



Who Is God?

“And this is the way to have eternal life – to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.” (John 17:3, NLT)

Did you know that some people do not believe there is a God? Did you know that some say there are many gods and worship all kinds of created things – stars, moon, idols, etc? Some even say that **you** are a god! Did you know that there is one thing everyone looks at that proves there is only one true God? God says this evidence of his existence surrounds everyone. (Romans 1:18-20) It is available to people of every language and color in every part of the world.

The God of creation

The Bible says that everyone can know that God exists by simply looking at his creation – the stars, flowers, birds, rocks and trees, etc. All reveal his almighty power and creativity. Have you ever watched birds? Did you notice how different birds are each perfectly fitted with the unique equipment and knowledge of how to get their food, build a nest and feed their young? Amazing! So who is the true living God? Can you really know him? Yes, because he has given us much more proof than creation. He has told us all about himself in the Bible.

The three in one

If you sense the awesomeness of God when you look at the trees, mountains, ocean and animals, you can also sense it in the words he said to the prophet Isaiah, *“For I am God – I alone! I am God, and there is no one else like me.”* (Isaiah 46:9b, NIV) So who is God? Although no one fully understands, God describes himself in terms of a unity of persons: one God, yet three coequal persons all in perfect agreement. They are the same in essence, unity and fundamental nature. The three persons who make up the Trinity (called the Godhead) are God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. Each is a personality distinct from the other while one in unity with the others. The Bible does not explain how three can be one, but neither can anyone explain how each person is created with a spirit, a soul (mind, will and emotions) and a body. Have you ever seen your spirit and soul living in your body? Of course not, but without them you could not think, speak or feel emotions!

Old Testament proof

How can you know God is one yet three? Three-in-oneness is taught in many ways in the Bible. In the Old Testament God tells us: *“The Lord our God is One Lord.”*

(Deuteronomy 6:4, NIV) In the English language, the word “God” would mean one person. However, the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the word for God was “Elohim.” Elohim is like our English word “group,” meaning one group but made up of a number of people. In Genesis 1:26 (NIV) God said, *“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”* The “us” and “our” refer to God as more than one. However, in Genesis 1:27 (NIV) God reminds us he is one: *“So God created man in his own image.”* The word “his” stands for one person. When God spoke to the prophet Isaiah, he asked: *“Whom shall I send as a messenger to my people? Who will go for us?”* (Isaiah 6:8, NIV) The “I” stands for one and “us” for more than one. When the prophet Isaiah heard the angels saying: “Holy, Holy, Holy,” they may have been praising the three-in-one. (Isaiah 6:3) Isn’t this awesome? There’s more – read on!

New Testament proof

The New Testament reveals the greatest proof of the three-in-oneness principle. One day as John the Baptist, a prophet, was baptizing crowds (dipping or immersing in water), Jesus came and asked John to baptize him. The Scripture says: *“After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God [Holy Spirit] descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with him.’”* (Matthew 3:16-17, NLT) Did you notice that three persons of the Godhead are present and active in this passage? God the Father spoke; God the Son was baptized; and God the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he referred to the three-in-oneness when he commanded his disciples: *“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”* (Matthew 28:19, NLT)

The characteristics of the Godhead

The three Persons of the Godhead all have the same characteristics or attributes. They all have eternal life; all are all-knowing, all-powerful and present everywhere, etc. However, they show by what they do that they are distinct one from the other.

In his mind, **God the Father** originated all that exists. In other words, he is the architect of the universe! Although you can pray to all three, believers usually pray to the Father. Most often the word “God” in the Bible refers to the Father.

God the Son, Jesus Christ, created all that was in the Father’s mind. He is the artist. *“Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see – kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through him and for him...and he holds all creation together.”* (Colossians 1:16-17, NLT)

Jesus, who took a human body, is the visible image of the invisible God. He said, “*The Father and I are one.*” (John 10:30, NLT) He is the revealer of God, and no one can know the Father except through the Son. He is the Savior of the world and gives new life to all those who believe in him.

God the Holy Spirit lives in you. He leads you into all truth and confirms that you are the child of God. He gives you the power to live the new life. As you grow in Christ, you will begin to recognize his voice as he teaches, guides, assures, directs, warns and intercedes for you. He gives you spiritual gifts, and as you learn to obey, produces in you the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Although the three are never separated, the Father was more active in the Old Testament, Jesus more active in the Gospels and the Holy Spirit in the remainder of the New Testament.

Do you find the three in one God confusing? Don't worry! God will reveal himself to you and help you better understand as you study his Word and pray. Remember, you may not fully understand some mysteries until you are in heaven.

Attitude Check:

- How can you show honor, reverence and respect toward God by your attitude?

Explore:

- To learn much more about God, read, “Who is God?” “Who is Jesus?” “Who is the Holy Spirit?” (In front of the *Student New Testament*.) **Be sure and look up all the references about each one!** Write a statement about each one in your journal.

Talking with God:

- Heavenly Father, thank you that I can look around my world and see your hand in creation. However, most of all, I thank you for revealing yourself through Jesus and his Word. Give me a hunger to know you and to follow your ways.