

Throughout time, there has arisen many aberrant views on the idea of who God is. Man has departed into idolatry by fashioning a God into something other than what God (Yahweh) has already revealed Himself, to us, in His word.

This study is a detailed examination of who God is, how has He revealed himself and his characteristics in His word.

What is truth

As believers, we need to be seekers of truth. We live in a culture that takes God and suppresses the truth of God in unrighteousness. Romans 1:18-23
The problem isn't that there is lack of knowledge or evidence, but suppression. The danger is, is that because of this we exchange the truth of who God is to worshiping idols. A lot of these heretical views on God usually make God into something we can relate to. They make God (a loving, forgiving, sovereign, just, majestic, transcendent and incomprehensible) into something other than what He really is to suit their needs.

John 4:23

23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Jon 14:6

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

One of the most important teachings that is consistent throughout the entire bible, is that there is only one God. 66 books written by 40 authors, in different geographic locations, time periods and cultures and yet there is still this one consistent, unified theme from Genesis to revelation, there is only one God.

Only one God (monotheism)

The bible teaches that there is only one God.

Moses maimonides asserted that the Jewish people that God is Yachid, an only one.

Deuteronomy 6:4 (The Shema)

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad

Mark 12:28-29

28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Isaiah 43:10 makes it clear that no man will ever attain Godhood. God makes it clear that this is not possible.

Isaiah 43:10

10 Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

The God of the Bible, who is all knowing, says He knows of no other Gods (Isaiah 44:6 and 8).

Isaiah 44:6

6 Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

Isaiah 44:8

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.

The God of the Bible adamantly declares that He is the first and the last. From eternity past to eternity future, there will never be a true God besides the one God as presented throughout the entire Bible.

Isaiah 45:5

4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. 5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

Psalms 90:2

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God

God makes it clear in Deuteronomy 4:39 that there is no other God anywhere.

Deuteronomy 4:39 KJV

39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else..

Flesh vs. Spirit

God the father is not flesh and bones.

John 4:24

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Luke 24:37-39

*37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; **for a spirit hath not flesh and bones**, as ye see me have.*

The Triune God

Moses wrote the first five books of the bible (the Torah). Moses declares over and over that there is only one God. Yet in Genesis 1, right out of the gates, Moses writes.....

Genesis 1:26a

*26 Then God said, "Let **us** make man in **our** image, in **our** likeness,*

Genesis 11:7 (tower of babel)

*7 Come, let **us** go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."*

This is interesting talk coming from a monotheistic God.

The Triune God

The trinity is apprehendable. The trinity is incomprehensible. (E=mc² analogy) (Water analogy) Many heretical and aberrant views of the Godhead have been created in mans attempt to comprehend and rationalize the trinity. When you think about it, it's kinda arrogant for us to distort Gods word in order to comprehend God.

Within the one Being that is God, there exists eternally three co-equal persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

1 john 5:7 KJV

7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Jesus created or Eternal

John 1:1-3 KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made .

Verse 1 in greek literally means in the beginning (arche en logos) the word was already there and he was πρὸς θεός (pros theon) face to face in relationship. The "Word" (logos λόγος) was not only with God but is also God. Verse 3 shows that Jesus "the word" created all things. Col. 1:15-17 reienforces this.

Colossians 1:14-17

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created , that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist .

Paul here is telling us that Jesus created all things and that He is before all things. It says that He created principalities and powers, which are the angels. So how can satan and Jesus be brothers when this clearly says that Jesus created him. In vs 15 the word "firstborn" which is the Greek word PROTOTOKOS speaks of his preeminence (His position of authority and inheritance) God refers to the nation of Israel as His "firstborn". Does God give physical birth to nations? No! It's referring to inheritance. Just want to make clear that the word firstborn here is not referring to physical birth as from a woman.

God is an uncreated being. He is Eternal. No beginning no end.

Jesus is the Eternal God who has no beginning and no ending and is uncreated.

