COGMA

Church of God Mission Academy

STUDY GUIDE
31

One *God* in Jesus Christ

STUDY GUIDE 2 OF 10:

God Manifest in the Flesh

An overview of God revealed in Jesus Christ.



Equipping and empowering for effective service

2 Timothy 2:2

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE STUDENT

My Study Plan

Preparing a Study Plan before starting this Study Guide will assist you in completing it within a designated timeframe. It also helps in developing the discipline required for studying God's Word effectively.

Proverbs 16:3:

> *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

My Study Guide Journal

Keep a record as you progress through your Study Guide, including the Personal Responses for each section, for future reference and goal setting.

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Important Points

- COGMA does not claim to be infallible or the authority.
- Infallibility and authority belong only to God and His Word.

COGMA therefore strongly advises that you prayerfully study the content of each Study Guide with the heart of a Berean (**Acts 17:10–12**).

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PREFACE

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The first Study Guide established the foundation that there is one true God. Scripture declares that the LORD is one, that there is none beside Him, and that He alone created all things. We also saw that this one God is Spirit, invisible, eternal and omnipresent. Those truths must remain fixed as we now consider how the invisible God made Himself known to humanity.

This Study Guide takes the next step in that revelation. The question is no longer simply, How many Gods are there? Scripture has already answered that. The question now is: Who was revealed in Jesus Christ?

The New Testament gives a clear and consistent testimony. John declares that the Word was God and that the Word was made flesh. Matthew identifies Jesus as Emmanuel, *"God with us."* Paul says that *"God was in Christ"* and that *"God was manifest in the flesh."*

Jesus Himself said that the Father dwelt in Him and that whoever had seen Him had seen the Father. Paul then declares that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Jesus Christ.

These statements must be allowed to speak together. They do not present Jesus Christ as another God beside the one true God, nor as one divine person standing alongside other divine persons. They reveal the one invisible God making Himself known through the genuine human life of Jesus Christ.

This does not deny the genuine humanity of the Son. Jesus was truly born, truly lived as a man, and truly experienced human life. The humanity through which God revealed Himself was real. The fuller examination of that genuine humanity belongs to a later Study Guide.

Our purpose here is to establish the identity of the God who was revealed through Him. We will therefore examine the great Scriptural declarations that God was manifest in the flesh, that the Word was made flesh, that Jesus is Emmanuel, the image of the invisible God and the express image of His person, that the Father dwelt in Him, and that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Him.

Each of these Scriptural declarations adds another part to the same testimony. Together they show that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ was not partial, distant or incomplete. The invisible God made Himself known personally and fully in the Son.

The purpose is not to begin with a predetermined explanation and make these Scriptures fit within it. We will allow the Scriptures themselves to build the case.

The foundation established in the first Study Guide remains unchanged: there is one God. This Study Guide now asks how that one God was manifested and made known. The answer of Scripture leads us directly to Jesus Christ.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why must God's revelation in Jesus agree with the truth that there is one invisible God?

Personal Reflection

Have you thought of Jesus as revealing only part of God? What has led you to that view?

Action Step

Identify where that belief came from and compare it with God's Word. What needs to change in the way you trust Jesus?

INTRODUCTION: HOW DID THE ONE INVISIBLE GOD MAKE HIMSELF KNOWN?

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The first Study Guide established that there is one true God and that this one God is Spirit, invisible, eternal and omnipresent. Scripture also declares that there is none beside Him and that He alone created all things. We now come to the next question in the progression of this module: How did this one invisible God make Himself known to humanity?

The answer is found in Jesus Christ. Scripture does not leave us to construct a philosophical explanation of how God could be revealed. It gives us direct statements concerning what happened and who was made known.

Paul wrote in **1 Timothy 3:16**:

> *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."*

The statement is direct: 'God was manifest in the flesh.' Paul centres the revelation in God Himself. The invisible God made Himself known in a genuine human life.

This declaration must be understood together with the wider testimony of Scripture. John says that *"the Word was God"* and that *"the Word was made flesh."* Matthew identifies Jesus as Emmanuel, *"God with us."*

Paul says that *"God was in Christ."* Jesus says, *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* When Philip asked to see the Father, Jesus answered, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

These are not separate explanations that compete with one another. They form one consistent revelation. The God who is invisible as Spirit made Himself known through the genuine humanity of Jesus Christ.

This Study Guide will therefore examine the identity of the God revealed in Jesus Christ. We will consider what Scripture means when it says that God was manifest in the flesh, that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, that He is the express image of His person, and that all the fulness of Deity dwells bodily in Him. We will also examine why Scripture calls the Son *"The mighty God"* and *"The everlasting Father,"* and why the New Testament attributes creation to Jesus Christ even though the LORD declared that He created all things alone and by Himself.

The purpose is not to deny the genuine humanity of Jesus Christ. His humanity was real. Neither is our purpose here to develop every question concerning His human experience, His soul, His obedience or His suffering. Those subjects belong to a later Study Guide devoted specifically to His genuine humanity.

Our purpose here is more focused: to establish from Scripture who was revealed in Jesus Christ. The foundation remains unchanged: there is one God. The question before us now is: How was that one invisible God manifested and made known?

Personal Response

Key Truth

How did the invisible God make Himself known through the genuine human life of Jesus Christ?

Personal Reflection

Has God's invisibility ever made Him seem unknowable to you?

Action Step

Read **John 1:18** *and consider how Jesus makes the Father known. How should that truth change the way you seek to know God?*

GOD WAS MANIFEST IN THE FLESH

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We have established that there is one true God and that this one God is Spirit, invisible, eternal and omnipresent. Scripture now gives us one of its clearest statements concerning how that invisible God made Himself known to humanity.

Paul wrote in **1 Timothy 3:16**:

> *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."*

The central declaration is unmistakable: *"God was manifest in the flesh."* He does not define God here as three divine persons; he identifies God Himself as the One manifested in the flesh. This statement must be allowed to speak with its full force.

The Invisible God Was Made Known

To manifest something is to bring it into view, make it known or reveal what was previously unseen. This agrees perfectly with what Scripture has already taught concerning the nature of God.

Paul wrote in **1 Timothy 1:17**:

> *"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

God is invisible in His eternal Spirit nature. Natural human eyes cannot see Spirit as they see physical matter. Therefore, if the invisible God was to make Himself known through a visible human life, He had to be manifested. That is exactly what Paul says occurred.

The One who is eternal, immortal and invisible was made known in flesh. God did not cease to be Spirit when He was manifested, nor did His revelation in human life change His eternal

nature. The invisible God remained the eternal Spirit who fills heaven and earth while making Himself known through Jesus Christ. John gives the same testimony from another direction.

John wrote in **John 1:18**:

> *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."*

John begins with the invisibility of God: *"No man hath seen God at any time."* He then says that the Son *"hath declared him."* The God who cannot be seen in His eternal Spirit nature was declared and made known through the Son.

The Son therefore does not introduce another God beside the invisible God. The Son is the genuine human revelation in whom the invisible God is declared and made known.

Personal Response

Key Truth

What does 'God was manifest in the flesh' tell us about the One made known through Jesus?

Personal Reflection

When you hear that God was manifest in the flesh, do you still imagine God standing apart from Jesus?

Action Step

Examine that idea beside **1 Timothy 3:16**. *State what needs correcting in your understanding of the One revealed in Jesus.*

The Flesh Was Genuine Humanity

The words *"manifest in the flesh"* also require us to recognise the genuine humanity of Jesus Christ. The flesh was not an illusion, an appearance or a temporary disguise. Jesus truly entered human life.

John wrote in **John 1:14**:

> *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*

John does not say that the Word appeared to be flesh. He says, *"the Word was made flesh."* The humanity of Jesus Christ was real.

Jesus was genuinely born. He grew, hungered, became weary, experienced sorrow, suffered and died. These experiences belonged to genuine human life. We must never affirm His Deity in a way that weakens His humanity.

At the same time, we must not allow His genuine humanity to obscure the identity of the One being revealed through that humanity. Paul does not say that an ordinary man gradually became God or that God later associated Himself with a man who already existed independently. He says:

"God was manifest in the flesh."

The humanity was genuinely human, and the God revealed through that humanity was genuinely God. The detailed examination of Jesus Christ's humanity belongs to a later Study

Guide. Here our purpose is to preserve the two truths necessary for this subject: the human life was real, and the One manifested through that human life was the one true God.

God Himself Was in Christ

Paul gives another statement that helps us understand what "God was manifest in the flesh" means. Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 5:19**:

> *"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."*

Notice carefully who Paul says was in Christ: *"God was in Christ."* He does not describe God as standing apart from Jesus while another divine person carried out the work of redemption. The God doing the reconciling was in Christ, reconciling the world *"unto himself."*

This gives us a powerful connection between these two Scriptures. Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh"* and *"God was in Christ."* These are not competing explanations.

