

## Mormonism Mandates Transhumanism

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Mormonism is an immersive discipleship of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> Not so much a religion about Jesus, Mormonism is an aspiration to live the religion of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> With Jesus,<sup>3</sup> we would trust in,<sup>4</sup> change toward,<sup>5</sup> and fully immerse our bodies and minds in the role of Christ.<sup>6</sup> We would be messiahs,<sup>7</sup> saviors for each other,<sup>8</sup> consoling and healing and raising,<sup>9</sup> as exemplified and invited by Jesus.<sup>10</sup> We would also endure in that role,<sup>11</sup> working to reconcile with our relations and world,<sup>12</sup> through suffering and even death if needed,<sup>13</sup> anticipating the prophesied day of transfiguration and resurrection to immortality in eternal life.<sup>14</sup> So while Mormons may not be Christian by creed,<sup>15</sup> we are plainly Christian by Gospel.<sup>16</sup>

Transhumanism is advocacy for the ethical use of technology to expand human abilities. It is a new way to think about the future of humanity.<sup>17</sup> As transhumanists, we have discarded the old assumption that human nature is or ever was static, not only because science has demonstrated biological evolution, but especially because history itself is cultural and technological evolution. We are diverse in background and perspective, but our common expectation is that humanity will continue

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to evolve. Our common ambition is to shape that evolution intentionally, changing our bodies and minds, our relationships, and our world for the better—perhaps even to learn, love, and create together indefinitely.<sup>18</sup>

I am a Mormon and a transhumanist. Together, Mormon transhumanism stands for the idea that humanity should learn how to be God,<sup>19</sup> and not just any kind of God, not a God that would raise itself in hubris above others,<sup>20</sup> but rather the God that would raise each other together as compassionate creators.<sup>21</sup> Humanity should learn how to be Christ.<sup>22</sup> As Mormon transhumanists, we celebrate scientific knowledge and technological power as means, among others afforded by pervasive and persistent grace beyond ourselves, for learning and becoming Christ.<sup>23</sup>

Some Mormon transhumanists claim that, beyond mere compatibility or even complementarity, Mormonism actually mandates transhumanism. From this perspective, one can be a transhumanist without being a Mormon, but one cannot be a Mormon without being a transhumanist, at least implicitly. Although this is a controversial claim, we may use Mormon scriptures and authorities to formulate a supporting argument based on four premises.

The first premise is that God commands us to use prescribed means to participate in God's work. For example, *The Book of Mormon* claims that God will not save us unless we make use of means already provided,<sup>24</sup> and that God will prepare means that we may find<sup>25</sup> or even invite us to propose our own means.<sup>26</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants* presses us not to wait for God to command us regarding the means,<sup>27</sup> and it suggests God may go to great lengths to motivate action.<sup>28</sup> These ideas reflect the Bible, which praises those who invest their talents for the profit of heaven<sup>29</sup> and teaches that "faith without works is dead."<sup>30</sup>

Other Mormon authorities have long encouraged us beyond passive belief to active participation in God's work. The founding prophet of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, preached that "we are all responsible to God for the manner we improve the light and wisdom given by our Lord to enable us to save ourselves."<sup>31</sup> *The Lectures on Faith* states that faith is "the principle of action in all intelligent beings."<sup>32</sup> And Brigham Young, who led the Mormon pioneers, claimed that "you are in just as good a kingdom as you will ever attain to, from now to all eternity, unless you make it yourselves by the grace of God."<sup>33</sup>

The second premise is that science and technology are among the means prescribed by God. For example, in *The Book of Mormon*, Nephi builds a ship and uses a compass as means to act on the commands of

God.<sup>34</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants* encourages us to learn and apply science in our efforts to act on the commands of God.<sup>35</sup> And it claims that “if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come.”<sup>36</sup>

Other Mormon authorities have also repeatedly advocated the use of science and technology in our efforts to participate in the work of God. Considering the inventors of his day, Joseph Smith said, “the benefits of all their ingenuity and inventions will be the means of advancing the building up of Zion with greater speed.”<sup>37</sup> Brigham Young encouraged Mormons to “give to our children the benefit of every branch of useful knowledge, to prepare them to step forward and efficiently do their part in the great work.”<sup>38</sup> And a recent president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church, which is by far the largest Mormon denomination), Gordon Hinckley, observed that modern science “has opened new opportunities for us which we must grasp and use for the advancement of the Lord’s work.”<sup>39</sup>