The father, son, holy spirit are all seperate persons and all are equally the one true God in being and substance. They are not 3 seperate Gods. The bible does not teach that Jesus is the father. Jesus is not the father, the father is not the son, and the holy spirit is not the father or the son.

This is the triune God.

JESUS IS GOD

1 john 5:7 KJV

7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

OLD TESTAMENT (Jesus calls himself YHWH, the tetragrammaton)

john 8:58 KJV

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

I AM, is significant. It expresses that he is the eternal God. In Hebrew it is "hayah" which means "to be" I AM, I was, I will always be. Identity in a pagan culture.

same translation as john 8:58

exodus 3:14

14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "
Stones....Shema

Isaiah 9:6

6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, **Mighty God**(el' gibbowr), Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (ref psalm 90:2)

Micah 5:2

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Titus 2:13

13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Jesus recieves worship

Mat. 4:9-10

9 And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

John 20:28

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Shares Glory

Isaiah 42:8

8 I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

John 17:4-5

4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Raised from the dead ?

acts 2:24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Romans 8:11 says, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you."

JESUS IS GOD

Raised from the dead ?

*17 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command received from my Father.”2 “The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me;
his word was on my tongue.*

*3 The God of Israel spoke,
the Rock of Israel said to me:*

John 2:19

*19 Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”
also Acts 2:32 , Acts 4:10, Galatians 1:1, Col. 2:12, I thes. 1:10*

HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD

Christianity has traditionally taught that the Holy Spirit is the third Person or Hypostasis of the Godhead. Some, however, have taught that the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force used by God. Is the Holy Spirit God, or simply a power of God? The Spirit also has the infinite attributes of God: unlimited in time, space, matter, power and knowledge.

Matt 12:32

31 “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. 32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Acts 5:3-4

3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”

How can you lie to an active force? Like fire or wind. You can't.

The Holy Spirit commands and instructs

Acts 13:2

2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

Eternal

John 14:16

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Heb 9:14

14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Creates

Job 33:4

The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD

Matt 1:18

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

2 Sam 23:2-3

2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his word was on my tongue. 3 The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me:

Luke 1:35

"The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God'"

Isaiah 48:16 (father, son and holy spirit is here)

12 "Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I am He, I am the First, I am also the Last. 13 Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together. 14 "All of you, assemble yourselves, and hear! Who among them has declared these things?

The Lord loves him; He shall do His pleasure on Babylon, And His arm shall be against the Chaldeans.

15 I, even I, have spoken; Yes, I have called him, I have brought him, and his way will prosper. 16 "Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me." 17 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel:

"I am the Lord your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.

Omniscient

1 Cor. 2:10

10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy[d] Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

John 14:26

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Omnipresent

7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.

THE TRINITY

The Triune God

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1 John 5:7 KJV

7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Matt 3:16-17

16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He[c] saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

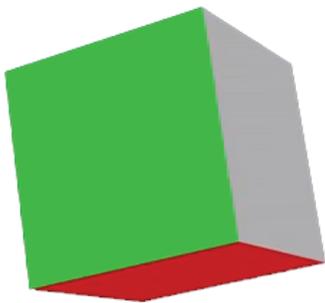
Again.....the true God is not total comprehensible. A God that we can fully explain, like a unitarian God would be an entity that is no greater than we are. Every monotheistic religion believes that God is omniscient(all-knowing). If He is, then He must be omnipresent as well (all places at all times). If God is Omnipresent then He must exist outside of our reality....a 3 dimensional realm. Anything that exists in a 3D realm cannot be at all places at all times, therefore God must exist outside our understanding of time, space and matter or be comprised of more than 3 spatial dimensions.

God is Hyperdimensional or infinitely dimensional.

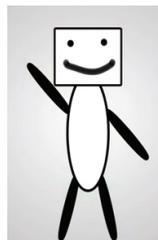
Isaiah 40:28

28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable.

