

## Intertwining of Humanity and Divinity



Many mystics, theologians, philosophers, and even psychologists speak of a supernatural, spiritual, or divine element within humans. Some go as far as saying we are divine. This article reflects on how the human and divine are interconnected – realizing that a great deal of it is in the realm of mystery.

### God is One

The Bible states emphatically that God is one – there are no other gods beside the Almighty Creator who rules the earth and universe (e.g., Isaiah 45:5-13, 18-24).

This monotheistic concept can be extended further into a panentheistic concept which states that not only is there only one God, but all that exists is in God, or more accurately in emanations from God -- God's thoughts, creative imagination and power, as well as life force. God and nothing else is the source of all things. God's Mind and Spirit form an all-pervasive unity and everything is connected in a field of energy with and in divine emanations. This also means that everything is mutually interconnected and God, in the form of Spirit is very close to everything – the whole universe and the entire spirit and physical creation.

The Holy Scriptures support this concept as well: The apostle Paul told the religious Athenians that the Creator God is very near – in him (his emanations or energy) we live, move and have our being. Indeed, we are God's offspring in the sense that God gives us life and breath. We, as well as all living creatures, are sustained by the omnipresent universal divine life force which connects us to God and to all creation (Acts 17:25-29; also Deuteronomy 30:20; Job 12:10).

God's creative process can be seen as divine contraction from within the divine unity. In a sense, God -- his creative spirit -- moves over so that the created universe can come into being. God also withdraws a measure of power and control to allow for free will found to

some degree in all creation, but seen to the largest extent in humanity. Yet, God is also very aware of and concerned for the creation including humankind (Psalms 84:3; Isaiah 49:16; Matthew 10:29-31; Luke 12:6-7).

So God's presence is all around – very near within as well as without. In fact, every creature has a part of the divine within – not becoming divine, but being "powered" by divine life-giving energy. Also, in a certain context, humans are referred to as "gods" and children of God (Psalm 82:6; John 10:33-35). Through a process of a "birth from above" or "new birth" and soul transformation, humans can, under the right circumstances, literally become divine children of God (John 3:3-8; see also [Salvation as New Birth](#)).

The latest understanding of the nature of the universe is that only about 4 percent of its mass and energy is detectable through physical senses or instruments. The remaining 96% exists as dark matter (22%) or dark energy (76%) – theoretical concepts that cannot be humanly perceived. The question is, could this 96% be "God" or Spirit / energy of God – the totality of all things, the Source of everything and Supreme Intelligence that masterminds all things?

The Scriptures tell us that God is invisible, dwelling in unapproachable light or thick darkness (see Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16; John 1:18; 6:46; Hebrew 11:27; Exodus 20:21; Deuteronomy 4:11; 5:22; Psalms 18:11). Yet while God is hidden or camouflaged, humans are to seek God – his nearness can be discerned. The creation and history witness of and point to the existence and nature of God, as does interpersonal love. (Deuteronomy 4:7; Jeremiah 23:23-24; Acts 14:17; 17:27; Psalms 19:1-4; 1 John 4:12.)

### **Humans Reflect God's Image**

In addition to sharing with the whole creation being in "God" and being sustained by God, humans, unlike other creatures, were created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1). This is not a literal physical likeness, for God as Spirit doesn't possess human shape. The image however is at the soul level and is reflected in attributes such as love, creativity, and reasoning ability.

Besides being physical and subject to returning to dust upon death, humans also possess a spirit essence or soul from God which continues on when they die. Each person's soul, encased in a spirit body, continues life and development in the spirit world. At the level of the soul also occurs a union (or "at-onement") with God which happens upon conversion. The Holy Spirit is the instrument that imparts divine love and nature into the soul, transforming it from divine image into divine substance. At that time the new birth occurs as well as a full membership in the family of God as God's immortal children and heirs of God (Romans 5:5; 8:15-16, 35-39; Galatians 4:6; Titus 3:4-7. See also [Salvation as Soul Transformation](#)).

## **Evil Human Nature Can Be Transformed**

Christianity, based on the story of the first humans in the Garden of Eden and their expulsion because of disobedience to God, talks about the Fall of humanity whereby the image of God was marred. Whether or not the Genesis story is literally true, experience shows that humans, true to the image of God, have the potential for doing a great amount of good, show amazing love and care to others, and be incredibly creative in producing inspiring and awesome works. On the dark side, however, people can be frighteningly mean and cruel to each other with their inventiveness channelled to causing a tremendous amount of suffering, pain, and destruction (Genesis 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 11:7; Genesis 3:1-24; 6:5; Romans 3:9-20).

The Bible attributes the evil in humans to a "heart of stone" or a "law of sin and death" – an enslaving sinful nature, which is hostile to God and unable to be subject to the laws of God. It leads to acts such as idolatry, immorality, selfishness, rage, envy, jealousy, murder, and more. This is often the natural human inclination – humans are by nature slaves of sin (Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:26-28; Romans 7:15-25; 8:2, 6-8; Galatians 5:16-21).

This bleak state of affairs, however, is not the end of the story. By God's grace, through the work of the Holy Spirit imparting God's divine love to the soul upon earnest prayer -- a message brought and exemplified by Jesus Christ -- people can be forgiven and reconciled to God, born from above, and be given "a heart of flesh", a new heart and spirit. The Holy Spirit imparts the divine nature, which enables humans to follow the way of love. This way of life must, however, be consciously chosen and can only be sustained through divine empowerment. The slavery to sin is thus broken and those redeemed become instead servants of God and Jesus Christ and embark on a new way of life (Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:26-28; John 1:12-13; 2 Peter 1:3-4; Romans 6:4; Galatians 5:22-25. See also [Divine Plan of Salvation](#)).

While this state of renewal and transformation occurs through election and grace, God's ultimate plan is to redeem and liberate all humanity -- all those who are willing -- from the power of sin and adopt into God's family all who will choose to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour (Romans 11:26, 32; 1 Timothy 2:3-6).

## **Jesus Christ Became Fully Human so That Humans Can Become Fully Divine**

Despite the human tendency to outward evil, there is also a great potential for good. We can train ourselves to focus on this divine beauty and goodness that is deep within ourselves and others as a result of the image and life force of God. Focusing on the divine image in people of course doesn't mean ignoring danger and placing ourselves in the path of

abusers through naiveté and unsound judgment, but it does mean looking beyond the outward behaviour to the person's godly potential.

The Scriptures tell us that God, who is love, does exactly that. Being aware of the proclivity to evil and sin in humanity, God decided to redeem it – to cleanse humans from sin through his own divine love and nature. For those who accept this gift of grace, there is no condemnation before God – whenever forgiveness is sought, it is graciously granted (John 4: 7-14; Romans 8: 34-37).

Jesus came as a messenger and mediator of the way to salvation by teaching the renewed availability of the divine love and nature to transform human souls from divine image to divine likeness. After the Fall, he was the first to exemplify a life filled with the divine love, thus realizing his full human potential. Through his teaching about how to achieve a glorified divine life and immortality in the world to come, he has paved the way for humanity to follow in his footsteps. Ultimately, all humans who choose the divine offer of grace will be justified, forgiven and, with their cooperation and the working of the Holy Spirit, transformed into the children of God, and the heirs of the divine Celestial Kingdom with Jesus Christ – with fully divine likeness and character (Romans 5:5; 1 John 3:1-9).

© Eva Peck, 2011, updated 2015