They belong together. The one invisible God was in Christ and was manifest through the genuine human life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself identified the One dwelling within Him.

Jesus said in **John 14:10**:

> *"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."*

Jesus said, *"the Father that dwelleth in me."* The Father was not absent from Jesus Christ, nor was He standing beside Him as another God. The invisible Father dwelt within and revealed Himself through the genuine humanity of the Son.

This is why Jesus could say to Philip that the person who had seen Him had seen the Father. The invisible God was being made known in a visible human life.

God Fully Revealed in Jesus Christ

The language of Scripture therefore brings us to an important conclusion. Jesus Christ is not a partial revelation of God. The one invisible God made Himself known fully in Him.

Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh"* and *"God was in Christ."* Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me,"* while John says that the Son *"hath declared him."* These statements all direct us towards the same revelation: the one invisible God made Himself known in Jesus Christ.

This does not mean that the eternal Spirit became confined within the physical dimensions of a human body. God remained omnipresent. Neither does it mean that the humanity of Jesus was unreal. Jesus possessed genuine human life.

It means that the invisible God revealed Himself through that genuine humanity without ceasing to be the eternal Spirit. The mystery of godliness is therefore not a mystery concerning how three divine persons can somehow be one God. In the words of Paul, the mystery before us is:

"God was manifest in the flesh."

What had been invisible was made known. The eternal God entered human history through genuine human life. The God whom no man could see in His eternal Spirit nature was revealed in Jesus Christ.

This brings us naturally to the next question. If God was manifested in the flesh, how completely was God revealed in Jesus Christ?

Paul gives the answer: *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

How can God be fully revealed through real humanity while remaining the eternal Spirit?

Personal Reflection

Have you tended to emphasise Jesus' Deity at the expense of His genuine humanity, or the reverse?

Action Step

Choose one Gospel account of His human life and explain how it strengthens your faith without weakening the God revealed in Him.

THE WORD WAS GOD - AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH

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The declaration that *"God was manifest in the flesh"* leads us directly to the opening words of John's Gospel. John does not begin with Bethlehem. He begins *"in the beginning"* and speaks of the Word before describing the Word made flesh. His purpose is to show that the God revealed in Jesus Christ did not begin to exist when Jesus was born.

John wrote in **John 1:1-3**:

> *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."*

John gives us three statements that must be held together. The Word was in the beginning. The Word was with God.

The Word was God. We must not emphasise one statement in a way that contradicts another. Whatever *"with God"* means, John immediately tells us that *"the Word was God."*

In the Beginning Was the Word

The Greek word translated Word is LOGOS. It carries the thought of word, expression, communication and reason. John is not introducing another God beside the one true God. He is speaking of the Word that belonged to God and expressed God.

The Word did not begin at Bethlehem. John says that the Word was already *"in the beginning."* This agrees with the truth already established concerning the one eternal God. Before creation, before human history and before the birth of Jesus Christ, God already was.

The Word therefore belongs to God's own eternal existence. God did not first exist without His Word and later produce another divine being called the Word. His Word is His own expression and revelation.

John then makes the decisive statement:

"The Word was God."

He does not say that the Word was another God, a lesser God or one God beside the God already revealed in Scripture. The Word was God. The same Scripture that declares there is one God now tells us that the Word was God.

John 1 must therefore be read within the one-God foundation already established. The Word cannot be made into a second divine being without contradicting both John's own statement and the wider testimony of Scripture.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why must 'the Word was with God' be read together with 'the Word was God'?

Personal Reflection

Have you treated 'with God' as though it must mean another God?

Action Step

Read **John 1:1–3** *together, not in isolated phrases. Identify and correct any conclusion that contradicts 'the Word was God'.*

The Word Was With God

John also says, *"the Word was with God."* This statement must not be ignored, but neither should it be separated from the words that follow: *"the Word was God."*

The phrase does not require us to imagine two Gods standing beside one another. John has not said, *"the Word was with another God."* He says the Word was with God and then identifies the Word as God.

Scripture often speaks of what belongs to God without turning what belongs to Him into another divine person. It speaks of the Word of God, the wisdom of God, the power of God, the glory of God and the Spirit of God. These expressions tell us something about God Himself: His expression, His wisdom, His power, His glory and His Spirit.

In the same way, the Word of God must be understood within the identity of the one God. The Word expresses God because the Word is God's own self-expression. John's language prepares us to understand how the invisible God would make Himself known.

We must also resist reading later theological categories back into John's opening words before allowing John to explain himself. John does not use the expression *"second divine person,"* nor does he define the Word as one person within a triune divine being. His own controlling statement is simpler and stronger: *"the Word was God."*

The interpretation of *"with God"* must therefore preserve, not weaken, that declaration. The language distinguishes God and His Word without dividing the one God into separate divine beings. The later revelation of the Son must arise from this Scriptural foundation rather than from a definition imposed upon the Scripture beforehand.

The Word was not created. The Word was not another God. The Word was God.

John also says that all things were made by Him. We will return later to the significance of creation being attributed to Jesus Christ. At this stage, the important point is that the Word belongs on the Creator side of the distinction, not among created things. John begins with God, and the Word he describes is God.

The Word Was Made Flesh

John later tells us what happened when the eternal Word entered human history. John wrote in **John 1:14**:

> *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*

This is one of the most important movements in this portion of Scripture: *"The Word was God."* Then: *"The Word was made flesh."*

John does not say that the Word changed from being God into being nothing more than flesh. Neither does he say that the eternal God ceased to be Spirit. The one eternal God remained what He eternally is, while His Word was manifested through genuine human life.

The flesh was real. Jesus Christ was not an appearance, an illusion or a temporary outward form. The Son entered genuine human life. The detailed nature of that humanity will be examined later in this module, but John's statement must be allowed to stand plainly: *"the Word was made flesh."*

At the same time, the flesh does not introduce another God. The One revealed through that genuine human life was the God whom John had already identified at the beginning of the chapter.

The movement is therefore not from God to another divine person. It is from the invisible God to His manifestation in genuine humanity.

The Eternal Life Was Manifested

John later described what he and the other disciples personally experienced. John wrote in **1 John 1:1-2**:

> *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)"*

John says that *"the life was manifested."* What was eternal and unseen was made known in a form that could be heard, seen, looked upon and handled. The disciples encountered genuine human life, yet through that human life the eternal life of God was manifested.

This does not mean that the eternal Spirit became material or ceased to fill heaven and earth. God remained Spirit. What became visible and touchable was the genuine humanity through which His eternal life was revealed.

John's two writings therefore agree closely. In his Gospel, he says, *"the Word was God"* and *"the Word was made flesh."* In his first epistle, he says that *"the life was manifested."* Both accounts describe the invisible and eternal God making Himself known in genuine human life.

The Word made flesh is therefore central to understanding Jesus Christ. Jesus is not a man who later became associated with God. Neither is He a second God sent by the first God. In Jesus Christ, the eternal Word who was God was manifested in genuine humanity.

This is why the language of John must remain joined together. The Word was in the beginning. The Word was with God.

The Word was God. The Word was made flesh. The eternal life was manifested.

These statements lead us towards the next great declaration. If the Word who was God was made flesh, how should we understand the identity of the One who came among us?

Matthew gives the answer in one remarkable name: *"Emmanuel,"* meaning *"God with us."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does the Word made flesh connect God's eternal life with what the disciples saw and heard?

Personal Reflection

How has the reality that the disciples saw and touched Jesus affected your understanding of eternal life?

Action Step

Consider **1 John 1:1–2** *alongside* **John 1:14**. *Explain what this means for your personal confidence in the One who was manifested.*

EMMANUEL: GOD WITH US

BACK TO CONTENTS

John declares that *"the Word was God"* and that *"the Word was made flesh."* Matthew gives us another powerful statement concerning the identity of the One who came among us. He records the name Emmanuel and then explains exactly what that name means.

Matthew wrote in **Matthew 1:22-23**:

> *"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."*

Matthew does not leave the meaning of the name uncertain. Emmanuel means *"God with us."* The child who was born was genuinely human, yet the One revealed through that human life was the one true God.

The Name Identifies Who Was With Us

Matthew is drawing upon the prophecy of Isaiah. Isaiah wrote in **Isaiah 7:14**:

> *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."*

Isaiah foretold the birth of a son, and Matthew explains the significance of the name given in that prophecy: *"God with us."* This is important because Scripture does not describe Jesus simply as a messenger who came to speak about God. Neither does Matthew say that someone less than God came among humanity. His explanation is direct: *"God with us."*

The one God whom Scripture has already declared to be invisible, eternal and Spirit made Himself known in genuine human life. The name Emmanuel therefore points beyond the visible humanity to the identity of the God being revealed through that humanity.