The third premise is that God’s work is to help each other attain Godhood.<sup>40</sup> For example, in *The Book of Mormon*, echoing words in the Bible,<sup>41</sup> Jesus commands us to be perfect like God.<sup>42</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants* says we may become Gods<sup>43</sup> and equal in power with God.<sup>44</sup> And *The Pearl of Great Price* says that is God’s work, to make humanity immortal in eternal life,<sup>45</sup> “which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God.”<sup>46</sup>

Reflecting Christian precedent,<sup>47</sup> other Mormon authorities have emphasized apotheosis or deification, the idea that humanity can and should become God, as or like God, or one in God.<sup>48</sup> In his last general conference sermon, Joseph Smith preached “you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves ... the same as all Gods have done before you.”<sup>49</sup> Brigham Young echoed that, saying, “the Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming Gods.”<sup>50</sup> Specifying the kind of God we should help each other become, Joseph F. Smith, a former LDS Church president, wrote, “we will not finish our work until we have saved ourselves, and then not until we shall have saved all depending upon us; for we are to become saviors upon Mount Zion, as well as Christ.”<sup>51</sup>

The fourth premise is that an essential attribute of Godhood is a glorified immortal body. For example, in *The Book of Mormon*, the Brother of Jared sees that God is embodied.<sup>52</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants* claims that elements are the body of God, and intelligence is the glory of

God.<sup>53</sup> And it goes on to claim that while God has a body glorified like the sun,<sup>54</sup> it is as tangible as that of a human.<sup>55</sup>

It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of bodies in Mormonism. Expanding on the Bible,<sup>56</sup> Mormon scriptures decry death of the body (in combination with spiritual misery) as an “awful monster” to be overcome in resurrection that reunites spirit with body.<sup>57</sup> They characterize the separation of spirit from body as “bondage.”<sup>58</sup> And they would make full joy contingent on the union of spirit and body.<sup>59</sup> Distinguishing between primitive spirits and robust spiritual bodies, Mormon scriptures describe different kinds of spiritual bodies as glorified natural bodies,<sup>60</sup> while maintaining that all spirit is matter, even when separated from that which we might ordinarily think of as bodies.<sup>61</sup> They describe sanctification of priests to be “unto the renewing of their bodies.”<sup>62</sup> And they construct immortality in terms of progressive changes to the body.<sup>63</sup> This leads to what they describe as “resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bone,”<sup>64</sup> and “whole bodies filled with light” that “comprehendeth all things.”<sup>65</sup> Finally, the scriptures culminate in prophecy that Earth will be glorified with the presence of God, “that bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever.”<sup>66</sup>

From the four premises stated and described above, we may make three deductions, all of which are necessarily true if the premises are true. The first deduction, combining the first and second premises, is that God commands us to use science and technology to participate in God’s work. The second deduction, combining the third premise and the first deduction, is that God commands us to use science and technology to help each other attain Godhood. The third and concluding deduction, combining the fourth premise and the second deduction, is that God commands us to use science and technology to help each other attain glorified immortal bodies.

The concluding deduction is both a religious mandate, in that it purports to express the will of God, and a description of the transhumanist project, advocating the ethical use of technology to expand human abilities. If we have arrived at this conclusion by valid reasoning, which we have, and if we began with premises that accurately reflect Mormonism, then Mormonism mandates transhumanism.

Despite this argument, some Mormons object that Mormonism does not mandate transhumanism. After all, as Brigham Young observed, “it is hard to get the people to believe that God is a scientific character,”<sup>67</sup> let

alone persuade them that we should use technology to help each other become Christ. In my experience, there are a few common reasons for the objection. Here are two of them: First, some Mormons think God warns us against ideas like transhumanism through the story of the Tower of Babel,<sup>68</sup> and second, some Mormons think particular technologies that transhumanists commonly advocate, such as cryonics or mind uploading, are inconsistent with Mormonism.<sup>69</sup> I address both of these in the following sections.

### TOWER OF BABEL

Like others who esteem the Bible as scripture, Mormons generally recognize the story of the Tower of Babel to be a warning against hubris. And some use it to condemn the superhuman aspirations of transhumanists, much like others use it to condemn the deification aspirations of Mormons.<sup>70</sup>

The word “Babel” appears in the Bible only twice, both times in *Genesis*, once just in passing and the other during the story of the Tower. The builders want a Tower “whose top may reach unto heaven” to unify and make a name for themselves.<sup>71</sup> God observes that, if they gain such unity, “nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do,” so he changes their language and scatters them.<sup>72</sup> Nowhere does the Bible explain, beyond this terse reasoning, the moral of the story. This leaves some of us wondering, as those who charge transhumanism with hubris, whether God is opposed to the use of technology to expand human abilities.

