

Devotional Questions
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Devotional Questions – Answers to Questions
The Attributes of God – God’s Self-Existence

See *Theological Studies* Book Number 2 *The Personality of God* pp 22-27 by Dr Ruckman for detailed comment.

1. What does ‘self-existence’ mean?

Revelation 4:8 “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, **Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come**”

God is past, present and future “after the power of an endless life” Hebrews 7:26 that the Lord Jesus Christ promises “to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting” 1 Timothy 1:16.

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” John 10:28.

2. Did God need to create anything?

The Lord Himself explains why “the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” Exodus 20:11.

“For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else” Isaiah 45:18.

In the beginning God was not alone

Genesis 1:26 “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...”

John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Acts 17:23-25. A more relevant scripture would appear to be Acts 17:29 “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.” See the attached study “**The Godhead.**”

Today’s believer should take comfort that he is not alone because as the Lord Jesus Christ promised “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” John 14:16-17.

3. Why did God bring the universe into existence?

See *Question 2* and Isaiah 45:18 “For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.”

Romans 11:36 “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

1 Corinthians 8:5-6 “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” 1 Corinthians 8:6.

Colossians 1:15-17 “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” Colossians 1:16.

The sense of the above scriptures in **blue text** is that as the outcome an *inhabited* universe, the Lord's aim is for a *righteous* universe in harmony with Him as Peter explains. *Note the exhortation for the individual believer that matches Paul's command to Timothy and today's believer* **"Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart"** 2 Timothy 2:22.

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" 2 Peter 3:13-14.

4. We humans are only partly sufficient

2 Corinthians 3:5, 12:9 **"but our sufficiency is of God...And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."**

This writer knows first-hand that Paul's glorying in his infirmities is more than he has experienced. Comfort, however, comes from John's revelation, *noting again the exhortation to living right with God.*

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" 1 John 3:2-3.

5. What do the following verses teach us about God's Self-Existence?

Exodus 3:14 **"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM..."** **John 8:58** **"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."**

Exodus 3:14, John 8:58 teach that as the Lord Himself said **"I and my Father are one"** John 10:30 and that **"...thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end"** Psalm 102:27.

Psalm 90:2 **"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."**

Noting *Question 3* and 2 Peter 3:13-14 with respect to *righteousness*, Psalm 90:2 verifies Isaiah 45:22 with its exhortation to individual salvation. **"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."**

Isaiah 41:4, 43:1, 44:6, 48:12, **"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God"** Isaiah 44:6, **Revelation 1:8, 17, 2:8, 3:14, 21:6, 22:13**, **"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last"** Revelation 22:13.

See remarks under Psalm 90:2 that Isaiah 41:4, 43:1, 44:6, 48:12, Revelation 1:8, 17, 2:8, 3:14, 21:6, 22:13 reinforce and note that these verses also declare that what the Lord Jesus Christ says as summed up in Revelation 22:13 **"the first and the last"** is finally authoritative in the King James Bible **"...for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name"** Psalm 138:2.

John 1:1-5, **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men"** John 1:4, **John 5:26** **"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."**

John 1:1-5, 5:26 teach that *life* exists because *God* exists and *all* men need the admonition that Daniel gave King Belshazzar, to whom the same exhortation applied that Daniel had given his father **"Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity"** Daniel 4:27. Like his father, King Belshazzar took no notice and suffered God's judgement, worse than his father did in that Belshazzar lost everything permanently, as Daniel explains and as *all* men should note because as the Lord Jesus Christ said **"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"** Mark 8:36.

“O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour...But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him...And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified...In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old” Daniel 5:18, 20 22-23, 30-31.

6. *How does God’s Self-Existence help us to live for God today?*

It is basic to the life that today’s believer has as the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul and John testify.

“Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also” John 14:19.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” Galatians 2:20.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” 1 John 5:11-12.

“The Godhead”

Introduction

The word **“Godhead”** occurs *three* times in scripture; Acts 17:29, Romans 1:20, Colossians 2:9. Each occurrence of the word **“Godhead”** has a special significance with respect to the word itself. 1 John 5:7 identifies the three Persons of the **“Godhead.”**

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” 1 John 5:7.

Fundamentalists have disputed 1 John 5:7 but Gail Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions* p 381, states that *The testimony of early writers, the great mass of Old Latin and Vulgate manuscripts, the necessities of Greek syntax and the cry of the priesthood of believers all mandate its inclusion in the text...*

Versions: Old Syriac A.D. 170, Old Latin A.D. 200, Vulgate: 4th and 5th century, Italic: 4th and 5th century.

Writers: Tatian A.D. 150, Tertullian A.D. 200, Cyprian A.D. 225, Athanasius A.D. 350, Priscillian A.D. 350, Vadmarium A.D. 380, Cassian A.D. 435, Jerome A.D. 450, Cassiodorus A.D. 480, Vigilus A.D. 484, Victor-Vita A.D. 489, Fulgentius A.D. 533, PS Athanasius A.D. 550.

