

The Godhead

“But ye, beloved building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” Jude 20, 21

Mother bent over to kiss Tommy goodnight. Two little arms reached up and pulled her close. “Don’t go, Mommy. I want to ask you a question.”

Other waited, wondering whether this was a stall technique or a deep question.

“You and Daddy said God is love and that He loved even before He made angels or our world. But how could God love before there were angels or people? He was all by Himself with no one to love.”

“You’ve been doing a lot of thinking. Tommy, but you’ve forgotten something important. God wasn’t alone, for God is Three. And all Three have been forever – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Big people use the word, Trinity, which means, Three!”

“Does God ever get lonely?”

“Yes, Jesus was often lonely for His Father when He was on Earth, and I know God missed Him. And God is lonely for us, too. That’s why Jesus is coming to take us to Heaven soon. The Godhead, all Three, love each other so much they want to share that love. Love always wants to give more.”

If Tommy’s sleep eyes hadn’t closed, Mother could have told him about the “Us” verse that proves God wasn’t alone at Creation. *“Let us make man in our image.” Genesis 1:26* – or the one that mentions all three. *“Now the Lord God (the Father) and His Spirit (the Holy Spirit) hath sent me (Jesus, the Son of God)” Isaiah 48:16*

But no one can explain the mystery that while there is only ONE God – *“The Lord our God is one Lord”*. **Deuteronomy 6:4** – the Godhead consists of three co-eternal Persons having a unique and mysterious relationship

Preview

At Port Dickson on the West Coasts of Malaysia, is a lighthouse built on a steep, rocky cliff. The beam from that lighthouse guided more than 1000 ships each week past the dangerous rocks and shallows of the coast. Streaming from one source, its blinking glow could be seen not only far out at sea, but also along the coast for many miles.

God is somewhat like that light. He is the Eternal Father, who possesses infinite love, light, and wisdom. With Him as part of the Godhead, is His Son, Jesus – our Saviour and Creator, who is also the Light of the world. Working as part of the holy team is the Holy Spirit, our Enlightener.

Jesus stated that His *Father loved Him before the foundation of the world*. **John 17:24**. The love is more real, active, and concrete than the love we feel, for it’s not polluted and warped by sin.

All three holy Persons illumine the pathway to Heaven. As light shines out in every direction, so there are present everywhere, determined to do everything possible to save us.

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While the Godhead is not one person, but Three, God is one in purpose, mind, and character. The separateness of their personalities was evident at Jesus' baptism. During the baptism of the Son of God, the Father gave His verbal blessing. **Matthew 3:16,17**, and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove. Just before He died, Jesus promised, *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name; He shall teach you all things . . ."* **John 14:26**

Points to Ponder

The Godhead has many wonderful names. Each name adds details to the beautiful emerging portrait of the Godhead. *"Holy and reverend is His name."* **Psalms 119:9**. Below are a few Hebrew words translated as "God" in English:

- **Elohim** – Mighty covenant maker (plural form indicating Trinity)
- **Elohim Chai** – Living God
- **Elohei Chasdi** – God of mercy
- **Elohei Olam** – God everlasting
- **Elohei Mikarov** – God near at hand
- **El** – Might one
- **El Elyon** – Everlasting, God Most High
- **El Gibbor** – God the Champion
- **El Shaddai** – God Almighty, source of blessing and comfort
- **Yaweh** – Jehovah or LORD, "I AM WHO I AM"
- **Adonai** – God, Almighty Ruler

Nuts and Bolts

1. **Knowing God is more than knowing His names.**

Jesus said in **John 17:3**, *"This is _____ eternal, that they might _____ Thee, the only _____ God, and _____ whom Thou hast sent."*

Through the Bible and Nature we come to know God. As we worship God, Nature helps us understand Him better. Like the little boy who almost explodes with big wonderful words about his daddy, we use some difficult words to describe the Godhead. (See "Words to Remember" below). Not only God's names but His Divine attributes provide information to help us know God a little better.

2. **Omniscience**

- a. Consider how your body shows God's wisdom

Psalms 139:14 *"I will _____ Thee for I am fearfully and _____ made; marvelous are they _____"*. Red corpuscles – fantastic little carriers of raw materials and oxygen – go to remote parts of your body. Instead of returning empty, they pick up carbon dioxide and dump it in the lungs for a fresh load. How does God guide these billions of red cells, all constantly moving, without a mammoth traffic jam? How did God design mysterious substances that the best chemists have never duplicated, which convert apples, spinach, bread, and carrots into bones, fingernails,

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teeth, muscles, blood, and saliva? How can your stomach know which digestive juices are appropriate for which foods, and in what order each should be digested?

- b. Consider how Nature reveals God's wisdom. "*His _____ is _____.*" **Psalm 147:5** Think for a moment about the Creator's plan to protect the pollen in flowers and grasses from rain and dew. On rainy days, notice a field of Queen Anne's lace. Some of the delicate round flower heads are tipped over. Some are not. Why? The older heads that have already shed their pollen remain erect. Those that have just bloomed – in which the pollen is still ripening – are tipped 90 degrees. God planned that in wet weather the stem becomes flabby about two inches below the flower head, protecting the pollen from the rain. Only God could have designed the stem to droop if pollen is present but to stand erect if not!

