MAGNALIA

What does God have to do with Bitcoin?

Introduction

Bitcoiners rightly acknowledge bitcoin's seemingly transcendent beauty: the permanence of its ledger, the universal scarcity of its supply, the selfless gift to the world by its creator, Satoshi Nakamoto.

Yet Christians who understand bitcoin see it as a shadow of a still greater Beauty, a reflection of the God who created all things, and who ultimately, we believe, superintended over bitcoin's inception.

The inimitable attributes of bitcoin point us upward to the perfection exhibited by God's own attributes, as well as some of the most glorious concepts found in the Bible. What follows is a brief survey of the most central biblical tenets, as seen through the eyes of a bitcoiner. We hope you find it illuminating.

God's Attributes

Immutability. The cryptographic links between blocks in bitcoin's history, combined with the immense amount of energy required to reorganize that history, make the bitcoin blockchain highly resistant to change. Likewise, the Bible tells us that God does not change; he is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8).

Truth. Bitcoin operates transparently on an open ledger, where anyone can verify its transactions. That ledger is the final source of truth regarding the state of bitcoin's economic network. Likewise, God, who cannot lie, is the foundation of all truth (Psalm 119:160, Hebrews 6:18). Because God is the immovable point of reference for all of reality, objective truth is impossible without him. In fact, Jesus claimed that he himself is Truth when he said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

Scarcity. Bitcoin's supply is forever fixed at 2.1 quadrillion satoshis, which is a primary driver of its value. Bitcoiners understand that this "digital scarcity" is the real 0-to-1 discovery, and that bitcoin is therefore a singularity among digital assets. Likewise, the Bible presents God as "holy"-- perfect, unique, set apart, one-of-a-kind (Isaiah 6, Deuteronomy 6:4). Even though he is everywhere, in his one-ness God is the ultimate expression of scarcity.

Justice. The bitcoin economy is one of rules without rulers. Bitcoin does not care who you are or where you came from; it offers the same benefits to all without favoritism. At the same time, self-custody, which is property ownership in the truest sense, demands personal responsibility. God’s justice is much the same. He has given us his law to show how life works best; those who break his laws end up breaking themselves. And God’s law demonstrates his fairness: he hates stealing (Exodus 20:15); he despises unequal weights and measures (Proverbs 20:23); he shows no partiality (Romans 2:11).

Faithfulness. Since its inception 16 years ago, Bitcoin has enjoyed 100% uptime. Through bear markets and bulls, and despite predictions, regulations, or the cultural battle du jour, bitcoin relentlessly keeps its core promise: "tick tock, next block". Likewise, God is forever faithful to his promises (Deuteronomy 7:9). He neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121:4). Whatever God has promised in his Word will surely come to pass. Most importantly, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13).

The Gospel

To those who strain under the burden of monetary debasement, bitcoin provides an offramp. To those repressed by an overreaching government, bitcoin gives a voice and a vote. To those who are fleeing war or persecution with only the clothes on their backs, bitcoin offers a monetary life raft. As Michael Saylor has said, “Bitcoin is hope.” It is no wonder that so many who grasp the breadth of bitcoin’s promises have staked their entire financial livelihoods upon it.

Indeed, we believe bitcoin to be a gift from God for the greater flourishing of humanity. But the Bible also warns us to be careful: “The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” (I Timothy 6:10). And Jesus himself said, “What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 16:26). Bitcoin, as a created thing, cannot bear the weight of our ultimate, eternal hope; for that we must look upward, to the greater Hope which bitcoin reflects.

Painting a picture of heaven, Jesus likens it to “a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field” (Matthew 13:44). As bitcoiners, we can all relate to this low time-preference behavior; seeing bitcoin as the most precious asset, we would part with even our chairs if it meant growing our stack. But this parable shows us that bitcoin, while sublime, is but a shadow of the Heavenly Treasure. How do we attain this heavenly treasure?

We know instinctively that we all fall short of God's standard: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). And yet, God requires perfection: "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Meeting God's standard is harder than finding consecutive blocks solo with a lottery miner. Who can possibly attain it? The answer is no-one. We need God's mercy. We need forgiveness.

The world often imagines God's forgiveness to be like fiat money: easily printed and dispensed on a whim. In fact, God's perfect justice requires that his forgiveness come at a cost. The actual price of God's forgiveness is made manifest by the cross of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus' innocent death, all those who repent of their sins and trust in him by faith receive the merits of his sacrifice: in a great exchange, their sins become his, and his righteousness is credited to them.

But don't trust me; verify for yourself. That God's holy justice was satisfied at the cross was demonstrated to the world when Jesus defeated death and rose again from the grave. Just as a valid solution hash serves as probabilistic proof that sufficient energy was expended to mine a block, so also does Jesus' resurrection from the dead show forth to the world his own cosmic proof of work. Indeed, "if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (I Corinthians 15:17).

Bitcoiners rightly understand bitcoin not to be an investment but rather a life raft. Similarly, when Jesus asked his disciples whether they would stick by him, Peter responded, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). Forgiveness is found in no one else. Have you entrusted your life to this Jesus? Faith is a gift, but it also entails a choice. May God stir your heart to embrace his forgiveness today.