Writings: Liber Apologeticus A.D. 350, Council of Carthage A.D. 415.

See also www.timefortruth.co.uk/bible-studies/alan-oreillys-studies.php 1 John 4, 5.

Considering the three references in scripture to the term **“Godhead”** in turn:

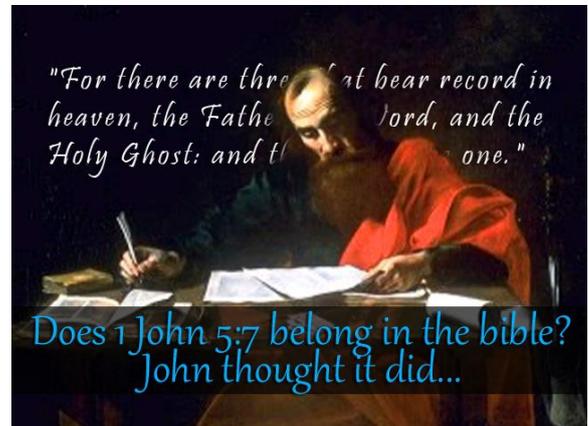
Acts 17:29

Acts 17:29 is significant as *the first mention* of the word **“Godhead”** in scripture.

“Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device” Acts 17:29.

Paul's statement condemns idolatry but it also shows that *even idolatrous heathen* (apart from **“certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks”** Acts 17:18, who may be found in various academic circles today) had a better understanding of **“the true God and eternal life”** 1 John 5:20 than modern version editors and Bible critics like James White and Robert A. Joyner. Acts 17:29 shows that they knew that they needed three materials; gold, silver, stone to represent **“THE UNKNOWN GOD”** Acts 17:23 *even in idolatry*. Note then Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians. **“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble”** 1 Corinthians 3:12.

Noting again that **“we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone”** because these substances do not live and God is **“the living God”** Deuteronomy 5:26, Joshua 3:10, 1 Samuel 17:26, 36, 2 Kings 19:4, 16, Psalm 42:2, 84:2, Isaiah 37:4, 17, Jeremiah 10:10, 23:36, Daniel 6:20, 26, Hosea 1:10, Matthew 16:16, 26:63, John 6:69, Acts 14:15, Romans 9:26, 2 Corinthians 3:3, 6:16, 1 Timothy 3:15, 4:10, 6:17, Hebrews 3:12, 9:14, 10:31, 12:22, Revelation 7:2; 30 references in all, these substances are nevertheless a reminder of **“the Godhead.”** See the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1513:



1 John 5:7 and the Record in Heaven
www.defendproclaimthefaitth.org/1_john_57_and_the_record_in_heaven.html

- **“Gold”** is a reminder of **“the Father”** 1 John 5:7 in that gold was used extensively in the construction of the tabernacle and in the making of the priestly garments. **“All the gold that was occupied for the work in all the work of the holy place, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary”** Exodus 38:24 with Exodus 25, 26, 36, 37. **“And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office”** Exodus 28:4 with Exodus 28, 39.
- **“Silver”** is a reminder of **“the Word”** 1 John 5:7 because silver is the price of redemption, Exodus 30:13-15, Numbers 3:47-49 and **“the Word”** John 1:1, 2, 14 is the Lord Jesus Christ **“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins”** Colossians 1:14.
- **“Precious stones”** are a reminder of **“the Holy Ghost”** 1 John 5:7 because **“the Spirit is life because of righteousness”** Romans 8:10 and **“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ”** 1 Peter 2:5 **“And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him”** Malachi 3:17.

As indicated even unsaved idolatrous heathen (apart from **“certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks”** Acts 17:18, who may be found in various academic circles today) understood **“the Godhead”** Acts 17:29 better than those who changed **“Godhead”** into **“Deity”** etc. and those who approved of or even condoned that change.

Romans 1:20

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” Romans 1:20.

Romans 1:20 associates God’s **“eternal power”** with the Godhead. *All three Persons of the Godhead manifest this eternal power.*

“God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God” Psalm 62:11.

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” Matthew 28:18.

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” Romans 15:13.

Colossians 2:9

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” Colossians 2:9.

Colossians 2:9 associates **“fulness”** with the Godhead. *All three Persons of the Godhead manifest this fulness.* In addition to Colossians 2:9 note:

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there” Psalm 139:7-8.

“Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD” Jeremiah 23:24.

Conclusion

The word **“Godhead”** confirms Three Persons, Acts 17:29, **“the power of God”** Luke 22:69, Romans 1:20 and **“the fulness of God”** Ephesians 3:19, Colossians 2:9 as **“a threefold cord”** Ecclesiastes 4:12 **“and these three are one”** 1 John 5:7.