

DEIFICATION

Deification is a term used by the Eastern Orthodox Church as the process whereby a human becomes 'one with God;' they believe this should be the goal for all Christians. Deification, also called *divinization*, comes from the Greek word *theosis* in which a human becomes free of the sinful, unholy life (*hamartia* or 'missing the mark') to be united with God in holiness, a process that begins in life now and is finalized in bodily resurrection at the Second Coming of Jesus. Orthodox Christians believe this to be salvation. Theosis, for Orthodox Christians, is based upon the passage in Peter's second letter that states . . .

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them ***you may participate in the divine nature*** and escape the corruption in the world caused evil desires" (2 Peter 1:3-4, NIV, ***emphasis added***).

Orthodox Christians further believe that the process of theosis is assumed for humans from the beginning of their lives *to ultimately share in the nature of our Holy God*.

The whole concept of deification is largely misunderstood and rarely taught or preached by most of Western Christianity. GotQuestions.com makes this important point about the concept of deification from the viewpoint of Orthodox Christians . . .

"the term deification should not be misunderstood to imply **that a human being can actually become God or a god**, nor does this amount to pantheism. It is said that man cannot become one with God in His essence, **but he can become one with His energies**. Love, for instance, is a divine energy, and **it is possible for the believer to be fully united and overcome by God's love.**"

In this regard, we share the following additional scriptures that speak of our participating in the divine nature . . .

Paul prays for Ephesian believers – that you will “know **(God’s)** love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” **(Ephesians 3:19, (emphasis added))**.

“For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God” **(Colossians 3:3)**.

“But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in Spirit” **(1 Cor. 6:17)**.

“. . . be transformed by the renewing of your mind” **(Romans 12:2)**.

New Testament scriptures speak of being transformed into the *image* of Jesus, a process that begins when we are born again (believe in our hearts and profess Jesus as Lord and Savior) and continues all of our earthly days as we daily yield to the spirit of Jesus living within us. We become *like* him; we don’t *become* him.

Our Eastern Orthodox brothers and sisters have the *concept* of deification correct but miss the mark on *how we attain it*. We participate in the divine nature of God by our faith in Jesus Christ and his cancelling of sin on the Cross. We have a right standing with God (justification), are set apart, and enter into God’s holiness (sanctification) through faith in Jesus, not by our own lifelong efforts to attain unity with God. The Mormons skew it even further, believing that all can be saved from sin and death, but that only those who are *obedient* will be exalted or achieve deification.

[Closing Thoughts](#)

It has been God’s intent from the beginning that the human family share in His holy nature. The way for that to occur was made through the ministry of Jesus Christ on our behalf. We can share or take of aspects of the holy, divine nature of God, but we cannot become God or a god.

This is an introduction on the subject of **Deification**. Here are some other resources you may wish to explore:

[What is deification in the Eastern Orthodox Church? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[What is theosis? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[Divinization \(Christian\) - Wikipedia](#)

[Apotheosis - Wikipedia](#)