this, how could we possibly let the failings of just a few people undermine this overwhelming proof of Jehova’s backing? [2016 “remain loyal to jehovah” regional conference](#)

And a Catholic speaking about her Bishops as she defends the Catholic doctrine of forbidding birth control:

Bishops are not CEO’s; they are stand-ins for Christ. The relation of a bishop to the people is not analogous to any ‘power’ relationships in the secular world. They are human and prone to mistakes, but they are also a way that God speaks to the world. Bishops serve lay Catholics by standing up for our beliefs, as they are doing now. I am glad that when the world wants to know “what Catholics think” there is a clear way to find out. I am grateful for the leadership of our bishops in these recent weeks. [source](#)

To take it to the very extreme, I will apply the algorithm to Germany’s Nazi Party.

*Warning: this example is meant for rhetorical purposes only and is not meant to disrespect the memories of the victims of WWII and the holocaust.*

With the proper partitioning algorithm, I can say that the Nazi party was being guided by God throughout the entire duration of its existence. The party brought peace and stability to Germany and upheld a number of positive ideals (the LDS Church praised them, for instance). Their war-like and genocidal actions were based on the pettiness and faithlessness of *some* members and leaders, but that doesn't mean God wasn't guiding the organization as a whole. I suggest that their war of aggression and genocide were merely part of God's plan in order to test both the Nazi's and their victims—in these circumstances *everyone* was able to prove their allegiance to God and grow in character (in this life or the next) in their extremities. Only rabid anti-Nazi's (you know, the ones who left it but couldn't leave it alone) would ever twist the historical record enough in order to find fault with God's own Nazi party.