This does not mean that the humanity was unreal. A real child was born. A real son was given. Matthew reveals that God Himself was with us in that genuine human life.

Not Another God Beside the Father

The name Emmanuel must be understood within the foundation already established by Scripture. There is one God, and there is no God beside Him. Therefore, *"God with us"* cannot mean that a second God came to stand beside the first God.

Neither should we read into Matthew's words the idea that one divine person came while other divine persons remained separate from Him. Matthew does not say, *"one person of God with us."* He says, *"God with us."*

This agrees with Paul's later statement, *"God was in Christ."* It also agrees with the declaration, *"God was manifest in the flesh."* The language is consistent. The God who had declared that there is none beside Him was not contradicted when Jesus Christ came.

The one true God made Himself known in Jesus Christ. Emmanuel therefore does not create another divine identity beside God. It reveals the presence of the same God who had spoken through Moses and the prophets.

God With Us in Genuine Humanity

The words *"God with us"* must also be held together with the reality of the Son's genuine humanity. Matthew does not say that God simply appeared as though He were human. He records an actual conception and birth.

The Son was born into human history. He could be seen, heard and touched. He lived a genuine human life. Yet the name attached to that birth tells us who was being revealed: Emmanuel: God with us.

This helps us avoid two opposite errors. We must not reduce Jesus Christ to an ordinary man who represented God while God remained separate from Him. Neither must we deny His genuine humanity by treating the Son as though human life were only an outward appearance.

Scripture holds both truths together. The humanity was real, and the God revealed through that humanity was real. The detailed examination of the humanity of Jesus Christ belongs to a later Study Guide. Here the point is more specific: the birth of the Son brought the invisible God into visible human revelation.

Emmanuel Agrees With the Whole Testimony

The name Emmanuel does not stand alone. It fits naturally with the other declarations we are examining.

John says *"the Word was God"* and *"the Word was made flesh."* Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh"* and *"God was in Christ."* Matthew records the name *"Emmanuel,"* meaning *"God with us."*

These are not unrelated expressions. Together they establish the identity of the One revealed in Jesus Christ.

The one invisible God did not send another God to make Him known. He made Himself known. The God who could not be seen in His eternal Spirit nature was revealed through genuine human life.

This is why Jesus Christ cannot be understood simply as someone standing between humanity and a God who remained unknown. In Jesus Christ, God Himself was made known. The revelation was personal, visible and centred completely in Him.

The question now moves one step further. If Emmanuel means *"God with us,"* how did the invisible God become visible and knowable to humanity?

Paul gives us another important description of Jesus Christ: He is *"the image of the invisible God."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does the name Emmanuel identify the God revealed through a genuinely human birth?

Personal Reflection

Have you treated Emmanuel as only a name rather than recognising its meaning, 'God with us'?

Action Step

Reflect on **Matthew 1:23**. *What difference should God's presence in Jesus make to the way you respond to Him?*

THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

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We have seen that Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, *"God with us."* Paul now gives another important description that helps us understand how the invisible God was made known through Jesus Christ. He calls Him *"the image of the invisible God."*

Paul wrote in **Colossians 1:15**:

> *"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:"*

The statement brings two truths together. God is invisible, yet Jesus Christ is His image. What cannot be seen in God's eternal Spirit nature is made known through the Son.

The word image must therefore be understood carefully. Paul is not introducing another God who resembles the first God. The same apostle repeatedly declares that there is one God. The

image of the invisible God must therefore reveal that one God rather than introduce another divine being beside Him.

The God Who Cannot Be Seen Was Made Known

John had already established the invisibility of God. John wrote in **John 1:18**:

> *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."*

The statement *"No man hath seen God at any time"* agrees with the truth that God is Spirit. In His eternal nature, God cannot be seen with natural human eyes. Yet John immediately tells us that the Son *"hath declared him."*

The invisible God therefore did not remain unknown. He made Himself known through Jesus Christ. Paul's description of Jesus as *"the image of the invisible God"* expresses the same truth.

Humanity could see Jesus Christ, hear His words and observe His works. Through that visible human life, the invisible God was being made known. This is why the word image cannot mean that Jesus is simply a religious teacher who resembles God's character. The statement is much stronger: Jesus Christ is the human revelation through whom the invisible God Himself is made known.

The Image Does Not Introduce a Second God

We must keep this verse within the foundation already established throughout Scripture. God has declared that there is none beside Him. He alone is God. Paul himself says that *"there is none other God but one."*

Therefore, when Paul calls Jesus *"the image of the invisible God,"* he cannot be teaching that one invisible God exists beside another visible God. The verse does not present one invisible God and another visible God who resembles Him.

Instead, Scripture directs us to the one God in His eternal invisible Spirit nature and to His revelation through Jesus Christ. This agrees with everything we have already examined. John says *"the Word was God"* and then says *"the Word was made flesh."*

Matthew says Emmanuel means *"God with us."* Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh"* and *"God was in Christ."*

Calling Jesus *"the image of the invisible God"* continues that same Scriptural testimony. The image makes the invisible God known. This is also why we must not understand Jesus as one divine person displaying another divine person from a distance. Scripture directs our attention to the one God making Himself known through the genuine humanity of the Son.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why does calling Jesus the image of the invisible God reveal one God rather than add a second God?

Personal Reflection

Is there an area in which you still think of the Father as distant from Jesus?

Action Step

Examine Jesus' words to Philip in **John 14:9–10***, and state what this corrects about where you look to know God.*

The Invisible God Revealed Through Genuine Humanity

The word image also helps us maintain the distinction between God's eternal nature and the genuine humanity through which He was revealed. God remained invisible Spirit. He did not cease to be omnipresent when Jesus Christ was born. The eternal God was not reduced to the physical dimensions of a human body.

At the same time, Jesus Christ possessed genuine human life. The Son could be seen because His humanity was real. The visible human life did not make God another kind of being. It provided the genuine human revelation through which the invisible God was made known.

This allows both truths to remain intact. God remains the invisible eternal Spirit, and Jesus Christ is the visible human revelation of that invisible God.

The image does not divide God. It reveals Him.

This becomes especially important when we later examine the words of Jesus to Philip. Philip asked to see the Father, but Jesus answered, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."* That statement becomes understandable when we recognise that Jesus Christ is *"the image of the invisible God."*

The invisible Father was not physically visible as Spirit. He was being revealed through the Son.

The Image Reveals Who God Is

Paul's wording also tells us something about the purpose of the revelation. God did not reveal Himself in Jesus Christ so that humanity would continue looking elsewhere to discover what God is like.

Jesus Christ makes the invisible God known. This does not mean that every aspect of the infinite God can be reduced to what human eyes saw physically. God remained eternal and omnipresent Spirit. Rather, the God who is invisible chose to reveal His identity, character and divine life through Jesus Christ.

The revelation is therefore centred in Him. When Scripture directs us to Jesus Christ, it is not directing us away from God. It is directing us to the One through whom God has made Himself known.

Paul's declaration must therefore be allowed to retain its full force: Jesus Christ is *"the image of the invisible God."* The invisible God has not remained distant or unknown. He has made Himself known through the genuine human revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Bible reveals that God is love, God is life, and God is light. Each truth is fully revealed in Jesus Christ, the visible expression of the invisible God.

God Is Love; Jesus Is That Love

John wrote in **1 John 4:8**:

> *"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."*

This does not mean that God is only loving. It teaches that love is the very essence of who God is. Every action of God flows from His nature as love.

Jeremiah wrote in **Jeremiah 31:3**:

> *"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."*

Even in the Old Testament, God revealed Himself as the One who loves with an everlasting love and draws His people with lovingkindness. However, this love was not yet fully seen in a visible form.

Paul writes in **1 Timothy 3:16**:

> *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."*

The New Testament reveals that this divine love is fully and perfectly expressed in Jesus Christ, who is the visible manifestation of the invisible God.

God's Love Made Visible

John wrote in **1 John 4:9-10**:

> *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

These verses show that the love of God is not a feeling or idea. It was manifested, made visible and tangible, in the person of Jesus Christ. God did not send a messenger or a representative; He sent Himself in visible form clothed in humanity.

Jesus is not only the proof of God's love. He is the expression of it. His life, ministry, and sacrificial death reveal what divine love looks like when it walks among men.

Love in Action: Jesus Laying Down His Life

Jesus said in **John 15:13**:

> *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."*

This was not simply a teaching. It was prophetic. Jesus would soon demonstrate this truth at the cross. His love was not passive. It was sacrificial, purposeful, and directed toward sinners who had no love for Him in return.