Lets take an example of a cube and trying to translate it into a 2D realm.



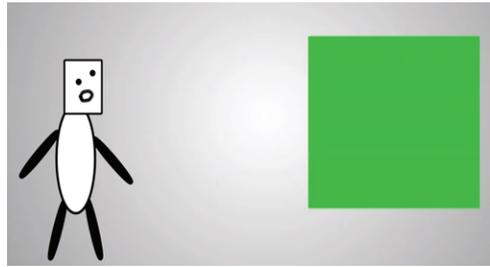
we understand this cube because it exists within our spatial parameters.



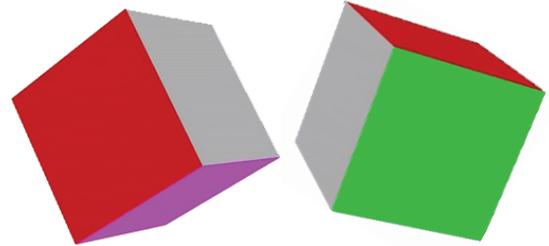
but if we were to encounter someone in a 2D world he would not be able to comprehend the cube



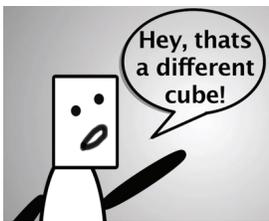
He would look at it and see it as just a square



We could then show him that it is a cube, by rotating it

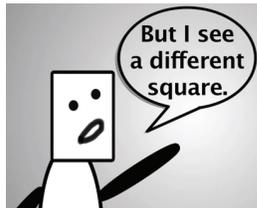


But he can not comprehend changes made in 3D space. It would look like this to him.



We would say

He would say, " that can't be right."



We would say, "Yeah....it is a different sqare, but it's all part of the same cube. We could then rotate the cube around again to show him that all these squares are part of one six sided cube. All he would see is six squares because his mind can not rationally comprehend the physics required to see the cube. All he could do is take our word for it.

When man makes up a religion, it's almost always in the form of something that man can understand logically. At close examination of the different views of God, there is one consistant thing that man does. They make God into something they can rationally comprehend. In doing so, man denies the triune God and the fact that Jesus is God and that he is eternal. why???

Let's now take a look at some of these false views of God.

Objections to the Trinity

There is only one God. but there are 3 persons in the bible that call themselves God. They share the same attributes, qualities, characteristics.....etc.

There are many that object to this theology, after all how can $1+1+1=1$. Doesn't $1+1+1=3$

We have taken a look at how the Triune God is in the old and new testament to get a foundation for what God's word says about who God is.

Some Objections

Proverbs 8

1. Solomon is speaking in Proverbs 8 about how glorious Wisdom is. Many unitarians point out that Solomon is calling wisdom an actual existing person. They will draw a parallel to John 1 and say the "Word" (Jesus) is the personification of wisdom referred to in Proverbs 8.

Skeptics will quote this verse in proverbs to show that Jesus is created. If he's created, then he cannot be eternal.

qanah

Proverbs 8:22

22 "The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old;

The hebrew word for create is **BARA** as used in Gen 1:1. **Qanah**, which is used here means acquire, possess, own, purchase.

One thing that is notable is that wisdom is referred to as a "her".

If we conclude that wisdom is an actual being rather than a mere personification of a virtue, then we would have to conclude that "prudence" and "instruction" is also a being.

12 "I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion.

Proverbs 4:13

13 Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.

If wisdom is understood to be a created being, then we have to conclude that every time Solomon personifies a virtue he is speaking of a created being.

Is Jesus Michael the arch angel

Some religious movements will make claims that Jesus is simply Michael the arch angel.

Is Jesus Michael the arch angel cont.

