

Who Is God?

Introduction. In describing and explaining the concept of God, the term "Godhead" (variously translated as "divine nature," "divine being," "divinity," and "deity") is used in the New Testament (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9), and implied in God's language in the Old Testament (Genesis 1:26; 3:22; Isaiah 6:8). According to W. E. Vine, the word means, "The Divine essence of Godhood, the personality of God."

The most prominent doctrine of Islam is the assertion that Allah is the only one who possesses deity (cf. Surah 112:1-4). Muslims forcefully reject the teaching of three individual Beings that make up God (4:171). This perhaps might be the biggest issue separating us and Muslims.

Is there one God or can there be one God in three Persons? In the Bible, God is triune, not triplex. God is three in the unity of one. In the mind of a Muslim, a strict monotheist, this is as impossible as $1+1+1=1$. However, the Godhead is more like $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$.

Careful study will help us to grasp this deep yet important concept, and see the beauty in God's plan with three distinct Beings.

I. ***The Father Is God***

- A. Although the term "God" can mean deity, many times it specifically refers to the Father.
 1. Jesus referred to the Father over 150 times in the gospels (Matthew 6:9; John 3:16).
 2. From Acts to Revelation He is referred to as "Father" 75 times (Romans 5:10; 8:3).
- B. God revealed Himself in nature and scripture.
 1. The heavens declare His glory (Psalm 19:1-6).
 2. The scriptures declares His glory (Psalm 19:7-11).
- C. God revealed Himself as the one true God.
 1. God is Jehovah (Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3).
 - a) "Jehovah" (Yahweh) is related to "I AM" which was a Semitic idiom meaning "He [who] is" or "He [who] causes to be."
 - b) This is indicative of eternal existence, and infinite power, resources, and wisdom.
 2. All other gods are false (Isaiah 43:9-10).
 - a) The Gentiles were not witnesses to real gods because they could provide no revelation and no miracles.
 - b) With Jehovah, it was different. Israel could testify to the reality of God because of the constant revelation and miracles (1 Kings 17:24).
- D. The one true God exists in three persons.
 1. God has all the qualities of personhood.

- a) He is not part of the creation.
 - b) He is not a philosophical concept.
 - c) He is not an impersonal power, force, or fate.
2. One God, deity, or divine nature is shared by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; Romans 15:16; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 John 5:7).
- a) Plural persons in the Godhead can share a unity of nature, purpose, and work just like humanity shares the same nature even though there are many persons (John 17:21; Acts 17:26).
 - (1) In marriage, two become one (Genesis 2:24).
 - (2) Trees are composed of a trunk, branches, and leaves.
 - (3) Our government includes an executive, legislative, and judicial branches.
 - b) Ephesians 4:4-6 shows that each person of the Godhead is separate and distinct.
 - (1) In the seven "one's" or units, three units identify persons in the Godhead.
 - (2) Deity includes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) The Father is a distinct person and is God (John 20:17). He is not the Son or the Holy Spirit (John 8:16; 14:26).
 - (b) The Son is a distinct person and is God (Hebrews 1:8). He is not the Father or the Holy Spirit (John 8:16; Acts 10:38).
 - (c) The Holy Spirit is a distinct person and is God (Acts 5:3-4). He is not the Father or the Son (John 14:26; Acts 10:36).
- E. God rules so we can seek and find Him.
- 1. In Acts 17:22-31, Paul introduced the one true God to idolaters in Athens.
 - a) Vss. 22-23 -- they worshiped many gods, but did not know the one true God.
 - b) Vs. 24 -- the true God made the universe.
 - c) Vs. 25 -- the true God sustains us.
 - d) Vs. 26 -- the true God made and rules all nations.
 - e) Vss. 27-28 -- God wants us to seek Him.
 - f) Vs. 29 -- the one true God is not an idol.
 - 2. Paul concluded his sermon by stating that the one true God saves us from false gods and religions by Christ (cf. John 14:6).
- F. The Father prepared salvation in Christ.
- 1. Only the one true God could prepare this glorious plan (Romans 11:33-36).
 - 2. We can praise God for this salvation (Ephesians 1:3-7).