*The Book of Mormon* references the Tower in four chapters, without much additional insight into the moral of the story. We read only that God instigated the scattering<sup>73</sup> and that the scattering was just<sup>74</sup> because the builders were inspired by Satan and angered God.<sup>75</sup> Again, this leaves some of us wondering whether the use of technology to expand human abilities is inspired by Satan.

In response to such wondering, Mormon authorities have repeatedly pronounced a more practical and nuanced interpretation of the story. A former LDS Church president, Lorenzo Snow, said the Tower builders wanted to reach heaven before they were “properly and lawfully prepared to become its inhabitants,” which we may begin to do by “learning to live in conformity with its laws and the practice of its principles.”<sup>76</sup> Another former LDS Church president, John Taylor, said the

Tower builders wanted to “throw off God,” but in contrast, “if we possess any other scientific information ... we will thank God for the information.”<sup>77</sup> And, after observing the “great and wonderful” buildings of New York City, Joseph Smith wrote, “not for the works can the Lord be displeased[,] only [against] man is the anger of the Lord Kindled because they Give him not the Glory.”<sup>78</sup>

By such interpretation, the use of technology to expand human abilities is not hubris in itself. Rather, the Tower builders’ hubris was in their lack of ethics—“laws” and “principles.”<sup>79</sup> Their hubris was in engineering egotistically and being ungrateful toward God. In this light, the moral of the story is that our work, even if ostensibly aimed at a conception of heaven, will lead to our destruction if not accompanied by ethics informed of values beyond egoism.

Consider the story of Noah’s Ark. God plans to flood the world because it is “filled with violence,”<sup>80</sup> and the people desire “only evil continually.”<sup>81</sup> But first, God provides means for Noah and his family to build the Ark, which preserves them from the flood.<sup>82</sup> In the New Testament, Peter and Paul celebrate the Ark as means for salvation.<sup>83</sup> *The Book of Mormon* compares the Ark to the Jaredites’ boats, which enable them to reach their promised land.<sup>84</sup> And *The Pearl of Great Price* says that God “smiled upon” the Ark “and held it in his own hand.”<sup>85</sup> Like the Tower of Babel, the Ark is a work of engineering. Unlike the Tower builders, the Ark builders “found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”<sup>86</sup> The reason for that grace, as indicated by the Bible, is that “Noah was a just man.”<sup>87</sup>

Transhumanism is not merely technological cheerleading. Ethical use of technology to expand human abilities, to be actually ethical, must weigh both opportunities and risks. Accordingly, transhumanists like Nick Bostrom emphasize concern for risks and thereby exemplify an approach to technology that is consistent with the moral of both the story of the Tower and the story of the Ark.<sup>88</sup>

Today, as in the mythical days of Babel or Noah, we find ourselves at risk. Accelerating technological change is magnifying human power as never before in our history. Destructive potential is vast. Yet, although our vices are many, our survival so far is testimony to the extent of our virtues. We have proven ourselves at least moral enough to make a bit of heaven, however primitive, within the context of pervasive and persistent grace beyond ourselves. Have we reached our limits? In hubris, will we fall to a hell scenario,<sup>89</sup> like the scattered legacy of the Tower builders?

Or will we rise to a heaven scenario, like the family of the Ark builders? The answers depend in part on how we choose to proceed.

Ethical use of technology to expand human abilities is not Babel. Ethical work toward deification or superhumanity is not Babel. To the contrary, as interpreted by Mormon authorities, God uses Babel to emphasize the importance of ethics in such work, thereby giving a qualified endorsement to the work. God uses Babel to advocate ethics in our use of technology to expand human abilities. And that is transhumanism.

### CRYONICS<sup>90</sup>

Some Mormons, like other Christians when first exposed to cryonics, suppose it to be incompatible with their faith in resurrection. Commonly advocated among transhumanists, cryonics is a low-temperature and chemical process for the preservation of a legally dead body for resuscitation when new technology might cure the illness that caused death. The preservation technology is available today through service providers like Alcor,<sup>91</sup> although the resuscitation technology is hypothetical at this point.