They will use verses like 1 thes. to show that Jesus is an arch angel

1 Thes. 4:15-18

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an [archangel](#), and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

All these things will be accompanied with Jesus

2 Thessalonians reenforces the fact that Jesus is returning with angels

1 thes. 1:7

7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

Hebrew 1 refutes the idea that Jesus and Michael the arch angel are one and the same.

Hebrew 1:5-7

5 For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"?[c] And again:

"I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"?[d] 6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says:

"Let all the angels of God worship Him."[e] 7 And of the angels He says:

"Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire."[f]

Note that the writer (Paul) is indicating that these are [ministering spirits](#)

Rev. 22:8-9

8 Now I, John, saw and heard[c] these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For[d] I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

So Jesus cannot be Michael the arch angel for angels are not to be worshipped.

Colossians 1:14-17

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the *firstborn* of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: *all things were created by him, and for him:* 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Paul here is telling us that Jesus created all things and that He is before all things. It says that He created principalities and powers, which are the angels. In vs 15 the word "firstborn" which is the Greek word PROTOTOKOS speaks of his preeminence (His position of authority and inheritance). It's not speaking of birth order, but rank. God refers to the nation of Israel as His "firstborn". Does God give physical birth to nations? No! It's referring to inheritance.

Psalm 89:27 God refers to King David as his firstborn

27 Also I will make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth.

John and Hebrews refute this to show Jesus created all things.

John 1:1-3 KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Verse 1 in greek literally means in the beginning (arche en logos) the word was already there and he was πρὸς θεός (pros theon) face to face in relationship. The "Word" (logos λόγος) was not only with God but is also God. Verse 3 shows that Jesus "the word" *created all things*. Col. 1:15-17 reinforces this.

Hebrews 1

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed *heir* of all things, through whom also *He made the worlds*; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself [a] purged our[b] sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become so much *better than the angels*, as He has by *inheritance* obtained a more excellent name than they.

Unitarians and skeptics will say, "How can Jesus be God if he prays to the father." This doesn't make sense."

Greater in power

Skeptics will say, "Doesn't Jesus say that the father is greater than Him."

Greater in power

John 14:28

*28 You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said,[a] 'I am going to the Father,' for **My Father is greater than I.***

The following verses show that Jesus claimed to be equal with the Father in essence.

John 5:16-18, John 14:9, John 14:23, Rev.22:13

Paul points out that Jesus willingly submits to the father

1 Cor. 11:3

3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Willingly made lower in position of authority

Hebrews 2:9

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

Philippians 2:5-8

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Modalism

The doctrine that the persons of the Trinity represent only three modes or aspects of the divine revelation, not distinct and coexisting...

So....God is one and works in modes. What's the problem with this?

Arianism

A heresy denying the divinity of Christ, originating with the Alexandrian priest Arius (c.250–c.336).

This is what the early church in 325 A.D. came together to fight.....the rising Heresy of Arianism. It's better known as the Council of Nicea.

1 John 4:1-3

4 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess that[a] Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

Gal. 1:6-9

6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

Gnosticism

Gnosticism traces its roots back just after the beginning of the Christian Church. Some researchers state that evidence of its existence even predates Christianity. Whichever the case, the error of gnosticism had affected the culture and church of the time and possibly even earned a mention in 1 John 4. The word "gnosticism" comes from the Greek word "gnosis" which means "knowledge." There were many groups that were Gnostic and it isn't possible to easily describe the nuances of each variant of Gnostic doctrines. However, generally speaking, Gnosticism taught that salvation is achieved through special knowledge (gnosis). This knowledge usually dealt with the individual's relationship to the transcendent Being.