Paul wrote in **Romans 5:8**:

> *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

At the cross, the invisible heart of God was fully revealed. The Son of God, God manifest in flesh, gave Himself willingly as the only acceptable offering for sin. This is love at its highest and purest form.

Jesus Is the Heart of God Revealed

Jesus is not one who only teaches about the love of God. He is the love of God embodied. Every healing, every act of compassion, every word of mercy, and His sacrificial death and resurrection all reveal the loving nature of the one true God.

Jesus said in **John 14:9**:

> *"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"*

To see Jesus is to see the character of God in visible form. Therefore, to see Jesus laying down His life, reaching out to the lost, forgiving sinners, and weeping with the broken is to see the love of God in action.

God Is Life; Jesus Is That Life

John wrote in **1 John 1:2**:

> *"For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;"*

John is not speaking of a gift or a quality. He speaks of a Person, Jesus Christ, who is the eternal life revealed to mankind. This eternal life was always in God, and is now made visible in Christ, who is God manifest in flesh.

Before God was manifest in flesh as Jesus Christ, the Scriptures already revealed that the one true God is the source of all life. The God of Israel, the fountain of life in the Old Testament, is the same God who later appeared in visible form as Jesus Christ.

There can be no confusion. Jesus is not another being beside God, He is God Himself revealed, the only true God made visible.

David wrote in **Psalm 36:9**:

> *"For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."*

God is the fountain of life, the spring from which all true life flows. There is no real life apart from Him.

Moses wrote in **Deuteronomy 30:20**:

> *"That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."*

For Israel, God was not only a helper or protector. He was their very life and the length of their days.

Paul declared in **Acts 17:25**:

> *"Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;"*

The one true God does not receive life from another. He is the giver of life, breath, and all things to every creature. This is the same eternal life that John says was *"with the Father"* and was *"manifested unto us"* in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Declares Himself to Be the Life

Jesus said in **John 14:6**:

> *"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

Jesus does not simply give life. He is life.

Jesus Is the Resurrection and the Life

Jesus said in **John 11:25**:

> *"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:"*

Here, Jesus identifies Himself as the life. He does not say He brings life. He declares that He is the resurrection and the life. This affirms His divine nature as the source of all life.

The Life of God Revealed in Jesus

Jesus said in **John 5:26**:

> *"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;"*

Some misunderstand this verse and imagine a second being who receives life from another. However, it must be read in the light of Jesus' full identity as the visible manifestation of the invisible God.

Paul wrote in **Colossians 1:15**:

> *"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:"*

The life that the Father has in Himself is the same life now revealed in Jesus Christ. It was not transferred to another person. It was manifested in flesh.

John 5:26 does not teach two separate divine beings. It teaches one truth. The eternal life that existed in the invisible God is now expressed and revealed bodily in Christ.

Jesus does not share deity with God; He is the visible expression of that one divine life.

The Son is not a secondary person receiving life. He is the embodiment of the eternal life that has always been in God.

God Is Light; Jesus Is That Light

John wrote in **1 John 1:5**:

> *"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."*

This is not a poetic expression. It is a declaration of the nature of God. Light in Scripture symbolises purity, truth, holiness, and life, while darkness represents sin and deception.

To say that God is light means He is absolute in truth and perfect in holiness. He is entirely free from corruption, error, or shadow. This is the very nature of the one true God.

The Invisible God Who Is Light

God is light, yet He remains invisible to natural human sight.

Paul wrote in **1 Timothy 1:17**:

> *"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

The invisible light of God cannot be seen by humanity in its pure form. However, this divine light is fully revealed in Jesus Christ, who is the visible expression of the invisible God.

Jesus, the True Light of God

John wrote in **John 1:9**:

> *"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."*

Jesus is not a reflection or a secondary light of God. He is the true, original, and perfect Light of God. John the Baptist bore witness to this Light, but Jesus is that Light Himself, shining with the very glory of God.

Jesus Claims to Be the Light of the World

Jesus said in **John 8:12**:

> *"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."*

Jesus does not say He brings light. He is the Light. As God is light, Jesus shares that same divine identity because He is the visible manifestation of the invisible God. Those who follow Him are brought out of darkness into truth, life, and freedom.

Jesus, the Light of the New Creation

Moses wrote in **Genesis 1:3**:

> *"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."*

This was the first act of creation. Before any form, order, or life appeared, God spoke light into the darkness. That light shattered the emptiness and prepared the way for creation.

In the same way, Jesus Christ is the Light of the new creation. His entrance into the world and into the human heart begins a new life, a spiritual creation. Without Him, the soul remains formless, empty, and dark, just as the earth was in the beginning.

The Light of Christ Shines into Believers

Just as God said, Let there be light in Genesis, God now shines through Jesus into the hearts of believers.

Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 4:6**:

> *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

When Jesus enters a person's life:

Sin is exposed and removed; the darkness of rebellion and ignorance is dispelled;

Understanding is given, the person begins to see clearly what is true and what is false;

Righteousness is imparted, not by works, but through union with Christ who is the Light;

Transformation takes place: the old creation passes away, and all things become new.

Jesus Is the Beginning of All Things New

Jesus does not help a person improve. He makes the believer new. As the Light of the new creation, He begins a complete spiritual rebirth.

Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 5:17**:

> *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

This is not symbolic. It is the literal work of God in the soul. Just as the first creation began with light, the new creation begins with Jesus, the Light of life.

This prepares us for an even stronger description in the book of Hebrews. Jesus Christ is not only called *"the image of the invisible God."* He is also described as: *"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

How are God's love, life and light made known in Jesus Christ?

Personal Reflection

Which is harder for you to trust: God's love, His gift of life or His light in the darkness? Why?

Action Step

Identify one fear or attitude that truth addresses. Explain how knowing that Jesus reveals God's love, life and light should govern your response.

THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS PERSON

BACK TO CONTENTS

Paul has described Jesus Christ as *"the image of the invisible God."* The writer of Hebrews gives us another closely related description. He speaks of the Son as *"the brightness of his glory"* and *"the express image of his person."* These words deepen our understanding of how the invisible God made Himself known.

The writer of Hebrews wrote in **Hebrews 1:1-3**:

> *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"*

The verses begin with God speaking. In former times He spoke through the prophets. Now He has spoken through the Son.

The Son is therefore not introduced as another God bringing a message from a separate divine source. He is the human revelation through whom the one God has spoken and made Himself known.

The Brightness of His Glory

The writer first describes the Son as *"the brightness of his glory."* God's glory belongs to God Himself, yet that glory is made known in the Son.

John gives the same testimony concerning the Word made flesh. John wrote in **John 1:14**:

> *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*

John says, *"we beheld his glory."* The invisible God, whose glory could not be seen as a physical object in His eternal Spirit nature, made that glory known through the genuine human life of Jesus Christ.

The expression *"brightness of his glory"* therefore directs us to revelation. The glory is God's glory, and the Son is the brightness through whom that glory is made known.

We should not turn this language into two separate Gods, one possessing glory and another independently possessing a different glory. Scripture has already established that there is one God. The Son reveals the glory of that one God.

This is why Jesus Christ is central to knowing God. God did not leave humanity with only an abstract description of His glory. He made His glory known in a life that could be seen and heard.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does the Son reveal the brightness of God's glory?

Personal Reflection

Have you pictured God's glory as something separate from the words and works of Jesus?

Action Step

Choose one recorded word or work of Jesus and explain what it reveals of God and how that should affect your worship.

The Express Image of His Person

The writer then calls the Son *"the express image of his person."* The phrase is strong. It speaks of a precise and definite expression, not a vague resemblance.

Jesus Christ does not simply remind us of God or resemble God in the way a faithful servant may resemble the character of his master. The Son is the human revelation in whom the invisible God is made known.

This agrees with Paul's words: *"Who is the image of the invisible God."* It also agrees with Jesus' own words: *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

The testimony is cumulative. The invisible God is revealed. His glory is made known. His identity is expressed through the Son.

Two Greek words help explain this Scriptural language. EIKŌN in **Colossians 1:15** means image, representation or likeness. CHARAKTĒR in **Hebrews 1:3** describes an impressed mark or exact imprint. Like a stamp impressing its form into wax, or a perfect mirror making the original clearly visible, these expressions show that Jesus Christ makes the invisible God known. Neither expression requires us to invent a second God beside the One being revealed.

The word *"person"* in the King James wording of **Hebrews 1:3** must also be handled carefully. We should not automatically read the later theological expression *"divine person"* back into the verse and conclude that the verse is describing one divine person as the exact representation of another divine person.