The LDS Church has no official position on cryonics, but it has official positions on euthanasia, life prolongation, and cremation. All three positions implicitly allow for cryonics. The Church encourages members to use reasonable means to extend life and states that judgment of what is reasonable is “best made by family members after receiving wise and competent medical advice and seeking divine guidance through fasting and prayer.”<sup>92</sup> The Church also “does not normally encourage cremation,”<sup>93</sup> without referencing an explicit reason, but thereby implies value in at least avoiding the acceleration of body decomposition.

Both the Bible and Mormon scriptures establish a mandate for resuscitation. Jesus commanded his disciples to raise the dead.<sup>94</sup> Precedent for this command appears in the Old Testament, where Elijah resuscitates a widow’s son,<sup>95</sup> and Elisha resuscitates a Shunammite’s son.<sup>96</sup> Examples of acting on this command appear in the New Testament, where Peter resuscitates Tabitha,<sup>97</sup> Paul resuscitates Eutychus,<sup>98</sup> and Jesus himself resuscitates Jairus’ daughter,<sup>99</sup> a widow’s son,<sup>100</sup> and Lazarus.<sup>101</sup> An example of acting on this command also appears in *The Book of Mormon*, where Nephi resuscitates Lehi.<sup>102</sup>

The Bible and Mormon scriptures also suggest that the prophesied resurrection to immortality may be a form of resuscitation with

improvements to the body.<sup>103</sup> In the Old Testament, Job describes resurrection in the “flesh.”<sup>104</sup> In the New Testament, Paul claims “the body that is sown ... is raised imperishable,”<sup>105</sup> and Jesus describes resurrection in “flesh and bones.”<sup>106</sup> Paul also claims some of us will become immortal without dying.<sup>107</sup> In *The Book of Mormon*, Alma teaches that resurrection will be in the body as it is now and repeats that the body will be restored.<sup>108</sup> *The Doctrine and Covenants* teaches that we will be resurrected to “the same body which was a natural body.”<sup>109</sup>

Mormon authorities have suggested that the scriptural prophecies of immortality may be realized by ordinances we perform for each other, in contrast to passively waiting for immortality. For example, Brigham Young claimed that resurrected persons “will be ordained, by those who hold the keys of the resurrection, to go forth and resurrect the Saints.”<sup>110</sup> Similarly, Joseph Smith claimed that transfiguration (or “translation”) of the living to immortality is “a power which belongs to this Priesthood ... to be revealed in the last times.”<sup>111</sup> While some have supposed that God would do all the work to resurrect the dead, Joseph claimed that proxy baptism for the dead was intended to remind us of their resurrection<sup>112</sup> and that God “ordained, before the world was, that which would enable us to redeem them.”<sup>113</sup>

Some suppose our participation would contradict prophecies that Christ will bring about resurrection.<sup>114</sup> However, this is not a necessary contradiction. The New Testament characterizes Christ reigning over the destruction of death,<sup>115</sup> and it characterizes many participating in that reign.<sup>116</sup> More broadly, the scriptures set precedent for acting in the name of Christ. As *The Doctrine and Covenants* puts it, “whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.”<sup>117</sup> As the New Testament puts it, “whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”<sup>118</sup> And by analogy, few suppose our participation in missionary work necessarily contradicts prophecies that Christ will bring about salvation.<sup>119</sup> Just as Jesus commands his disciples to take the Gospel to the world,<sup>120</sup> even ultimately to judge the world in compassion,<sup>121</sup> he also commands us to raise the dead.<sup>122</sup>

Today, the LDS Church uses technology to facilitate and expedite ordinances generally, establishing precedent for using technology in the future to facilitate and expedite other ordinances, such as resurrection. Reflecting on the importance of computers in proxy ordinances for the dead, former LDS Church president Howard Hunter observed:



The role of technology in this work has been accelerated by the Lord himself, who has had a guiding hand in its development and will continue to do so. However, we stand only on the threshold of what we can do with these tools. I feel that our most enthusiastic projections can capture only a tiny glimpse of how these tools can help us — and of the eternal consequences of these efforts.<sup>123</sup>

Of course, cryonics in itself would not be sufficient for realization of resurrection, as prophesied in Mormon scriptures. *The Book of Mormon* describes resurrection as universal, for all persons no matter when or how they lived.<sup>124</sup> Because the vast majority of persons who have lived and died are not cryonically preserved, we who would work toward universal resurrection must look for additional means—perhaps increasingly detailed family history research would enable the progressive transformation of ancestor simulations into resurrections.<sup>125</sup> But Mormon scriptures also describe universal resurrection as a prolonged process,<sup>126</sup> not as a single event, with the order of individual resurrections depending in part, but not wholly, on relative moral merit.<sup>127</sup> Consistently, then, we may choose cryonics in hope of expediting some of the work to fulfill the mandate of resuscitation. Compared to alternatives presently available, cryonics may be the most faithful choice for Mormons, honoring the mandate to use science and technology to help each other attain glorified immortal bodies.

