

Godhead or Deity - Is James White Right?

Colossians 2:8-9

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of THE GODHEAD bodily."

James White, a well known King James Bible critic, ignorantly harangues against the use of the word Godhead in the KJB. In his book, *The King James Only Controversy*, when discussing Colossians 2:9 Mr. White says on page 204: "Yet, the KJV rendering of this verse is probably the least clear of almost all currently available translations. How does one explain what "Godhead" means? Who really uses this term any longer? And what about the fact that the KJV uses "godhead" in other places when it is translating a completely different Greek term?"

Then Mr. White has a chart which shows the NASB rendering of the three passages where the KJB has Godhead in all three. Here are the NASB renderings: Acts 17:29 the Divine Nature (Theios); Romans 1:20 divine nature (theiotes), and Colossians 2:9 Deity (theotes).

As for Mr. White's puzzlement about how one explains what Godhead means, he might try looking at any number of current English dictionaries. As for his question - "Who really uses this term any longer?" maybe Mr. Scholar White might try reading the NIV introduction in the 1984 edition where it says on page xviii "Neither Hebrew, Aramaic nor Greek uses special pronouns for the persons of **the Godhead**." Actually the word Godhead is much stronger and more accurate than the "deity" of the NASB, NIV and ESV. I have also heard radio preachers today who use the modern versions talking about the Godhead, little realizing that this word no longer appears in the bible versions they use.

GODHEAD

Merriam Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary 1967, " the nature of God especially as existing in three persons -- used with the".

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition. 2000. 1. Divinity; godhood. 2. Godhead The Christian God, especially the Trinity.

The Greek lexicons of both Trench and Thayer's also show Godhead as being one of the primary meanings of this Greek word used in Colossians 2:9. Scholars often disagree with each other; what one affirms another denies. But of the three words used, there are some who affirm that each of the Greek words used has the meaning of "godhead".

Concerning the first example of Acts 17:29 "the Godhead" KJB and many others, τὸ θεῖον εἶναι ὁμοιον. Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament 1957 list this word on page 354 and reference Acts 17:29. They define it as: 1. of **the godhead** and everything that belongs to it.

Concerning the Greek word used in Romans 1:20 θεϊότης, on page 285 of Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon he tells us that this word means divinity or divine nature and is a synonym of θεότητος used in Colossians 2:9 which he defines as "absolute Godhead".

Concerning Colossians 2:9 τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words page 289 references Colossians 2:9 and says: "Paul is declaring that in the Son there dwells all the fulness of absolute Godhead; the apostle uses τῆς θεότητος to express this essential and personal Godhead of the Son." Then he references Trench's Synonyms. When we look at Trench Synonyms of the New Testament on pages 24-25 he says that τῆς θεότητος as found in Colossians 2:9 means exactly the same thing Vine told us - the essential and personal Godhead of the Son.

And this Greek New Testament site - <http://www.laparola.net/greco/> Gives the following quotes concerning Colossians 2:9:

Hippolytus Refutation of All Heresies Book X: that this is what has been declared, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the **Godhead** bodily." [12]

Irenaeus Against Heresies Book I: and further, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the **Godhead**;" [46]

Origen de Principiis Book II: And when it is said "above thy fellows," it is meant that the grace of the Spirit was not given to it as to the prophets, but that the essential fulness of the Word of God Himself was in it, according to the saying of the apostle, "In whom dwelt all the fulness of the **Godhead** bodily." [88]

The word Godhead implies the Three Persons of the Trinity, whereas the simple word Deity does not. There are many deities but only one Godhead. It is more than just coincidence that the KJB has the word Godhead three times in the New Testament.

As for Mr. White's charge that all three Greek words are "completely different", please note that all three have the base word Theos, which by itself means God. Not only does the KJB translate all three instances of these related words as Godhead, but so also do Tyndale 1525, Miles Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible (Cranmer) of 1540, Matthew's Bible (John Rogers) of 1549, the Bishop's Bible 1568, the Geneva Bible 1599, John Wesley's 1755 translation, Webster's 1833 translation, Young's "literal" translation, the KJV 21st Century Version 1994, and the Third Millennium Version of 1998.

Mr. White complains about the translation of Godhead here in Colossians 2:9, yet the NKJV, which he recommends in his book as a reliable translation, also has Godhead in Colossians 2:9. Not only do all twelve translations just mentioned have Godhead in Colossians 2:9, but so also do Lamsa's 1933 translation of the Syriac Peshitta, the Revised Version 1885, American Standard Version 1901, Darby 1870, New English Bible 1961, Wycliffe 1395, Hebrew Names Version, the World English Bible, Douay-Rheims, Amplified, Green's Modern KJV, and

Rotherham's Emphatic Bible 1902. That is a total of at least 24 English bible versions that disagree with Mr. White's "scholarly" opinions.

Mr. White also shows his hypocrisy when he says the KJB translates three "completely" different words as Godhead. The NASB, for whom he now works, has two very different words translated as deity - daimonion in Acts 17:18 and theotes in Colossians 2:9 - and another five very different words translated as Divine. In Acts 17:29 theios is translated as "divine nature", in Romans 1:20 theiotes is "divine nature", in Romans 11:4 kreematismos is translated as "divine response", in 2 Corinthians the Greek word theos is translated as "divinely", and in Hebrews 9:1 latreia is translated as "divine service".

The word Godhead in orthodox Christian theology clearly implies the Trinity. If anyone studies their Bible, you know that Christ was God manifest in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16 in the KJB, but not the NASB, ESV, RSV, NIV). The Lord also said in John 14:10 "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?...the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

The Lord Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Ghost (Luke 1:35) and God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power (Acts 10:38). In Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

People like James White have no inspired Bible or sure words of God. They set up their own minds as being the final authority and correct every bible version out there. Mr. White often corrects his own NASB and thinks it too has errors. They don't believe any translation can be the inspired words of God, and since the "originals" no longer exist, they have no inspired Bible and resent the fact that many of us believe we do. They want to be the Final Authority and have you come to them to find out what God really said. It is a big ego trip, easy to get into and very hard to get out of. I feel sorry for all the Christians who have been robbed of the true Holy Bible by unbelieving modern scholars like "Dr" James White.

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