The verse itself is showing how God is made known through the Son. The controlling truth remains that there is one God. **Hebrews 1:3** does not overturn that foundation. It shows how the God who is invisible has given humanity a true and definite revelation of Himself.

God Has Spoken to Us in the Son

The opening movement of Hebrews is therefore important. God spoke through the prophets, but He has now spoken *"by his Son."* The revelation has moved from prophetic testimony to personal manifestation.

The prophets spoke the Word of God. In Jesus Christ, the Word was made flesh. The prophets declared the glory of God. In Jesus Christ, that glory was revealed in genuine human life.

The prophets spoke about God. In the Son, God made Himself known personally.

This does not mean that the humanity of Jesus ceased to be genuine. The Son truly lived as a man. His human life was real. Yet through that genuine humanity, the one invisible God was being declared and made known.

Hebrews therefore adds another powerful witness to the testimony we have already established. God was manifest in the flesh. The Word was God and was made flesh.

Emmanuel means *"God with us."* Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God. He is also *"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."*

These declarations all point in the same direction. God did not reveal only information about Himself. He made Himself known in Jesus Christ.

The next question now becomes even more direct. If Jesus Christ is the express image through whom the invisible God is made known, who did Jesus say was dwelling within Him? His own answer is unmistakable: *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

What does an exact imprint help us understand about the Son revealing the invisible God?

Personal Reflection

Do you listen to Jesus as revealing the Father, or mainly as a teacher offering useful advice?

Action Step

Revisit **Hebrews 1:1–3***. Identify a teaching of Jesus you need to receive as God's own revelation and explain your response.*

THE FATHER THAT DWELLETH IN ME

BACK TO CONTENTS

We have seen that Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God and the express image through whom God made Himself known. Jesus now gives us His own explanation of this revelation. When Philip asked to see the Father, Jesus did not direct him towards another divine person standing apart from Himself. He explained that the Father was dwelling in Him.

John recorded in **John 14:8-10**:

> *"Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."*

The words are direct. Jesus identifies the divine One dwelling within Him as *"the Father."* This gives us an essential key for understanding the relationship between the Father and the Son.

The Father Was Not Distant From the Son

Philip's request was simple: *"Lord, shew us the Father."* His question assumed that the Father was someone still to be shown. Jesus answered by directing Philip back to the One already standing before him.

Jesus said, *"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"* He then declared, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

Jesus did not say that He Himself was the Father in His humanity. The Son was genuine human life. What He explained was that the Father was present and revealed in Him. This is why seeing Jesus was seeing the Father made known.

The Father was therefore not distant from the Son. He was not another God standing beside Jesus or a separate divine being observing His earthly life from elsewhere. Jesus said plainly, *"the Father in me."*

The words *"I am in the Father, and the Father in me"* must also be allowed to stand together. Jesus was not describing two divine beings occupying the same place. He was explaining the relationship between the genuine human Son and the invisible God who dwelt within and was revealed through Him.

The Son lived and spoke in complete dependence upon the Father, while the Father was present in Him as the divine source of the words and works. This is why Jesus could speak from genuine humanity and yet reveal God without deficiency. The Father who dwelt in Him was making Himself known through that human life.

The statement also prevents us from treating the Father as absent whenever Scripture speaks of Jesus Christ. If the Father dwelt in Him, then the works of Jesus were not evidence that another God had appeared. They were evidence that the one invisible God was present and active in the Son.

This agrees with everything already established. God is invisible Spirit, and Jesus Christ is the visible human revelation through whom that invisible God is made known. The Father was not seen as invisible Spirit with natural eyes, but He was revealed through the Son.

The distinction is therefore not between two Gods. It is between the invisible Father and the genuine human Son through whom the Father was revealed.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why did Jesus answer Philip's request to see the Father by directing him to Himself?

Personal Reflection

Have you asked for a clearer revelation of God while overlooking Jesus' words to Philip?

Action Step

Read **John 14:8–11** *and correct any assumption that knowing the Father requires looking beyond Jesus Christ.*

"The Father That Dwelleth in Me"

Jesus then makes the relationship even clearer: *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* The word dwelleth is important. Jesus does not describe the Father as temporarily assisting Him from a distance. He describes the Father as dwelling in Him.

This agrees directly with Paul's statement in **2 Corinthians 5:19**:

> *"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."*

Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me."* Paul says *"God was in Christ."* These are not separate explanations. The Father dwelling in Jesus Christ was God Himself.

The one God who had declared that there is none beside Him was not absent from Jesus Christ. He was in Christ, acting and revealing Himself through the genuine humanity of the Son.

This is also why the works of Jesus carried divine authority. Jesus did not claim that the works originated independently from His humanity. He said, *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* The divine works revealed the presence and activity of the Father within Him.

The Son therefore did not compete with the Father for divine identity. The Son revealed the Father because the Father dwelt in Him.

The Father Is the Invisible Spirit

To understand this correctly, we must remember what Scripture has already established concerning the nature of God. Jesus said in **John 4:24**:

> *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."*

God is Spirit. The Father is therefore not to be imagined as another physical divine being standing beside the Son. The Father is the invisible eternal Spirit who was dwelling in and revealing Himself through Jesus Christ.

This does not reduce the Son to a body. Jesus possessed complete and genuine humanity, including a real body, soul, mind, emotions, will and human experience. The detailed examination of that humanity belongs to a later Study Guide.

Here the point is specific: the divine Spirit dwelling in the man Christ Jesus was not a created human spirit of human origin. God Himself, the eternal Spirit, dwelt within Him. Jesus identified that divine indwelling as *"the Father that dwelleth in me."*

This preserves both truths. The humanity of the Son remains genuine, while the Deity revealed through that humanity remains the one eternal God.

God was not divided when He dwelt in Christ. The Father did not cease to fill heaven and earth. The omnipresent Spirit could dwell fully in Jesus Christ while remaining the eternal God who is everywhere present.

His indwelling did not confine Him to the physical dimensions of the Son's body. The one invisible Spirit was fully present and revealed in Jesus Christ without being divided, diminished or confined.

The Father Was Revealed Through the Son

Jesus' statement therefore gives us the biblical explanation of how the Father was made known. The Father was invisible, while the Son was visible. The Father dwelt in the Son and did the works through Him.

To see the Son was therefore to see the Father revealed. This is not the language of one divine person showing another divine person from a distance. It is the language of indwelling revelation. The invisible Father was making Himself known through the genuine human life of the Son.

This explains why the Scriptures we have studied fit together so naturally. John says *"the Word was God"* and *"the Word was made flesh."* Matthew records the name *"Emmanuel,"* meaning *"God with us."* Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh"* and *"God was in Christ."* Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me."*

These statements form one consistent testimony: The one invisible God made Himself known in Jesus Christ. The question now becomes even more personal and direct. If the Father truly dwelt in Jesus Christ, what did Jesus mean when He said: *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"*? That statement deserves to be examined in its own right because it shows just how completely the invisible Father was revealed through the Son.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How can the Father dwell in Jesus without ceasing to fill heaven and earth?

Personal Reflection

Have you confused God's dwelling in Jesus with God being limited to His human body?

Action Step

Compare **John 14:10** *with* **Jeremiah 23:24***. Explain how this changes your view of the Father revealed in Christ.*

I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE

BACK TO CONTENTS

We have seen that Jesus identified the divine One dwelling within Him as *"the Father."* He did not describe the Father as another God standing beside Him. He said plainly, *"the Father that dwelleth in me."*

This gives us the foundation for understanding another important statement Jesus made concerning His relationship with the Father. Jesus said in **John 10:30**:

> *"I and my Father are one."*

These words must be understood within the wider testimony of Scripture. The Father is the eternal invisible Spirit, the Father dwelt in Jesus Christ, and Paul says that *"God was in Christ."* Jesus' statement of oneness therefore belongs within that same revelation.

More Than Agreement

The words *"I and my Father are one"* should not be reduced simply to agreement of purpose. Two people may agree completely while still remaining entirely separate beings. Jesus goes further than saying that He and the Father shared the same purpose or worked towards the same goal.

The surrounding verses helps explain what He meant. Jesus said in **John 10:37-38**:

> *"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."*

Jesus connects His oneness with the Father to the reality of the Father being in Him. He says, *"the Father is in me, and I in him."* This agrees directly with His later words, *"the Father that dwelleth in me."*

The oneness is therefore not simply agreement between two divine beings. Jesus points to the indwelling Father. The invisible God was present and revealing Himself through the genuine human life of the Son.

The One God Revealed Through the Son

We must keep Jesus' words within the foundation already established in Scripture. There is one God, God is Spirit, and the Father is the eternal invisible Spirit. Jesus Christ is the genuine human revelation through whom that invisible God was made known.

