

# Article of Faith 1

October 25, 2018

We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.

The first article of faith deals with the godhead. Some faiths call this the trinity. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not hold to a trinitarian view on the godhead. They believe that the godhead is made up of three individual beings, separate in body and mind<sup>1</sup> but one in purpose.

It would appear that the nature and thought of God has changed over the years. Oliver Cowdery once taught:

The language in which this record<sup>2</sup> is written is very comprehensive, and many of the hieroglyphics exceedingly striking. The evidence is apparent upon the face, that they were written by persons acquainted with the history of the creation, the fall of man, and more or less of the correct ideas of notions of the Deity. The representation of the godhead—three, yet in one, is curiously drawn to give simply, though impressively, the writers views of that exalted personage.<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting how he phrases the notion of the godhead, “three, yet in one” and defines it as what appears to be one “exalted personage.” He does not state they are three separate beings, but one. Is this on purpose? Or did he not understand the godhead as it was presented in the Book of Abraham?

Perhaps it was defined as one god, but Joseph Smith changed the writings to be gods instead? Who is to say what was done as he was translating<sup>4</sup> the record.

Another example of Jesus and God being one is found in 2<sup>nd</sup> Nephi:

And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen.<sup>5</sup>

Now, we are taught that they are one in purpose not one in body or spirit. Yet it would be interesting to know they the author didn't mention this outright and explain it. People in bible times stated that they saw God and Jesus on the right hand of God while being in the spirit. Even at Jesus' baptism it states that the Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove and a voice was heard from heaven which is assumed to be God. I find it interesting the words “which is one God.” If we are to believe they are three distinct and separate individuals, it needs to be defined as such. Why else do you think there is so much confusion even within the Latter-day Saints about the nature of God at times. I remember in seminary people had asked this question, and the answer was always “one in purpose not in body.” Well say it then.

1 Joseph Smith once taught that the Holy Spirit was the mind of God and Jesus and there were only two beings in the godhead. This can be found in Lectures on Faith 5.

2 The record of which is being talked about is the Book of Abraham

3 Messenger and Advocate, Page 236

4 Recently, it's been determined that translating is not the same as translating as is known today. In this reference, translation is actually revelation using the papyri as a catalyst for the revelation and inspirations from God.

5 2 Nephi 31:21

From the Lectures on Faith we learn the nature of God and Jesus Christ.

The Father being a personage of spirit, glory and power: possessing all perfection and fulness: The Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, a personage of tabernacle, made, or fashioned like unto man, or being in the form and likeness of man, or, rather, man was formed after his likeness, and in his image;<sup>6</sup>

This goes contrary to the teachings in the Doctrine and Covenants about the nature of God and Jesus Christ it would seem:

The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.<sup>7</sup>

It makes one wonder, which teaching of God is correct and true? They cannot both be truth, for one says that God is a spirit while the other claims that God has a body of flesh and bone like the Son. Perhaps it is simply one of those things which cannot be understood at this time. If that is the case, then it is one of those things which should be understood later in life and is not important at this time. However, if we are to worship such a being...would it not be easier to have an understanding of such a being?

The reason for the Holy Ghost being a personage of Spirit is so he can dwell in us. Now I'm assuming this is not to be possessed of the spirit, but more of feeling the spirit as those good feelings that people experience.

So even with all the answers we have regarding the Godhead, we still have questions. I suppose that is okay for now, but eventually answers will be needed.

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6 Lectures on Faith 5:2

7 D&C 130:22