A more detailed Gnostic theology is as follows. The unknowable God was far too pure and perfect to have anything to do with the material universe which was considered evil. Therefore, God generated lesser divinities, or emanations. One of these emanations, Wisdom desired to know the unknowable God. Out of this erring desire the demiurge an evil god was formed and it was this evil god that created the universe. He along with archons kept the mortals in bondage in material matter and tried to prevent the pure spirit souls from ascending back to god after the death of the physical bodies. Since, according to the Gnostics, matter is evil, deliverance from material form was attainable only through special knowledge revealed by special Gnostic teachers. Christ was the divine redeemer who descended from the spiritual realm to reveal the knowledge necessary for this redemption. In conclusion, Gnosticism is dualistic. That is, it teaches there is a good and evil, spirit and matter, light and dark, etc. dualism in the universe.

The danger of gnosticism is easily apparent. It denies the incarnation of God as the Son. In so doing, it denies the true efficacy of the atonement since, if Jesus is not God, He could not atone for all of mankind and we would still be lost in our sins.

There is debate whether or not this is a Christian heresy or simply an independent development. The evidence seems to point to the later. Nevertheless, the Gnostics laid claim to Jesus as a great teacher of theirs and as such requires some attention. It is possible that 1 John was written against some of the errors that Gnosticism promoted.

Mormon Beliefs, are they Christian?

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, known as the Mormons, believes and teaches that God the Father used to be a man on another planet, that he became a God by following the laws and ordinances of that God on that planet and came to this world with his wife (she became a goddess), and that they produce a spirit offspring in heaven. These spirit offspring, which includes Jesus, lucifer, and you and me, are all brothers and sisters born in the preexistence. These preexistence spirits come down and inhabit babies at the time of birth and their memories of the preexistence are lost at the time. The LDS church teaches that there are many Gods and that God (Heavenly Father) was once a man and is now an exalted man with flesh and bones and that you, yourself, are working and hoping to reach exaltation and become a god.

They are a works based movement claiming that grace by faith in Jesus Christ is not sufficient to attain salvation, that faith combined with works are required for eternal assurance.

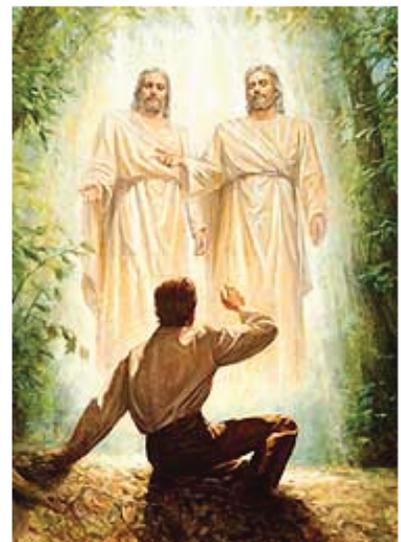
It all started with this.....Joseph Smith and his first vision

In accordance with this, my determination to ask of God, I retired to the woods to make the attempt. It was on the morning of a beautiful, clear day, early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty. It was the first time in my life that I had made such an attempt, for amidst all my anxieties I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally.

After I had retired to the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me, and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction.

But, exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction--not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world, who had such marvelous power as I had never before felt in any being--just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other--"This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong)--and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: "they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof." He again forbade me to join with any of them; and many other things did he say unto me, which I cannot write at this time. When I came to myself again, I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven. When the light had departed, I had no strength; but soon recovering in some degree, I went home.



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God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make himself visible, — I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form — like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with Him, as one man talks and communes with another.

In order to understand the subject of the dead, for consolation of those who mourn for the loss of their friends, it is necessary we should understand the character and being of God and how He came to be so; for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see.

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Here, then, is eternal life — to know the only wise and true god; and you have got to learn how to be gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all gods have done before you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power.

*A quick summation of what Joseph Smith said was said again in June of 1840 by Lorenzo Snow,
"As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become."*

Brigham Young, the second prophet and president of the Mormon Church, delivered a message in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on August 8, 1852, in which he affirmed this teaching when he said, "The Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming Gods like Himself" (JOD 3:93).

God three in one purpose

The trinity is three separate Gods: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. "That these three are separate individuals, physically distinct from each other, is demonstrated by the accepted records of divine dealings with man," (Articles of Faith, by James Talmage, p. 35).