II. **Jesus Christ Is God**

- A. John's gospel proves Jesus Christ is God.
 - 1. "Word" is the full expression of God's will and purpose (John 1:1-18).
 - 2. Jesus claimed to be God, the eternal "I AM" (John 8:58).
 - 3. His miracles confirm His claim.
 - a) Changing water to wine demonstrated power over nature and time (John 2:1-11).
 - b) Healing the nobleman's son demonstrated power over disease (John 4:46-54).
 - c) Healing the invalid demonstrated power over helplessness (John 5:1-9).
 - d) Feeding the 5,000 demonstrated power over hunger (John 6:1-13).
 - e) Walking on water demonstrated power over nature's limitations (John 6:16-21).
 - f) Healing the blind man demonstrated power over sight (John 9:1-7).
 - g) Raising Lazarus demonstrated power over death (John 11:1-44).
 - h) The resurrection demonstrated power over hades (John 20:1-29).
 - i) The great catch of fish demonstrated power over nature's bounty (John 21:1-11).
- B. In Colossians 1:15-18, Jesus Christ sustains everything.
 - 1. He is preeminent in creation and salvation.
 - a) He is the exact representation of God.
 - b) He is the firstborn -- not time or sequence but position (cf. Exodus 4:22).
 - 2. He is preeminent for three reasons:
 - a) Vs. 16: "By him all things were created."
 - b) Vs. 17: "By him all things consist."
 - c) Vs. 18: "He is the head of the body."
- C. The angels worship Jesus as God.
 - 1. Christ is the final prophet, priest, and king (Hebrews 1:1-3).
 - 2. The Father taught angels to worship the Son as God (Hebrews 1:4-8).
- D. The role of Jesus was to die for our sins.
 - 1. The Father sent Him for this purpose because of His love for mankind (John 3:16).
 - 2. He is the mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5).

III. *The Spirit Is God*

- A. The Holy Spirit is directly referred to as God.
 - 1. Each divine person is distinct. The Father and the Son are both persons.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit is God, not a mysterious "better felt than told" emotion (Acts 5:3-4).
- B. The Spirit's role was to reveal all truth.
 - 1. He will convict men with truth of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:7-11).
 - 2. The Spirit revealed all truth to the apostles (John 16:12-13).
- C. The Holy Spirit revealed God to man.
 - 1. The Spirit searches the depths of God (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).
 - 2. All scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - 3. Inspiration means that men were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21).
- D. The Spirit reveals our relationship to God.
 - 1. God created man to know, love, and serve Him (Genesis 1:1, 27; Matthew 4:10).
 - 2. We find meaning and purpose in serving God (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).
- E. We are united to God when we love and obey Him.
 - 1. The Spirit dwells in us when we obey Him (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
 - 2. We dwell in God and God in us -- spiritual unity and fellowship.
 - a) The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit dwell in Christians.
 - b) Christians dwell in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- F. The Spirit revealed the gospel of Christ.
 - 1. The gospel given by the Spirit is God's power to save (Romans 1:16).
 - 2. He revealed the basis of salvation in the cross of Christ (Romans 3:23-26).
 - 3. He revealed the conditions of salvation (John 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13).
 - 4. The gospel reveals the church of Christ (Matthew 16:16-19; 1 Timothy 3:14-15).
 - 5. He teaches us to live holy and godly lives (Titus 2:11-14).
 - 6. He revealed our destiny (Revelation 21:1-8).

Conclusion. The Godhead is holy and fills the earth with glory (Isaiah 6:1-3). The creation should praise God as the creator and sustainer of everything (Psalm 100:1-5). We can know God's character and purpose for us. We should turn from Satan and sin to the one true God (Galatians 3:26-27; 1 John 1:8-9). It is only by this that we can be saved.