

What is a god?

That question might seem strange. Everyone knows what a god is, right? The problem with most answers is that they begin in the wrong location. Most commonly the answers begin from the top down. We try to answer the question as if we humans could see a god to describe the thing. But, that is just not the case. It is more helpful if we start with where we humans are. By doing so we might grasp what a god is and what a god wants.

When we start on the ground the answer becomes quite clear. A god is whatever we trust, whatever we look to for good, whatever makes us secure when we have and anxious when it goes away, and whatever orders the way things are for us. Because this is what a god is, what also becomes clear is what a god wants. A god wants our devotion and attention. A god wants our prayers and emotions. A god wants our sacrifices and attempts to convert others. A god wants our uncompromising allegiance. By this description of what a god is and what a god wants we could compile a good long list of gods: Apple Computers, Green Bay Packers, Iowa Hawkeyes, Iowa State Cyclones, Money, Fame, Children, Spouses, Knowledge, Vanity, etc. Yes, what we find by such a simple description of a god, like religion before, is that gods and religions all vying for our attentions and allegiances surround us humans. This brings us to a very important question. Which god are we going to worship as Christians?