3. Omnipotence

- a. God asked in **Job 38:31**, "*Canst thou _____ the sweet influence of the Pleiades?*" We cannot, but God can and does. This star cluster in the Northern Hemisphere appears to have six or seven stars, but through telescopes, astronomers have identified more than 250. All these stars, one of which is 800 times larger than our sun, move through space on parallel paths having a common motion. It's as if God said, "You are to journey through the Heavens together. My power will hold you in a cluster as you travel at terrific speed through space."
- b. "*With God _____ things are _____.*" **Matthew 19:26**

4. Omnipresence

Hebrews 4:13 "*Neither is there _____ creature that is not _____ in his _____; but all things are _____ and _____ unto the _____ of him with whom we have to do.*"

Light (called radiant energy) can help us understand better this concept of God's ability to be present everywhere at the same time. All light exists in the form of waves, ranging from enormous ones, hundreds of miles in length, to infrared rays measured in microns – about 1/1000th of a millimeter – or cosmic rays so small they are tiny fractions of a millionth of an inch. Yet trained persons using complicated machines can do marvelous wonders with these types of invisible light all around us, such as x-rays and ultraviolet rays. Though God is invisible, He is always near and longs to surround you with His loving presence. You can be illumined by the light of His life.

5. Immutability

"*For I am the _____, I _____ not.*" **Malachi 3:6.** In the tropical rain forests of Malaysia, the ever-wet jungles have temperatures similar to a hothouse. July or January, the rain forest literally drips. Jungle animals don't hibernate. Food is plentiful all year. Bird generations immediately follow the last one. New pink or red leaves appear continually on the green foliage. The jungle throbs with grandeur, a fantastic profusion of life, and unusual sounds. The multitude of species in the flora and fauna is overwhelming.

You can stand in one of those jungles and marvel at its invariableness. Our God is like that. *With Him there is no variableness.* **James 1:17.** He does not change. He is constant in His love and mercy. He is always true to His promises. Aren't you thankful God doesn't change?

Words to Remember

Self-existent – Not dependent on anyone else for His life.

Omniscient – All wise, all knowing

Omnipresent – All powerful, Almighty

Immutable – Unchangeable, perfect

Sovereignty – Having all dominion and supreme power. “*Whatsoever the Lord _____, that did He in _____, and _____ . . .*” **Psalms 135:6**

Foreknowledge – Knowing a thing before it exists or happens

Human freedom – The ability to make personal choices freely - a gift given by God to all humans.

Plurality – More than one. The Godhead is three divine persons.

Incarnation – God coming in flesh in the person of Jesus

The Difference Between

Foreknowledge and human freedom: God allows you to sin, but He does not ordain your actions. God respects your freedom to choose. God may foresee your choice, but His foreknowledge does not determine what that choice will be. (**NOTE:** The idea of “Ordain” and “Determine” was not present in the definition of “Predestination” above – and needs to be.)

- a. “*As many as _____ Him, to them gave He _____ to become the sons of _____, even to them that _____ on His name.*” **John 1:12**
- b. *God’s appeal to us is: “Choose you this _____ whom ye will _____.”* **Joshua 24:15**

I Truly Believe

A clover leaf is one leaf with three leaflets. It is NOT three leaves, but only one. Yet the three leaflets make it one.

Likewise, the Godhead – Three in One. On the cross we can see the inexpressible love of the Godhead for each one of us. The Father and the Holy Spirit shared the agony of the Son when He cried out, “*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?*” **Matthew 27:46** They suffered with Him when He could not see beyond the grave. Together they felt a depth of sorrow, of horror, we will never understand.

Consider carefully each statement below before you respond. If, in your heart, you agree with the concept of each statement place a check in the box.

- ☐ I choose to accept the glorious possibilities God has planned for me to *give me a future and a hope.*” **Jeremiah 29:11**
- ☐ I am opening my heart to receive God’s love.
- ☐ I am resolving that the unsearchable love of God won’t be wasted on me.

My Prayer

Dear Father:

I thank you for Your goodness and great love for me. For Your Son who died for me, and for the Holy Spirit who pleads with me to accept that great Love. May none be wasted because I refuse to let it grow in my heart. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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Quiz

Read the following Bible texts and with the help from the lesson, answer the following questions by circling “T” if statement is True, or “F” if statement is False. (Hint: there are 8 True and 2 False.)

KEY TEXTS **Gen 1:26** **Deut 6:4** **Psalm 139:1-18** **Dan 4:34,35**
 Matt 28:19 **2 Cor 13:14** **Eph 4:4-6** **1 Tim 1:17**
 1 Peter 1:2 **2 Pet 3:8,9** **1 John 4:7-12** **Rev 14:7**

1. T or F In the Bible we may find a practical knowledge of God sufficient for us to enter into a saving relationship with Him. (see pg 24)
2. T or F The Bible reveals God’s essential qualities through His names, activities, and attributes. (see pg 26)
3. T or F God is self-existent, for He has “life in Himself”. (see pg 27)
4. T or F Since God is Sovereign, He selects some to salvation and some to damnation. (see pg 28)
5. T or F The Old Testament does not explicitly teach that God is Triune (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – three in one) but it openly alludes to a plurality within the Godhead in a variety of references. (see pg 29)
6. T or F While the Godhead is not one in person, God is one in purpose, mind and character. (see pg 30)
7. T or F The early Christian church’s practice of baptizing believers in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in accordance with Christ’s great commission (**Matt 28:19**), reminds us that all three members of the Godhead are intensely interested in our salvation. (see pg 31,32)
8. T or F Looking at the cross of Christ, we see the heart of God – self-sacrificing love for us. (see pg 32)
9. T or F God’s foreknowledge of our lives never violates our human freedom to choose. (see pg 29)
10. T or F The Bible declares that God cannot be both transcendent and personal at the same time. (see pg 26)

NOTE: All page numbers are in reference to the book, **Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .**