

God: Evidence for His Existence and Character

I. The Existence of God:

A. Why is this an Important Issue?

1. There is no more profound question that a human being can ask. The answer will affect every action and belief they have.
2. To have reasonable evidence for the existence of God enables us to powerfully share with those who don't believe giving them a reason for the hope that is within you (1 Pet. 3:15).

B. What is the Evidence for God's Existence?

1. The physical creation

- a. David tells us, "The heavens declare the glory of God" - Psalms 19:1-4. This message is uttered every day and every night to every creature.

In Romans 1:18-22, Paul tells us that the creation clearly reveals the existence of God and the greatness of His power. It is such a powerful proof, that all men are "*without excuse*".

2. Our physical body

- a. David realised that his physical body was a masterpiece of creative ability: "I will praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well." - Psalms 139:14.
- b. How does the body know to regulate all its own functions, and all at the same time? Yet man cannot successfully duplicate even one major organ that works as efficiently as the original.

3. Logic

- a. *Cause and effect* - Logic demands that when we see the heavens and the biological wonder of the human body, we naturally ask the question of, "*who has created this?*"

When we look at a work of art, we know there must be an artist. When we see a great building, we know there must be a wise master builder. When we see craftsmanship, we know there is a craftsman. So, the creation demands a creator!

- b. *Order and design* - The observable design of creation speaks of an intelligent creator.

The only alternative we have is that all things have come about by random chance from disorder. Yet simple logic tells us order and design must come from intelligence. Order doesn't come from disorder. We know that a stick of dynamite exploded in a brickwork couldn't build a city.

4. Historic proof

- a. God has revealed Himself by 'stepping into time,' in His interaction with people. Once such way He has revealed Himself in this way is by prophecy, i.e. foretelling the future through prophets as recorded in the Scriptures.

God 'stepped into time,' most profoundly in the Person of Jesus the Christ, whom even secular historians attest of Jesus claims of deity, performing of miracles, and rising from the grave. Examples - Josephus (A.D. 37), and Roman historian Tacitus (A.D. 52).

5. Personal proof

- a. Your own experience of a changed life and having a personal relationship with Jesus after accepting Him as your Lord and Saviour is proof that God exists and is intimately involved with His Creation.

C. Why Do People Reject the Evidence?

1. *Intellectual pride* - The desire to be independent from God causes an intellectual arrogance within man, because he must attempt to explain his life, his decisions and his very existence by himself. Paul explains this by saying, "*they knew God, but did not glorify Him as God*". This resulted in futile thoughts and the profession of wisdom, which was in reality foolishness (Rom. 1:21-22).
2. *Moral disobedience* - Many will not believe the evidence that God exists, because they know that will mean that they must deal with what God says about their immoral lifestyle. People know in their conscience that they would have to change many things that are contrary to His Word. They choose to reject the evidence, so that they don't have to change their lifestyle - 1 Kings 18:21; Luke 18:18-23.

D. IV. Must We See God Visibly to Believe He Exists?

1. Jesus taught that it was unnecessary to see God to believe. He said to Thomas, "*because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*" - John 20:29.

II. The Character of God:

A. Can Man Completely Comprehend God?

1. In order for man to completely understand God logic tells us that man would have to be God himself, but this is not the case. God is distinctly different from man as man is merely God's creation. The Scriptures highlight the distinct difference between God and man:
 - a. Romans 11:33-34 "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counsellor?"
 - b. Isaiah 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."
2. Although God is distinctly different from man and impossible for us to completely understand, He has sought to give us great insight into His person and character as revealed in the Scriptures.

B. The Trinity:

1. A basic definition of the Trinity would be: "*Within the one Being that is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*"¹
2. Trinitarians do not believe in '*three gods in one Person.*'

¹ James R. White, *The Forgotten Trinity*, 26.

- a. "Trinitarians believe that there is one God, but that within the unity of the Godhead there are three co-equal, co-eternal Persons. So the Trinity is not 'three gods in one Person' but 'three Persons in one Godhead.'" ²
- b. H. Maldwyn Hughes, M.A., D.D., describes the Trinity in this way, "The three Persons equally possess the fullness of the Godhead. Each Person by Himself is God and Lord, and in each Person the other divine Persons exist in inseparable unity, although without confusion of persons. The act of each Person is, in a real sense, the act of all Three."³
- c. The Trinity is a unity between the biblical nature of God as being both monotheistic (one God) and having a tri-unity (3 Persons)