Therefore, when Jesus says *"I and my Father are one,"* He is not introducing two Gods who have become united. Neither is He describing two separate divine beings who agree perfectly with one another. The Father was dwelling in the Son, God was in Christ, and the one invisible God was revealing Himself through genuine humanity.

This preserves the real distinction between the Father and the Son without dividing God. The Father is the eternal Spirit, while the Son is the genuine human life through whom that Spirit was revealed.

The Son is not simply the physical body of Jesus. Jesus Christ possessed complete and genuine humanity, including a real body, soul, mind, emotions, will and human experience. Yet the divine Spirit dwelling within the man Christ Jesus was not a created human spirit of human origin. The Spirit within Him was God Himself, the eternal Father.

This is why Jesus could speak and act from genuine humanity while at the same time revealing the Father perfectly.

The Works Revealed the Oneness

Jesus told those who struggled to believe His words to consider His works. He said, *"believe the works,"* and then explained why: *"that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."*

The works were evidence of the indwelling Father. Jesus had already explained, *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* The works of Jesus were therefore not evidence of a second God operating independently beside the Father. They revealed the presence and activity of the Father within the Son.

This is the Scriptural explanation of their oneness. The Father was not distant or absent. The Father was in Him, and the one God was being revealed through Jesus Christ.

This also prevents us from weakening Jesus' statement by saying that He was only claiming unity of purpose. Their purpose was certainly one, but Jesus Himself directs us deeper than agreement. He directs us to indwelling when He says, *"the Father is in me, and I in him."*

The testimony is therefore consistent. Jesus says, *"I and my Father are one."* He explains, *"the Father is in me,"* and also says, *"the Father that dwelleth in me."* Paul then declares, *"God was in Christ."*

These are not separate explanations. They form one Scriptural testimony concerning the one invisible God revealed through the Son.

This prepares us to understand what Jesus said when Philip asked Him to show them the Father. Jesus answered, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."* If the Father truly dwelt in the Son, and Jesus could say *"I and my Father are one,"* then His answer to Philip follows

naturally. The Father whom Philip wanted to see was already being revealed through Jesus Christ.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do Jesus' works help explain His words 'I and my Father are one'?

Personal Reflection

Do you understand 'I and my Father are one' mainly as shared agreement between separate beings?

Action Step

Reconsider **John 10:30** *alongside Jesus' explanation of the Father's works. State how this should shape your confidence in Him.*

HE THAT HATH SEEN ME HATH SEEN THE FATHER

BACK TO CONTENTS

Jesus had already explained that the Father dwelt within Him. His conversation with Philip now brings the revelation to an even more direct statement. Philip wanted Jesus to show him the Father, but Jesus answered that the Father had already been made known through the Son.

John recorded in **John 14:8-11**:

> *"Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."*

Philip's request gives us one of the clearest opportunities in Scripture to understand how Jesus Himself explained the relationship between the Father and the Son.

Philip Wanted to See the Father

Philip said, *"Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us."* He wanted a revelation of the Father that he believed had not yet been given.

Jesus' response is striking: *"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"* Philip asked to see the Father, yet Jesus immediately spoke about Philip knowing Him. The answer shows that Philip had not yet fully understood what was being revealed through the life of Jesus Christ.

Jesus did not tell Philip that the Father would appear separately so that he could see another divine person. Neither did He direct Philip's attention away from Himself. Instead, Jesus said:

"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

This statement must be understood within everything Scripture has already established. God is Spirit and invisible. No man has seen God in His eternal Spirit nature. Therefore, Jesus could not mean that Philip had physically seen the invisible Spirit with his natural eyes.

Philip had seen the Son, and through the Son he had seen the Father revealed. The distinction is important. The Father remained invisible Spirit, while the Son was genuine human life that could be seen. Yet the Father was so fully present and revealed in the Son that Jesus could say, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why had Philip not yet understood the Father although he had seen Jesus?

Personal Reflection

When you think of the Father, do you still picture someone whose identity Jesus has not fully revealed?

Action Step

Read Jesus' answer to Philip. What mistaken idea should you abandon, and how will you direct your trust to Jesus?

Jesus Did Not Point Philip to Another Divine Person

If the Father were another divine person standing separately beside Jesus Christ, Philip's request would have provided a natural opportunity for Jesus to explain that distinction clearly. Instead, Jesus responded: *"how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"*

Philip's request showed that he had not yet understood the revelation already before him. Jesus then explained why seeing Him was seeing the Father: *"I am in the Father, and the Father in me."* And: *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."*

The answer is not that Jesus and the Father are two Gods who resemble one another. Neither is the explanation that Jesus is a second divine person displaying the character of a first divine person. Jesus points to the Father dwelling in Him.

The invisible Father was not separated from the Son. He was present within and revealing Himself through the genuine human life of Jesus Christ. This agrees directly with Paul's words: *"God was in Christ."*

The God who could not be seen as invisible Spirit was being made known through the Son. The Father was not absent or distant. The Father was dwelling in Him.

To See Jesus Was to See God Revealed

We must also understand what Jesus means by *"seen."* Philip had physically looked upon Jesus many times, yet Jesus' words go beyond recognising His outward human appearance.

To see Jesus correctly was to understand whom that human life revealed. This agrees with Paul's statement in **Colossians 1:15**:

> *"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:"*

Jesus Christ is *"the image of the invisible God."* The God who cannot be physically seen in His eternal Spirit nature is made known through the visible Son.

The writer of Hebrews gives the same testimony when he describes the Son as *"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."* These Scriptures help us understand Jesus' words to Philip. To see Jesus was not to see another God beside the Father. It was to see the Father's revelation in genuine human life.

The words Jesus spoke revealed the Father. The works Jesus performed revealed the Father. The character displayed through His life revealed the Father. The divine authority operating through Him revealed the Father.

Jesus Himself explains the source: *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* The revelation therefore came from within. The Father who was invisible as Spirit was dwelling in the Son and making Himself known through Him.

The Revelation of the Father Was Not Partial

Jesus' words also show how completely the Father was revealed in Him. He said, 'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' This prepares us for Paul's later declaration that 'all the fulness of the Godhead' dwells bodily in Jesus Christ. The revelation in Jesus was full and complete. The Father dwelling in Jesus Christ was the one eternal God.

This does not mean that God's entire omnipresent existence became physically confined within a human body. God remained the eternal Spirit who fills heaven and earth. Yet everything necessary for God to make Himself truly and fully known was revealed through Jesus Christ.

This is why no additional divine person needs to be seen in order to know the Father more fully. Jesus told Philip that the Father was already being revealed before him.

We no longer need to ask, Where is the Father whom Jesus came to reveal? Jesus has answered: *"the Father that dwelleth in me."*

We no longer need to ask, How can the invisible Father be known? Jesus has answered: *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

The Son Makes the Father Known

The testimony of Scripture now fits together with increasing clarity. John says *"No man hath seen God at any time,"* yet the Son *"hath declared him."* Paul says Jesus is *"the image of the invisible God,"* and Hebrews calls Him *"the express image of his person."*

Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me"* and then *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."* These statements are not describing two Gods who happen to resemble one another. They describe the revelation of the one invisible God through the genuine human life of the Son.

The Father is the eternal invisible Spirit. The Son is the genuine human revelation through whom that Father was made known. This is why Jesus Christ stands at the centre of our knowledge of God. We do not look beyond Him in search of another divine person who will reveal something more complete about God.

The Father was revealed in Him. The next section will strengthen this identification even further. Long before the birth of Jesus Christ, Isaiah prophesied concerning the Son who would

be given and declared that His name would be called: *"The mighty God, The everlasting Father."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do Jesus' words and works reveal the Father fully?

Personal Reflection

Is there a word or work of Jesus that you have treated as less than a revelation of the Father?

Action Step

Identify it, compare it with **John 14:9–10***, and explain how this changes the way you listen to Him.*

THE MIGHTY GOD AND THE EVERLASTING FATHER

BACK TO CONTENTS

Jesus told Philip, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."* Long before Jesus spoke those words, Isaiah had already given a remarkable prophecy concerning the identity of the Son who would be born. Isaiah did not simply announce the coming of a child. He also declared the names by which that Son would be known.

Isaiah wrote in **Isaiah 9:6**:

> *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."*

The prophecy must be allowed to speak with its full force. The child who is born and the Son who is given is called *"The mighty God"* and *"The everlasting Father."* These names are not placed beside the Son as names belonging to someone else. They identify the One revealed through the Son.

A Child Is Born, a Son Is Given

Isaiah carefully joins two truths together. He says, *"a child is born"* and *"a son is given."* The prophecy therefore brings genuine human birth together with divine revelation.

The child was truly born. Jesus Christ entered human history through genuine human life. His humanity did not exist from eternity. The man Christ Jesus was born in time.