## MIND UPLOADING

Given the significance of embodiment in Mormonism, some have supposed our religion to be incompatible with mind uploading.<sup>128</sup> Commonly advocated by transhumanists, mind uploading is the hypothetical process of scanning a brain or body and emulating it in a computational device, such as an artificial brain or prosthetic body. It is associated with the idea that minds may be substrate independent,<sup>129</sup> or transferable from one substrate to another. In other words, minds may be like software, which we can transfer from one kind of hardware to another.

There is an important difference between notions of immateriality or disembodiment on the one hand and substrate independence on the other hand. Information is substrate independent, but it is neither immaterial nor disembodied. While information is separable from any specific

instance of embodiment, it is inseparably connected with embodiment generally. For example, while we can separate software from a particular computer, we cannot separate it from hardware generally, whether it be another computer or a storage device. Separated from hardware generally, it is no longer software in any practical sense. Likewise, information is no longer information in any practical sense if separated from substrate generally. Information is both independent from substrate-in-particular and dependent on substrate-in-general.

In fact, there is no bright line of distinction between information and embodiment. As the concepts attain in experience, information and embodiment impinge upon each other. The simple dichotomy between hardware and software is an abstraction for practical purposes, but it becomes blurry on close investigation. Go looking for the software, and you will find it expressed in the physical state of the hardware itself. Go looking for information, and you will find embodiment.

Implicit in substrate independence is the notion that minds are information, or at least minds correlate with information. Accordingly, in at least some cases (such as humans), information or its correlate must experience itself as consciousness. Maybe consciousness is something like information experiencing itself from the inside.<sup>130</sup> Although contemporary science has not provided anything close to a sufficient account of consciousness, it has clearly established correlations between reportable changes in consciousness and observable changes in brains.<sup>131</sup>

While substrate independence implies that minds are or correlate with information, it does not necessarily imply that minds are limited to brains. Beyond the information that constitutes brains, maybe minds extend into the information that constitutes bodies generally,<sup>132</sup> or perhaps even into the information that constitutes communities or environments.<sup>133</sup> In any case, the information that constitutes brains is substrate independent, whether or not its transfer from a given brain would constitute a complete transfer or only a partial transfer of an associated mind.

Mormon scriptures lend themselves to interpretations consistent with the notion that the mind is information. They intentionally equivocate between “spirit,” “light,” and “truth,”<sup>134</sup> suggesting that which discerns (spirit/mind), the means by which it discerns (light/body), and that which it discerns (truth/information) are interchangeable—feedback loops of introspection. The scriptures extend the intentional equivocation between “light” and “truth” to “intelligence” and state that primal intelligence cannot be created from nothing (even by God) but can be

“placed.”<sup>135</sup> That is echoed in their description of intelligences “organized” by God,<sup>136</sup> perhaps reminiscent of human work to develop artificial intelligence. The scriptures associate “intelligence” with “knowledge,” and admonish increases in both.<sup>137</sup> That leads them to describe spirits in a spectrum of intelligence.<sup>138</sup> In culmination, the scriptures extend the intentional equivocation of “light” and “truth” all the way to the intelligence of God: “the glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth.”<sup>139</sup>

The Mormon narrative itself relies implicitly on something like the idea of substrate-independent minds. Your mind has always existed, embodied in at least the most primitive physicalist sense. During birth, your mind transferred from a premortal spirit embodiment to the more robust mortal embodiment you now know. During death, your mind would transfer from mortal embodiment to a more primitive postmortal spirit embodiment like that before birth. Eventually, whether during transfiguration from mortal embodiment or during resurrection from postmortal spirit embodiment, your mind will transfer to a yet more robust immortal embodiment—a “spiritual body” in contrast to a “spirit.”<sup>140</sup> Each part of this narrative entails the transfer of mind from one embodiment to another, or from one substrate to another. None of this is possible unless mind actually is substrate independent.