Hughes states,

'...We learn from the New Testament that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, three Persons, are one God.' That is a statement of the materials out of which the doctrine of the Trinity has been fashioned. This doctrine is not the outcome of mere speculation. It is an effort to do justice to the facts recorded in the New Testament, namely, that God revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Once these facts were accepted, the Church was bound either to develop a doctrine of the Tri-unity God, or to accept Tritheism (i.e. the belief in three gods). But Christianity is monotheistic; consequently the Church developed the doctrine of the Trinity in order to safeguard its monotheism.⁴

3. A theological definition of the Trinity is based on three lines of biblical evidence:

- a. Evidence that there is only one true God.
- b. Evidence that there are three Persons who are recognised as God.
- c. Evidence for three-in-oneness within the Godhead."⁵

4. The God of the Bible is One:

- a. Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the **LORD is one!**
- b. Deuteronomy 32:39 'Now see that I, even I, am He, and there is **no God besides Me**; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; nor is there any who can deliver from My hand.
- c. 2 Samuel 7:22 "Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For there is none like You, **nor is there any God besides You**, according to all that we have heard with our ears.
- d. Psalm 86:10 For You are great, and do wondrous things; **you alone are God.**
- e. Isaiah 37:20 "Now therefore, O LORD **our God**, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that **You are the LORD, You alone.**"
- f. Isaiah 44:6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; **besides Me there is no God.**

² Ibid., 255.

³ H. Maldwyn Hughes, *Christian Foundations: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (London: The Epworth Press, 1933), 142.

⁴ Ibid., 137. Hughes cites the *Wesleyan Catechism*, 6.

⁵ Ron Rhodes and Marian Bodine, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Mormons* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1995), 256.

- g. Isaiah 43:10-11 "You are My witnesses," says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. ***Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD,*** and besides Me there is no saviour."
1. Note: Since there were no gods before the God of the Bible, this means that God had no Father-gods or Grandfather-gods before him. Since none of His children will become Gods.
- h. Isaiah 45:5 I am the LORD, and ***there is no other; there is no God besides Me.*** I will gird you, though you have not known Me,
- i. Isaiah 45:14 Thus says the LORD: "The labour of Egypt and merchandise of Cush and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over to you, and they shall be yours; they shall walk behind you, they shall come over in chains; and they shall bow down to you. They will make supplication to you, saying, 'Surely God is in you, and ***there is no other; there is no other God.***'"
- j. Isaiah 45:21-22 Tell and bring forth your case; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the LORD? And ***there is no other God besides Me,*** a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides Me.
"Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! ***For I am God, and there is no other.***
- k. Isaiah 46:9 Remember the former things of old, ***for I am God, and there is no other;*** I am God, and there is none like Me,
- l. John 5:44 "How can you believe, who receive honour from one another, and do not seek the honour that comes from the ***only God?***
- m. John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, ***the only true God,*** and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
- n. Romans 3:29-30 Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ***since there is one God*** who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.
- o. Romans 16:27 to ***God, alone*** wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.
- p. 1 Corinthians 8:4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that ***there is no other God but one.***
- q. Galatians 3:20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, ***but God is one.***
- r. Ephesians 4:6 one ***God*** and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
- s. 1Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned ***to God*** from idols to serve ***the living and true God,***
- t. 1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, ***to God who alone*** is wise, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.
- u. 1 Timothy 2:5 For there is ***one God*** and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

- v. I John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. ***This is the true God and eternal life.***
- w. James 2:19 You believe that ***there is one God.*** You do well. Even the demons believe-- and tremble!
- x. Jude 1:25 To ***God our Saviour, who alone*** is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

5. The Tri-unity of God in the Scriptures:

- a. Each person is called **God** (Now remember, there is only one God.)
 - 1. The Father (Romans 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2, 6:23 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:2).
 - 2. The Son (Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1; 20:28; Acts 7:59-60; Heb. 1:8; 1 Tim. 3:16; Titus 2:13).
 - 3. The Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3,4).
- b. Each person is described as the **Truth**.
 - 1. The Father (John 7:28).
 - 2. The Son (John 14:6; Revelation 3:7).
 - 3. The Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 1 John 5:6).
- c. Each person is called the **Lord**.
 - 1. The Father (Romans 10:12).
 - 2. The Son (Luke 2:11).
 - 3. The Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17).
- d. Each person is called the **Almighty**.
 - 1. The Father (Genesis 17:1).
 - 2. The Son (Revelation 1:8).
 - 3. The Holy Spirit (Romans 15:19 compare Revelation 11:17 "power").
- e. Each person is called **Powerful**.
 - 1. The Father (Jeremiah 32:17).
 - 2. The Son (Hebrews 1:3).
 - 3. The Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).
- f. Each person has the ***attributes of God***.