Yet Isaiah does not stop with the humanity of the child. He immediately gives names that reveal the identity of the God made known through that human life.

This distinction is essential. We must not make the Son into an eternal second divine person beside God in order to preserve His Deity. Neither should we reduce Jesus Christ to an ordinary man who later became associated with God. The Son is the genuine human revelation through whom the one eternal God was made known.

The detailed examination of the humanity of Jesus Christ belongs to a later Study Guide. Here Isaiah's prophecy serves another purpose. It tells us who was being revealed through the child who was born.

The Son Is Called "The Mighty God"

Isaiah calls the Son *"The mighty God."* This statement is especially important because Scripture has already established that there is only one God.

Isaiah himself records the words of the LORD:

"beside me there is no God."

Therefore, when Isaiah later calls the Son *"The mighty God,"* he cannot be introducing another mighty God beside the LORD. The prophecy must remain in harmony with the one-God revelation already established.

The Son is not a lesser divine being, nor is He another God beside the God of Israel. The One revealed through the Son is *"The mighty God."*

This agrees with Matthew's declaration concerning Emmanuel: *"God with us."* It agrees with Paul's statement that *"God was manifest in the flesh."* It also agrees with the declaration that *"God was in Christ."*

Isaiah's words therefore strengthen the same testimony. The child was truly human, but the God revealed through that genuine human life was the mighty God Himself.

We should not weaken the title by treating it as an honorary description that leaves Jesus below the true God. Isaiah does not call Him a mighty servant of God or a mighty representative of God. He calls Him *"The mighty God."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does calling the promised Son 'The mighty God' agree with God's declaration that none is beside Him?

Personal Reflection

Have you hesitated to acknowledge the full meaning of Isaiah's title 'The mighty God'?

Action Step

Read **Isaiah 9:6** *with* **Isaiah 45:5**. *What should you correct or affirm in your understanding and worship of Jesus?*

The Son Is Called "The Everlasting Father"

Isaiah then gives an even more striking title: *"The everlasting Father."* Traditional Trinitarian teaching distinguishes the Father and the Son as two distinct divine persons and teaches that the Son is not the Father. Isaiah's language therefore deserves careful attention. The Son who is given is called *"The everlasting Father."*

This does not mean that Jesus Christ is His own human father. Neither does it erase the genuine distinction between the Father as eternal Spirit and the Son as genuine human life.

The meaning is revealed by Jesus Himself. He said: *"the Father that dwelleth in me."* And: *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

The Father was not another God beside Jesus Christ. The Father was the invisible eternal Spirit dwelling in and revealing Himself through the Son.

Isaiah's title therefore agrees naturally with John 14. The Son is called *"The everlasting Father"* because the everlasting Father is revealed in Him.

This preserves both truths. The Son remains genuine humanity, while the Father remains the eternal invisible Spirit. Yet the Father is not separated from the Son as another God or another divine being. He is the God made known through the Son.

The prophecy also directs us away from the idea that the Father must be sought beyond Jesus Christ. Isaiah places the title 'The everlasting Father' upon the Son who is given. The Father is revealed in Him.

The Names Identify the God Revealed in the Son

Isaiah's prophecy gives several names:

- Wonderful;
- Counsellor;
- The mighty God;
- The everlasting Father;
- The Prince of Peace.

These names belong together. They reveal the identity and character of the One made known through the Son.

God with us." Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh."* Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me"* and *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

The prophecy therefore fits naturally within the cumulative testimony of Scripture. John says *"the Word was God."* Matthew records the name *"Emmanuel,"* meaning *"God with us."* Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh."* Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me"* and *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

Isaiah says that the Son is called: *"The mighty God, The everlasting Father."* These statements do not point us towards several divine beings sharing divine titles. They point us towards one God making Himself known in Jesus Christ.

The prophecy also protects us from thinking that Jesus Christ reveals only one part of God while another divine person must be sought elsewhere to reveal the Father. Isaiah places the title *"The everlasting Father"* upon the Son who is given. The Father is revealed in Him.

This is why **Isaiah 9:6** belongs at the centre of the Scriptural case concerning the identity of Jesus Christ. The verse does not ask us to choose between His genuine humanity and the Deity revealed through Him. It places both before us in one prophecy.

A child is born. A Son is given. The One made known through that Son bears names that belong to God Himself. The prophecy therefore prepares us to understand the New Testament declarations without creating another God beside the LORD.

This prepares us for another direct statement from Paul. Isaiah identifies the Son as *"The mighty God"* and *"The everlasting Father."* Paul then explains the relationship in equally simple language: *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."*

That statement brings us directly to the next section.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why does calling the Son 'The everlasting Father' neither make Him His own human father nor introduce another God?

Personal Reflection

Does 'The everlasting Father' confuse you because Jesus was genuinely born as a Son?

Action Step

Consider **Isaiah 9:6** *alongside the genuine humanity of Jesus. Explain how both truths should govern what you believe about Him.*

GOD WAS IN CHRIST

BACK TO CONTENTS

Isaiah called the Son *"The mighty God"* and *"The everlasting Father."* Paul gives us another direct statement that helps explain how the one true God was present and revealed in Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 5:19**:

> *"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."*

The statement is simple but profound: *"God was in Christ."* Paul does not describe God as standing apart from Christ while someone else carried out the work of reconciliation. God Himself was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.

God Was Not Standing Apart From Christ

The wording of this verse is important because it tells us where God was in the work of redemption. Paul does not say that God watched from a distance while Christ reconciled the world to Him. He says:

"God was in Christ."

The God who had declared that there is none beside Him was present in Christ. The work taking place through Jesus Christ was therefore not the work of a second God acting independently from the first. The one God was present and active in the Son.

This agrees directly with the words of Jesus: *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* Jesus identifies the divine One dwelling within Him as the Father. Paul identifies the One in Christ as God.

These statements belong together. The Father who dwelt in Jesus Christ was God Himself.

This is why Scripture can speak of the works of Jesus while at the same time Jesus says that the Father dwelling in Him was doing the works. The genuine human Son was not another divine source acting separately from God. God was revealing and working through Him.

God Was Reconciling the World Unto Himself

Paul does not simply say that God was in Christ. He tells us what God was doing:

"reconciling the world unto himself."

The direction of reconciliation is important. God was not in Christ reconciling the world to another God. He was reconciling the world *"unto himself."*

The One acting in Christ and the One to whom humanity was being reconciled is the same God. This strengthens the one-God testimony.

Redemption does not require us to imagine one divine person standing on one side, another divine person standing between God and humanity, and a third divine person later applying the work. Paul's statement is much more direct: *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."* The one God was accomplishing His work of reconciliation through the genuine human life of Jesus Christ.

This does not remove the real mediating role of the man Christ Jesus. Scripture calls Him *"the one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* His genuine humanity is essential to that mediating work. Yet the Deity acting through Him was not another God or another divine person beside the Father.

God was in Christ. The humanity was genuine. The indwelling Deity was the one eternal God.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Who was reconciling the world in Christ, and to whom was the world being reconciled?

Personal Reflection

When you consider reconciliation, do you imagine God remaining distant from the suffering of Christ?

Action Step

Reflect on **2 Corinthians 5:19**. *How should God's personal work in Christ change your gratitude and trust?*

The Reconciling God Was Revealed in Jesus Christ

This Scripture also fits naturally with the other statements we have already examined. Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh"* and *"God was in Christ."* Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me."*

John says *"the Word was God"* and then *"the Word was made flesh."* Matthew records the name *"Emmanuel,"* meaning *"God with us."*

These are not separate explanations of different divine persons. They form one consistent revelation.

The one God who is invisible as Spirit was manifest in flesh. The one God was in Christ. The Father dwelt in the Son.

The Word who was God was made flesh. God was with us.

The cumulative testimony is therefore strong. Jesus Christ cannot be understood simply as someone standing alongside God while carrying out God's work. The one true God was present in Him and was making Himself known through Him.

This is why the work of Christ reveals God so completely. His words and works were not disconnected from the Father. Jesus Himself said that the Father dwelling in Him was doing the works. The revelation was internal, not distant.

God Did Not Become Divided

When Paul says *"God was in Christ,"* we must not imagine that part of God moved into Christ while another part remained elsewhere. God is Spirit and omnipresent. He fills heaven and earth. His presence in Jesus Christ did not divide Him, diminish Him or confine Him to a physical body.

The genuine human life of Jesus had physical location and limitation, but the God revealed through that life remained the eternal Spirit. God could therefore be fully present and revealed in Christ without ceasing to be omnipresent.