The Mormon narrative can also accommodate risks, like identity loss or duplication, that some associate with mind uploading.<sup>141</sup> Brigham Young spoke about the importance of identity on multiple occasions. “The greatest gift that God can bestow upon the children of men is the gift of eternal life; that is, to give mankind power to preserve their identity,” he claimed.<sup>142</sup> He explained that they need to “know how to preserve their identity,” and one may “cease to exist, cease to preserve, manifest, and exhibit its identity,” in which case that person “will be returned to its native element.”<sup>143</sup> He encouraged all to “contend against those principles which tend to death or dissolution” and continued, “I want to preserve my identity, so that you can see Brigham in the eternal worlds just as you see him now.”<sup>144</sup>

Mormon authorities have even expressed an expectation that sounds like the result of mind uploading. As context, the Bible describes resurrected (and transfigured) bodies as being “spiritual” without “flesh and blood.”<sup>145</sup> The Bible also describes resurrection as being in the flesh,<sup>146</sup> and embodied,<sup>147</sup> and it describes Jesus’ resurrection as being in “flesh and bones.”<sup>148</sup> Commenting on the apparent contradiction, Joseph

Smith claimed that resurrected persons would have “spirit in their bodies, and not blood.”<sup>149</sup> Brigham Young added, “blood will not be resurrected with the body, being designed only to sustain the life of the present organization.”<sup>150</sup> More recently, Howard Hunter repeated that, in resurrection, we would have a “spiritual body, one of flesh and bones but quickened by the spirit instead of blood.”<sup>151</sup>

According to these Mormon authorities, an important distinction between mortal and immortal bodies is that mortal bodies have blood, whereas immortal bodies have spirit. We could dismiss that as merely strange or ridiculous. But we could also consider it as at least vaguely insightful. If our minds are substrate independent, we will eventually have the option of transferring them to non-biological substrates: to emulated brains. To maintain continuity for our minds, emulated brains may need processes like emulated blood, at least at first.<sup>152</sup> Emulated blood would be a level of abstraction higher than the blood now coursing through our bodies and might reasonably be characterized as “spirit” in comparison.

But no matter how brains or bodies may be abstracted, and no matter the level of that abstraction, all abstractions remain embedded in the most concrete foundations of reality. Mind uploading would not negate embodiment. To the contrary, it would depend on embodiment. It is, therefore, compatible with interpretations of Christianity that reverence embodiment.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, if mind uploading becomes a real option then, compared to passively accepting death and awaiting eventual resurrection, it may become the more faithful choice for Mormons, honoring the mandate to use science and technology to help each other attain a glorified immortal body.

## CONCLUSION

Based on premises that reflect the Mormon authoritative tradition, God commands us to use science and technology to help each other attain a glorified immortal body. This command is consistent with the moral of the story of the Tower of Babel, interpreted as advocacy for ethics in our use of technology. Faithful adherence to this command may entail embrace of particular technologies, such as cryonics and mind uploading, that transhumanists commonly advocate. More generally, we may reframe the command as advocacy for the ethical use of technology to

expand human abilities. That is transhumanism. That makes God a transhumanist. And that means Mormonism mandates transhumanism.

## NOTES

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3. *BoM*, 2 Nephi 31:5–13.
4. *BoM*, Ether 13:4.
5. *BoM*, 3 Nephi 11:37–40.
6. *BoM*, Mosiah 5:9.
7. 2 Corinthians 1:21.
8. *D&C* 103:9.
9. Matthew 10:8.
10. John 14:12.
11. *BoM*, 2 Nephi 31:16–21.
12. *BoM*, 3 Nephi 12:21–24.
13. *D&C* 138:11–14.
14. *D&C* 63:49–52.
15. *The Pearl of Great Price (PoGP)*, Joseph Smith History 1:19.
16. *BoM*, Mormon 7:8–9.
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20. 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4.
21. Romans 8:16–17.
22. Colossians 1:27.
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26. *BoM*, Ether 2:22–25.
27. *D&C* 58:26–29.

28. *D&C* 19:4–7, 43:24–25.
29. Matthew 25:14–30.
30. James 2:14–20.
31. Smith, *Teachings*, 227.
32. *Lectures on Faith* 1:9.
33. Brigham Young, “Remarks on a Revelation Given in August, 1831,” *Journal of Discourses* 3 (1856): 336.
34. *BoM*, 1 Nephi 17:8–11, Alma 37:38–42.
35. *D&C* 88:78–80, 121:29–33.
36. *D&C* 130:18–19.
37. Joseph Smith, “Statement Made by Isaac Decker,” Sep. 21, 1870, LDS Church Archives (Salt Lake City, Utah).
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42. *BoM*, 3 Nephi 12:48.
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