The Church

The Bible presents God as being one God (Deuteronomy 6:4) yet three persons – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). This is impossible for our finite minds to fully comprehend. As Jameson Lopp famously said, "nobody understands bitcoin– and that's OK." Even without fully grasping it, we can still learn much from the enigmatic truth of the Trinity.

What we learn first is that God, fully sufficient in himself, has always existed in community – a perfectly intimate, harmonious, and loving relationship among the three members of the Godhead. What we also learn is that humans, crafted in God's image, are created for relationship; we are built for community. Our lives will feel empty when they are lived out in isolation.

Bitcoiners understand the unifying and equalizing power of Community. Very few commonalities can reach across cultures or socioeconomic divides to create instant rapport like bitcoin can. And yet, bonds forged within the bitcoin community pale in comparison to the depth and intimacy of fellowship experienced by believers within the family of God, the Church. As the Apostle Paul tells us, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

One analogy the Bible uses to describe the Church is that of the human body: composed of many parts, each having value, and each making its own unique contribution, yet united in one vessel under the head, which is Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 12). Just like the smallest, most remote node on the bitcoin network, every member of God’s worldwide Church benefits the body, no matter how insignificant his earthly estate. Believers who have ever sought prayer from the Christian community know this well, having experienced the network effects of a global tidal wave of kneeling validators, unified in bringing their petition before a listening God.

Like the bitcoin network, the Church is antifragile. And ultimately, it is the head of the Church, Jesus Christ– and believers’ confession of him– which makes it so. In the Gospels, Peter confesses that Jesus is “the Christ, the son of the living God.” In response, Jesus declares this confession to be the foundation of his Church, and that “the gates of hell will not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). What gives the Church this resilience? Again, it is the unity of the body: “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” (Romans 6). The Church will prevail because, as promised in Isaiah and confirmed in the New Testament, through Jesus’ resurrection “death is swallowed up in victory” (I Corinthians 15:55).

Are you a participant in this, the greatest of networks, the Christian Church? If you have responded in faith to God’s call on your life, a crucial next step is to “spin up a node”, so to speak: find a local body that faithfully shares in the confession mentioned above, and begin to integrate your life with it. We at Magnalia are eager to help you make that connection and locate a sound, healthy church in your area.

The Kingdom

Shortly after God created the world, man distrusted God’s goodness and made a selfish, fateful choice, thereby bringing a curse upon humanity and plunging the entire creation into disorder. Jesus’ resurrection, then, brought about a reversal of man’s curse. And not only that, but it also signaled a new beginning for the world– the ground-up renewal of a disordered cosmos.

Many fancy “heaven” to be a disembodied, ethereal existence in the clouds. In truth, the Bible’s conception of heaven is not first and foremost a place but a person: to have eternal life is to know the one true God through his Son, Jesus Christ (John 17:3). Even so, the Bible does conceive of the future dwelling place of believers as “the new heavens and the new earth” (Revelation 21:1) – a return to the garden of creation, in which man once again walks alongside God without shame.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus of Nazareth described his coming kingdom, and demonstrated that in a sense his kingdom was already here, if not yet fully realized. His teachings and miracles painted a picture of what this kingdom– inverted by the world's standards– would look like: he pursued the poor, the dejected, and the downtrodden; he made the lame walk; he gave sight to the blind; he brought the dead back to life.

Bitcoiners have a similar vision: "fix the money, fix the world". If monetary debasement is a cause of so much injustice in our world, then sound money stands to constrain the money printer and bring justice to many. Far from being at odds with the Christian's vision for God's future kingdom, this "bright orange future" is fully consistent with it; we believe that God has blessed the world with bitcoin as a means of restraining human evil and restoring monetary justice. For many, the initial draw of bitcoin is "number-go-up", but for Christians, the ultimate glory of bitcoin is found in "freedom-go-up":

- Bitcoin stands to end the dollar's global hegemony and the unjust transfer of wealth from the world's poor to the elite. Likewise, God's heart is for people of every socioeconomic bracket (I Timothy 2:4) and of every tribe, nation, and tongue (Revelation 7:9).

- Bitcoin promises to constrain the easy money flowing into the military industrial complex and end the forever wars. Likewise, God is a champion of peace and the ultimate peace-maker (Ephesians 2:14-17).

- Bitcoin brings hope to the repressed, to the impoverished, to the disenfranchised, to the refugee. As we read in the Gospels, Jesus himself associated openly with such as these, offering them love and mercy.

Many see a future bitcoin standard as inevitable. This may or may not prove true, though we pray it does. Either way, we can rest assured that the Kingdom of God is indeed inevitable, advancing here and now through the ongoing work of the worldwide Church, and culminating at the end of all things in the New Heavens and the New Earth. For Christians, the greatest thrill of bitcoin is witnessing how God might use it to take us there.

We value bitcoin because it is the most pristine asset this world has ever known. But stopping there would be a cosmic mistake, as bitcoin must point our eyes upward to an even greater asset. The Bible tells us that those who trust in Christ are heirs to an inheritance– a Heavenly Treasure– that can never perish, spoil, or fade (I Peter 1:4). This inheritance, far greater than the hardest money, is Jesus himself. Is he your greatest treasure?

About Magnalia

The mission of Magnalia Foundation is twofold: to educate the Church about bitcoin, and to introduce bitcoiners to the Gospel of Jesus.

https://magnalia.foundation
https://x.com/magnaliafdn
https://www.youtube.com/@magnalia-foundation