

# The Nature of God

Genesis 1:27; 6:6; 8:21; Exodus 8:19; 15:16; 31:18; 33:20, 23; Deuteronomy 5:4; 8:3; 11:12; Numbers 12:8; Isaiah 11:11; 60:13; Ezekiel 8:18; Luke 24:39; Colossians 1:15; JS-History 1:16–17; Article of Faith 1

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Paul wrote that God's Son, Jesus Christ, is the image (Greek, *icon*) of the invisible (meaning unseen) God (meaning the Father). The scriptures do teach anthropomorphism—not "God in the image of man" but "man . . . in the image of God," just as Genesis 1:27 says. We have bodies, and He has a body.

The Bible notes that...

- God has a face (Exodus 33:20, 23; Deuteronomy 5:4)
- He has eyes (Deuteronomy 11:12)
- He has ears (Ezekiel 8:18)
- He has a mouth (Numbers 12:8; Deuteronomy 8:3)
- He has arms (Exodus 15:16; Isaiah 52:10)
- He has hands (Job 10:8; 12:9; Isaiah 11:11)
- He has fingers (Exodus 8:19; 31:18)
- He has a heart (Genesis 6:6; 8:21)
- He has feet (Isaiah 60:13)
- ...and so forth.

Paul constantly talks about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, emphasizing that he has a glorified body. Luke recorded his witness of the risen Lord: "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).

**The Prophet Joseph Smith said:**

"That which is without body, parts and passions is nothing. There is no other God in heaven but that God who has flesh and bones."

—*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 181*



## False Notions About the Godhead

Today, as in the days of Colossae, false ideas still abound regarding the nature of God. In A.D. 325 a council was held in Nicaea (which lies some fifty miles southeast of today's Istanbul, Turkey). More than three hundred bishops gathered to decide whether or not the body of Christ was corporeal physical) and whether or not the Son is the same person as the Father. Since that occasion some wrong ideas have circulated and persisted among Christians.

A basic Lutheran creed consists of the following statement: "We unanimously hold and teach, in accordance with the decree of the Council of Nicaea, that there is one divine essence, which is called and which is truly God, and that there are three persons in this one divine essence, equal in power and alike eternal: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit" (*Leith, Creeds of the Churches, 67*).

Roman Catholicism, the Church of England, and the Methodist Church all subscribe to a similar ideological portrayal of God: "There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts . . . And in the unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." (*Leith, Creeds of the Churches, 354; compare 266–267*).

The Old and New Testaments clearly present the doctrine of the Godhead, the same doctrine as revealed through prophets and apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ in our own day: "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost" (Article of Faith 1).