



A Closer Look at the Mormon Concept of God

*"It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God . . ."*¹ (Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church)

Mormon leaders often like to portray their faith as merely another branch of Christianity which, unlike other branches of Christianity, preaches the entirety of Christ's gospel. However, most people, even some Mormons, are unaware of how radically the Mormon view of God differs from the picture of God one finds in the Bible and traditional Christian theology.

Understanding the Biblical Christian Concept of God

In order to compare and contrast the Mormon concept of God with the biblical/Christian concept of God, we must first fully understand what we mean by the biblical/Christian concept.

Though there are numerous aspects to God's nature that we could examine (such as that He is a Trinity), for our present purposes it is sufficient to say that the God of biblical Christianity is at least (1) personal and incorporeal (without physical parts), (2) the Creator and sustainer of everything else that exists, (3) omnipotent (all-powerful), (4) omniscient (all-knowing), (5) omnipresent (everywhere present), (6) immutable (unchanging) and eternal, and (7) necessary and the only God that exists. Let us now briefly look at each of these attributes.

1. God is Personal and Incorporeal. According to the Bible, God is a personal being who has all the attributes that we may expect from a perfect person: self-consciousness, the ability to reason, know, love, communicate, and so forth. This is clearly how God is described in the Scriptures (see Gen. 17:11; Ex. 3:14; Jer. 29:11). God is also incorporeal. Unlike humans, God is not uniquely associated with one physical entity (i.e., a body). This is why the Bible refers to God as Spirit (see John 4:24).

2. God is the Creator and Sustainer of Everything Else that Exists. All reality has come into existence and *continues* to exist because of God. Unlike a god who forms the universe out of preexistent matter, the God of the Bible created the universe *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). Consequently, it is on God alone that everything in the universe, indeed, the universe itself, depends for its existence (see Acts 17:25; Rom. 11:36;