God is married to his goddess wife and has spirit children (Mormon Doctrine, p. 516).

"Therefore we know that both the Father and the Son are in form and stature perfect men; each of them possesses a tangible body . . . of flesh and bones," (Articles of Faith, by James Talmage, p. 38).

"The birth of the Saviour was as natural as are the births of our children; it was the result of natural action. He partook of flesh and blood - was begotten of his Father, as we were of our fathers," (Journal of Discourses, vol. 8, p. 115).

Joseph Smith certainly did attempt to redefine the nature of the Godhead by rejecting the Trinitarian concept in favor of one that represents tri-theism. He mocked the generally accepted view of the Godhead when he stated, "*Many men say there is one God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are only one God. I say that is a strange God anyhow-three in one, and one in three! It is a curious organization ... All are to be crammed into one God, according to sectarianism. It would make the biggest God in all the world. He would be a wonderfully big God-he would be a giant or a monster*" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 372).

Joseph Smith taught these 3 are separate Gods and are equal in purpose not being and believe that Jesus is a created being by the father by means of physical relations with Mary, in the same way we procreate physically.

Works and grace

There are 13 articles of faith for the mormon church. Here's article #3

3 We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel. (History of the Church, Vol. 4, pp. 535-41)

Salvation

-"One of the most fallacious doctrines originated by Satan and propounded by man is that man is saved alone by the grace of God; that belief in Jesus Christ alone is all that is needed for salvation,"
(Miracle of Forgiveness, by Spencer W. Kimball, p. 206).

-Jesus' sacrifice was not able to cleanse us from all our sins, (murder and repeated adultery are exceptions),
(Journal of Discourses, vol. 3, 1856, p. 247).

-Good works are necessary for salvation (Articles of Faith, p. 92).

-There is no salvation without accepting Joseph Smith as a prophet of God (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 1, p. 188).

-"We know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do," (2 Nephi 25:23).

- James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Compare that with what the bible says.....

The following is a dialogue Amy and I had with a mormon family through email on the topic of Works, grace and salvation

If you don't mind me responding, I wanted to first respond to your intro. You said, "Almost all religions believe we can gain some great reward in the next life". This stood out to me right away because the bible doesn't teach that our salvation is a reward; something to be earned. Salvation is a free gift from God a. If we try and attribute one good thing that we do towards it, then it is no longer a gift, but wages due b. You quoted 2 Nephi as saying, "...it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do. (2 Nephi 25:23)", which is in stark contrast to the verse of Ephesians 2:8-9 that you quoted, which says that it is by grace that we are saved and NOT of our works. 2 Nephi is saying that it is first our works and then grace will cover the rest. This is not what the bible teaches and I'm curious how the LDS church reconciles this.

a) Ephesians 2:8-9 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

**Romans 3:23-24 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

Romans 4:1-5 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.2 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption hat is in Christ Jesus:Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

The Book of Mormon

-Came from gold plates written in reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics

-The book of Mormon is more correct than the Bible, (History of the Church, vol. 4, p. 461.)

-Concerning this record the Prophet Joseph Smith said: "I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book."
(Intro to the book of Mormon)

8 We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God. (History of the Church, Vol. 4, pp. 535-41)

There is also other scriptures used.....*"The doctrine and Covenants" and "The Pearl of Great Price"*

If God said to us 1000's of years before Joseph Smith,

-before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me",

-I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

-Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.

-from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

-that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

Then less than 200 years ago Joseph Smith comes and says "All the churches are wrong and are an abomination. You can't trust the bible, but here's some books you can trust..... and totally contradict the bible.....who should I trust.....I'm going to trust in God's word.

Galatians 1:6-9

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Gods standered for testing a prophet

Deut 13:1-3

1 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'--which you have not known--'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Deuteronomy 18:20-22

20 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' 21 And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?'— 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.