

## Pantheism and the immanence of God

In my view, there is a very fine line between pantheism and the traditional Christian view of God as both immanent and transcendent. I believe this is why we have such difficulty understanding exactly who Jesus was/is. We read in John 1 that the Word (Jesus) was "with" God which implies a separate existence and a distinctly separate personality. The verse doesn't actually say He, at the same time, "was" God. The literal translation is this: "What God was, the Word was." In other words, Jesus was made out of the same "stuff" as God, but was/is not actually "God Himself."

I would speculate, at the same time, however, that God is all there is. He is omni-present. The universe, right down to the smallest sub-atomic wave of energy, is infused by God. All creation is a part of God in the sense that we came from God and are not technically separated from God. He is omnipresent.

Jesus said that He was one with the Father and that we have the same potential. Although we are at the same time distinct and different from God, one day we will all become like Christ, and God will be "*all in all*." When Jesus became incarnate, according to Philippians, he "*emptied*" himself, in a manner of speaking, and divested himself of many of his God-like qualities. These qualities and attributes were all restored to him when he ascended back to heaven. It is quite likely that Jesus, especially as a child, was not fully aware of his divine nature and his status as the only begotten son of God. Although, he was, by nature made up of God parts (begotten of God), in his subjective consciousness he was not fully aware of this connection. The Bible says he "*grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man*."

Just as Christ was made of "God parts," so we are made of "Christ parts" because the world and everything in it were created by and through Christ. So, we are part of Christ, and Christ is part of God. Christian salvation, in my view, is an ages-long process of discovering and experiencing our true nature as children of God in Christ. We are made from God's and Christ's DNA, so to speak.