1. Omnipresence – Everywhere present.
 - a. The Father (1 Kings 8:27; Jer. 23:23,24; Matt. 19:26).
 - b. The Son (Matt. 18:20; 28:20).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Ps. 139:7-10).
 2. Omniscient – all knowing.
 - a. The Father (Psalm 147:5; Romans 11:33).
 - b. The Son (Matthew 9:4).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10).
 3. Omnipotent - all -powerful.
 - a. The Father (Psalm 135:6; Jeremiah 32:27).
 - b. The Son (Matthew 28:18).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Romans 5:19).
 4. Eternal.
 - a. The Father (Deut. 33:27; Isaiah 57:15; Psalm 90:2; Romans 16:26).
 - b. The Son (Micah 5:2; John 1:2; 12:34; Heb. 1:8; Revelation 1:8,17; 22:13).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:14).
 5. Holy.
 - a. The Father (Revelation 15:4).
 - b. The Son (Acts 3:14).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Romans 1:4).
- g. Each person does the ***same work of God*** alone.
1. Creation.
 - a. The Father (Gen. 1:1,2; 2:7; Psalm 102:25; Heb. 3:4).
 - b. The Son (John 1:1-3,10; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps.104: 30).
 2. Sanctification.
 - a. The Father (Jude 1).
 - b. The Son (1 Cor. 1:2).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2).

3. Who raised Jesus from the dead?
 - a. The Father (Acts 3:26; 1 Thess. 1:10; Gal. 1:1).
 - b. The Son (John 2:19-21, 10:17,18).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11; 1 Peter 3:18).
4. Who inspired the Prophets?
 - a. The Father (Luke 1:68-70).
 - b. The Son (1 Peter 1:11).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Acts 1:16; 2 Peter 1:21).
5. Who strengthens me?
 - a. The Father (1 Peter 5:10).
 - b. The Son (Phil. 4:13).
 - c. The Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:16).
6. Further evidence for one God being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 - a. The Old Testament usage of the word one. The Hebrew word, *Echad* describes a united one, or compound unity.
 1. Examples of *Echad* used in the Bible.
 - a. A husband & wife become one flesh (Gen. 2:24).
 - b. The people are one (Gen. 11:6).
 - c. The Lord our God is one Lord (Deut. 6:4; Zech. 14:9; Mal. 2:10).
 2. The New Testament reveals the same usage.
 - a. We are all one in Christ (Gal. 3:28).
 - b. Paul & Apollos described as one (1 Cor.3: 6-8).
 3. Plural pronouns used when God speaks of Himself.
 - a. Let us make man in our image. (Gen. 1:26).
 - b. Let us go down ... (Gen. 11:7).
 - c. Who will go for us... (Isaiah 6:8)?
 4. The divine name of God used as a plural *-Elohim*.
 - a. (Gen. 1:1, 28; Ex.3:15; 20:15; Lev. 19:4; Num. 10:9 – There are several hundred uses of this term for God in the Old Testament. Only a few have been listed.)

5. God spoken of in plural terms:

- a. Numbers 6:24-27 - "The **LORD** bless you and keep you; the **LORD** make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the **LORD** lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace. So they shall put **My name** on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."
- b. Isaiah 48:16 - "Come near to **Me**, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, I was there. And now the **Lord GOD** and **His Spirit** have sent **Me**."
- c. Matt 3:16-17 - When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the **Spirit of God** descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is **My** beloved **Son**, in whom I am well pleased."
- d. 1 Cor 12:4-6 - There are diversities of gifts, but the same **Spirit**. There are differences of ministries, but the same **Lord**. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same **God** who works all in all.
- e. 2 Cor 13:14 - The grace of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, and the love of **God**, and the communion of the **Holy Spirit** be with you all. Amen.
- f. Ephesians 2:18 - For through **Him** we both have access by one **Spirit** to the **Father**.
- g. I John 5:7 - For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the **Father**, the **Word**, and the **Holy Spirit**; and these three are one.
- h. Revelation 1:4-6 - John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from **Him who is and who was and who is to come**, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, **and from Jesus Christ**, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests **to His God and Father**, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

7. The simplest way to see the work of God revealed from Scripture is:

- a. The Father is the fullness of the Godhead invisible (1 Tim. 1:17).
- b. The Son is the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).
- c. The Holy Spirit is the fullness of the Godhead acting immediately upon the believer (1 Cor. 2:9-12).