

What does “you are gods” mean?

Question: I heard a preacher on television say that we are "gods" because Jesus said in John 10:34, "You are gods." Does this mean that we are little gods?

Answer: Please don't believe everything that you hear from preachers on television. Some TV preachers accurately teach God's Word, but others on television teach things that are not correct. The teaching that you are a little god is a false doctrine.

John 10:30-36 says:

(Jesus said) "I and the Father are one." The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?"

The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."

Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

Jesus quoted from Psalm 82:6-8 which says: "I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High. Nevertheless you will die like men and fall like any one of the princes.'" This verse was addressed to the judges of Israel, who were called "gods"—not because they were divine, but because they represented God when they judged the people.

The Hebrew word for "God" used here is *elohim*, which can mean rulers, (not Yahweh Elohim used only for the one God). The Scripture clarifies that these rulers were not literal gods because it says, "you will die like men . . ."

The Bible teaches there is only one God (Deut. 6:4, Malachi 2:10, Eph. 4:6). First Corinthians 8:5 says there are many "so-called gods" which are actually idols that are worshipped as gods (8:4). Nowhere in Scripture is there a teaching of little gods versus big God, but instead the Scripture teaches about false gods versus the true God. To call yourself a little god is to put yourself in the category of a false god.