

The Godhead

John Isaac Edwards

The term “Godhead” appears three times in the New Testament (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9). The Scriptures teach there are three separate and distinct persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There are many passages where all three are mentioned (Matthew 28:19; John 14:26; Ephesians 2:18; 1 Peter 1:2). All three were present at the creation (Genesis 1:1-3; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17) as well as at the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17). The Scriptures ascribe deity to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but each is distinct one from the other.

The Father Is God, But He Is Not the Son or the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures ascribe deity to the Father. Jesus said, “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed” (John 6:27).

The Father is not the Son as He has knowledge the Son does not possess (Mark 13:32) and the Son can do nothing of Himself but what He sees the Father do (John 5:19-23). The Father and the Holy Spirit are not one and the same for the Father would send the Holy Spirit (John 14:26) and we are elect according to the foreknowledge of the Father through sanctification of the Spirit (1 Peter 1:2).

The Son Is God, But He Is Not the Father

or the Holy Spirit. The Son is said to be divine. Hebrews 1:8 records, “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.”

The Son is distinct from the Father for He did those things that pleased the Father (John 8:29) and He received honour and glory from the Father (2 Peter 1:16-17). The Son is not the Holy Spirit for the Son received the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33) and those who are in the Son are to walk after the Spirit (Romans 8:1).

The Holy Spirit Is God, But He Is Not the Father or the Son. When Ananias lied, in Acts 5:3, he was said to have lied “to the Holy Ghost,” but, in verse 4, Peter said, “...thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” Therefore, the Holy Spirit is God.

But He is not the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father (John 15:26) and it is by the Holy Spirit that we have access unto the Father (Ephesians 2:18). Nor is the Holy Spirit the Son. The Holy Spirit was sent in the name of the Son (John 14:26) and the Holy Spirit testified of the Son (John 15:26).

John said, “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). These three are not one person, but “agree in one” (1 John 5:8).

Use of the Word “Soul”

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The Hebrew word for “soul” in the Old Testament is *nephesh*. In the New Testament, the Greek word for “soul” is *psuchē*. These words occur a combined 858 times, and have different uses. Let’s notice some of the ways in which these words are used in the Scriptures.

Animal Life. Sometimes the word “soul” is used to refer to animal life. The first times *nephesh* occur in the Bible reference is made to sea creatures, beasts of the earth, and fowl of the air (Genesis 1:20-21, 24, 30). Numbers 31:28 mentions “...one soul of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep.” Revelation 16:3 records, “And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.”

Human Life. Many times *psuchē* refers to the life of man. An angel told Joseph, “Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child’s life (*psuchē*)” (Matthew 2:20). It is said of Epaphroditus, “Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life (*psuchē*)...” (Philippians 2:30).

Persons. Often *nephesh* and *psuchē* refer to a person. Genesis 17:14 states, “And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul (or person) shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.” Peter penned, “...eight souls (or persons) were saved by water” (1 Peter 3:20).

The Immortal Part of Man. There is a part of man that will continue to live even when the body is dead which is called “the soul.” Jesus said, “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). Peter wrote, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth...” (1 Peter 1:22). What does a person purify when he obeys the truth? Certainly not the physical body as Peter declared, “...not the putting away of the filth of the flesh” (1 Peter 3:21).

Failure to observe how the word “soul” is used in the Bible has led some to believe and teach false concepts about the soul. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26).

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