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Discovering the Divinity Within

We come to this earth to nurture and discover the seeds of divine nature that are within us.

Sisters, we love you! I testify that life is a gift. God has a plan for each one of us, and our individual purpose began long before we came to this earth.

Lately I have come to recognize the miracle of a baby's birth into mortality as part of the Lord's plan. Each one of us developed physically within our mother's womb while relying for many months on her body to sustain ours. Eventually, however, the process of birth—dramatic for both mother and child—separated us.

As a baby emerges into this world, the change of temperature and light and the sudden release of pressure on the chest induce the baby to take its first gasping breath. Those little lungs suddenly fill with air for the first time, the organs spring into action, and the baby begins to breathe. As the umbilical cord is clamped, that lifeline between mother and baby is forever severed, and the baby's life on earth begins.

Job said, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."¹

We come into this world "trailing clouds of glory."² "The Family: A

Proclamation to the World" teaches that each one of us "is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents" and "each has a divine nature and destiny."³ Heavenly Father generously shares a portion of His divinity within us. That divine nature comes as a gift from Him with a love that only a parent can feel.

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We Know Why

Elaine Cannon, a former Young Women general president, said, "There are two important days in a woman's life: The day she is born and the day she finds out why."⁴

We know why. We have come to this earth to help build His kingdom and to prepare for the Second Coming of His Son, Jesus Christ. With every breath we take, we strive to follow Him. The divine nature within each one of us is refined and magnified by the effort we make to draw nearer to our Father and His Son.

Our divine nature has nothing to do with our personal accomplishments, the status we achieve, the

number of marathons we run, or our popularity and self-esteem. Our divine nature comes from God. It was established in an existence that preceded our birth and will continue on into eternity.

We Are Loved

We identify with our divine nature as we feel and give the love of our Father in Heaven. We have the agency to nurture it, let it flourish, and help it



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grow. Peter said we are given "precious promises" that we "might be partakers of the divine nature."⁵ As we understand who we are—daughters of God—we begin to feel those precious promises.

Looking out through a window, not just into a mirror, allows us to see ourselves as His. We naturally turn to Him in prayer, and we are eager to read His words and to do His will. We are able to take our validation vertically from Him, not horizontally from the world around us or from those on Facebook or Instagram.

If you ever question that spark of divinity within you, kneel in prayer and ask Heavenly Father, "Am I really



Thy daughter, and dost Thou love me?" Elder M. Russell Ballard said, "One of the sweetest messages the Spirit will relay is how the Lord feels about you."⁶

We are His. Paul said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."⁷ Often the first Primary song we learn is "I Am a Child of God."⁸ Now it is time to take that beloved phrase "I am a child of God" and add the words "Therefore, what?" We might even ask questions such as these: "What will I do to live my life as a child of God?" "How can I develop the divine nature that is within me?"

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf said, "God sent you here to prepare for a future greater than anything you can imagine."⁹ That future, a day at a time, comes alive when you do more than

just exist; it comes alive when you live your life to fill the measure of your creation. This invites the Lord into your life, and you begin to let His will become yours.

We Learn Because of Our Divine Nature

Divine nature breathes into us the desire to know these eternal truths for ourselves.

A young woman named Amy recently taught me this lesson when she wrote: "It is hard being a teenager these days. The path is getting narrower. Satan is really trying. It is either right or wrong; there is no in-between."

She continued: "Good friends are sometimes hard to find. Even when you think you have best friends who will never leave, that could change for any reason. That is why I am so glad

that I have family, Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, who can be my companions whenever things with friends go wrong."

Amy went on to say: "One night I was troubled. I told my sister I didn't know what to do."

Later that night her sister sent her a text and quoted Elder Jeffrey R. Holland when he said: "Don't give up. . . . Don't you quit. You keep walking. You keep trying. There is help and happiness ahead. . . . It will be all right in the end. Trust God and believe in good things to come."¹⁰

Amy explained: "I remembered reading that and just praying that I would feel love from God if He really was there for me."

She said: "As soon as I asked and believed that He was there, I felt the most amazing, happy, warm feeling.



Words can't describe it. I knew He was there and that He loved me."

Because you are His child, He knows who you can become. He knows your fears and your dreams. He relishes your potential. He waits for you to come to Him in prayer. Because you are His child, you not only need Him, but He also needs you. Those sitting around you right now in this meeting need you. The world needs you, and your divine nature allows you to be His trusted disciple to all His children. Once we begin to see the divinity in ourselves, we can see it in others.

We Serve Because of Our Divine Nature

Divine nature breathes into us the desire to serve others.

Recently, Sharon Eubank, the director of Humanitarian Services and LDS Charities, told of an experience shared by Elder Glenn L. Pace. There was widespread drought and extreme famine in Ethiopia in the mid-1980s. To provide relief, feeding stations with water and food were created for those who could get to them. An old man who was starving was walking a long distance to get to a feeding station. He was passing a village when he heard the cry of a baby. He searched until he found the baby sitting on the ground next to his dead mother. Picking up the baby, the man continued to walk 25 miles (40 km) to the feeding station. When he arrived, his first words were not "I'm hungry" or "Help me." They were "What can be done for this baby?"¹¹

The divine nature within us ignites our desire to reach out to others and prompts us to act. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ can help us find the strength to do so. Could the Lord be asking us, "What can be done for this daughter, this brother, this father, or this friend?"

It is through the whisperings of the Spirit that the divine nature of a doubter, after gasping for breath, finds the peace to breathe again.

When the prophet speaks, his words resonate with our divine nature and give us strength to follow.

Partaking of the sacrament each week breathes hope into the divinity within us, and we remember our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I promise that as you seek to discover the depth of the divine nature that lies within you, you will begin to further magnify your precious gift. Let it guide you to become His daughter, walking the path back to Him—where we will be "restored to that God who gave [us] breath."¹² In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. Job 33:4.
2. "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (1924), 359.
3. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.
4. Elaine Cannon, in "Let Me Soar," *Women Counseled*, *Church News*, Oct. 17, 1981, 3.
5. 2 Peter 1:4.
6. M. Russell Ballard, "Women of Righteousness," *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 72; *Liahona*, Dec. 2002, 42.
7. Romans 8:16.
8. See "I Am a Child of God," *Hymns*, no. 301.
9. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Living the Gospel Joyful," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 121.
10. Jeffrey R. Holland, "An High Priest of Good Things to Come," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 38; *Liahona*, Jan. 2000, 45.
11. See Glenn L. Pace, "Infinite Needs and Finite Resources," *Ensign*, June 1993, 52; *Tambuli*, Mar. 1995, 18–19.
12. 2 Nephi 9:26.