This distinction is important because it protects the Scriptural teaching from two errors. We must not separate God from Jesus Christ as though Jesus were another divine being standing beside Him. Neither should we imagine that the infinite God ceased to be Spirit and became confined within human flesh.

Scripture gives us the proper relationship: God was in Christ. The invisible God remained what He eternally is while revealing Himself through genuine humanity.

This brings the argument another step forward. If God was in Christ, if the Father dwelt in Him, if the Word was God and was made flesh, and if the Son is called *"The mighty God"* and *"The everlasting Father,"* then we must ask how completely Deity was present and revealed in Jesus Christ.

Paul gives the answer in one of the strongest declarations in Scripture: *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."* The next section will therefore examine what it means that all the fulness of Deity dwells bodily in Jesus Christ.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why does God's presence in Christ neither divide God nor confine Him to a body?

Personal Reflection

Have you pictured God as divided or physically confined when reading 'God was in Christ'?

Action Step

Compare this declaration with what the Bible says about God's eternal Spirit nature. State what needs to change in your understanding.

ALL THE FULNESS OF DEITY DWELLS BODILY IN JESUS CHRIST

BACK TO CONTENTS

We have seen that God was in Christ, that the Father dwelt in Him, and that the one invisible God was manifested through genuine human life. Paul now gives one of the strongest statements in Scripture concerning how completely Deity was present and revealed in Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote in **Colossians 2:9**:

> *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."*

Every part of this statement matters. Paul does not say that some of the fulness dwells in Christ. He says *"all the fulness."*

He does not describe the presence of Deity as distant or symbolic. He says that the fulness dwells *"bodily."*

The verse therefore brings us directly to the completeness of the divine revelation in Jesus Christ.

What Does "Godhead" Mean?

The word Godhead in the King James Version can easily be misunderstood by modern readers. Today, many Christians use the expression the Godhead as though it were a biblical name for three divine persons. That is not what the word means in **Colossians 2:9**.

The Greek word translated Godhead in this verse is THEOTĒS. It refers to Deity, divine nature or the state of being God. A direct way of expressing Paul's meaning is therefore:

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of Deity bodily."

The Greek word does not mean *"three persons,"* nor does Paul say that three divine persons dwell in Jesus Christ. His statement concerns the fulness of Deity itself.

This becomes clearer when we consider the three places where the English word Godhead appears in the King James Version. Paul wrote in **Acts 17:29**:

> *"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."*

Here the underlying Greek word is THEIOS, which carries the thought of that which is divine or pertaining to God. Paul is contrasting the divine nature with idols made from physical materials.

Paul also wrote in **Romans 1:20**:

> *"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:"*

Here Godhead translates THEIOTĒS, which refers to divinity or divine quality. Then, in **Colossians 2:9**, Paul uses THEOTĒS, speaking directly of Deity itself. These three verses do not use the English word Godhead as a collective title for the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The emphasis is upon what belongs to God: His divine nature, divinity and Deity.

The fact that the King James Version uses the same English word for these related Greek terms should not lead us to assume that Godhead is a technical biblical title for a three-person divine structure. The translators were using an English word that spoke broadly of Deity or divine nature. The doctrine must therefore be drawn from what the verses themselves teach, not from a later meaning attached to the English term.

This explains why the wording of **Colossians 2:9** is so important. Paul is not asking us to identify separate members within Deity. He is directing our attention to Jesus Christ and declaring that the complete fulness of Deity dwells in Him.

Colossians 2:9 therefore directs our attention fully to Jesus Christ: all the fulness of Deity dwells in Him bodily.

Personal Response

Key Truth

What does 'Godhead' mean in **Colossians 2:9***, and why must its meaning come from the verse?*

Personal Reflection

Does the word 'Godhead' still suggest that only part of God dwelt in Jesus?

Action Step

Read **Colossians 2:9** *carefully. What conclusion about the fulness of God should change or strengthen your trust in Jesus?*

All the Fulness

The word fulness is equally important. Paul says 'all the fulness.' Nothing belonging to Deity is absent from Him.

This agrees with Paul's earlier statement in the same letter. Paul wrote in **Colossians 1:19**:

> *"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;"*

Again, the emphasis is all fulness. Scripture does not present Jesus Christ as a partial revelation of God. The one true God was fully revealed in Him. Paul directs the fulness itself to Christ.

This agrees with everything we have already established. John says *"the Word was God."* Matthew records the name *"Emmanuel,"* meaning *"God with us."* Paul says *"God was manifest in the flesh"* and *"God was in Christ."* Jesus says *"the Father that dwelleth in me."* Isaiah calls the Son *"The mighty God, The everlasting Father."*

Colossians 2:9 gathers these truths together. All the fulness of what God is dwells in Jesus Christ. Nothing belonging to Deity is absent from Jesus Christ, and Scripture directs us to Him to know the Father. The divine revelation in Jesus Christ is complete.

The Fulness Dwells Bodily

Paul also says that this fulness dwells *"bodily."* That word connects the fulness of Deity with the genuine human revelation of Jesus Christ. God was not simply associated with Jesus from a distance.

His presence was not symbolic, temporary or external. The fulness of Deity dwelt bodily in Him.

This agrees directly with the earlier statements *"The Word was made flesh," "God was manifest in the flesh,"* and *"God was in Christ."* The invisible God was revealed through genuine human life.

At the same time, we must not misunderstand the word bodily as though the eternal God became physically confined within the dimensions of Jesus' body. God remained Spirit. He remained omnipresent and continued to fill heaven and earth.

The body of Jesus had physical location and limitation, but the eternal Spirit dwelling in and revealing Himself through that humanity remained unlimited. God was therefore fully revealed in Christ without being divided or reduced.

The presence of all the fulness in Jesus Christ did not mean that one part of God was in Him while another part remained elsewhere. The one omnipresent God was fully revealed through the Son while remaining the eternal Spirit who fills all things.

This distinction preserves both the genuine humanity of Jesus and the completeness of His Deity. The humanity was real, and the Deity was complete.

The Revelation in Jesus Christ Is Complete

Colossians 2:9 therefore declares the completeness of the revelation in Jesus Christ. All the fulness of Deity dwells in Him. Paul's wording must retain its full force: all the fulness dwells in Christ.

Paul's wording does not allow us to divide the fulness. All the fulness dwells in Christ.

This is why Jesus could say *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."* The Father was not absent from Him. It is why Isaiah could call the Son *"The everlasting Father,"* why Matthew could say *"God with us,"* and why Paul could write *"God was in Christ."*

The Scriptural testimony is cumulative. Jesus Christ is not a partial revelation of God. The one invisible God has made Himself fully known in Him.

Paul immediately connects this truth with the believer's position in Christ. Paul wrote in **Colossians 2:9-10**:

> *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"*

The connection is deliberate. All the fulness is in Christ, and the believer is complete in Him.

The detailed teaching concerning the indwelling Christ and the believer's spiritual completeness belongs to the Study Guide that follows. Here the point is simpler: nothing is lacking in Jesus Christ because all the fulness of Deity dwells bodily in Him.

We therefore do not need to look beyond Jesus Christ to find another part of God. God was manifest in the flesh. God was in Christ. The Father dwelt in Him.

And Paul declares: *"in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."*

This brings us naturally to another powerful line of evidence. The LORD declared that He created all things *"alone"* and *"by myself."* Yet the New Testament says that all things were created by Jesus Christ. What does that reveal concerning His identity?

That question leads us directly to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does all the fulness dwelling bodily in Christ explain the completeness of God's revelation?

Personal Reflection

Have you looked for an additional divine revelation beyond what is fully revealed in Jesus Christ?

Action Step

Examine **Colossians 2:9–10***. Identify how this truth should correct your expectations and strengthen your confidence in Him.*

THE CREATOR REVEALED IN JESUS CHRIST

BACK TO CONTENTS

We have established that all the fulness of Deity dwells bodily in Jesus Christ. Scripture now gives us another powerful witness concerning His identity. The Old Testament declares that the LORD created all things alone and by Himself, while the New Testament attributes creation directly to Jesus Christ.

These statements cannot describe two different Creators. There is one Creator because there is one God. The question is therefore not whether Jesus Christ is connected with creation, but what that connection reveals concerning the identity of the God made known in Him.

All Things Were Created by Him

Paul wrote in **Colossians 1:13-17**:

> *"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."*

The Young's Literal Translation (YLT) renders the description in **Colossians 1:13** as *"the Son of His love"*. This comparison confirms that the Son is the subject of the verses that follow. It helps us identify Jesus Christ as the One whom Paul calls the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

Paul is speaking about the Son. He identifies Him as *"the image of the invisible God"* and then declares, *"by him were all things created."* He strengthens that statement by adding that all things were created *"by him, and for him."* Then Paul says, *"he is before all things, and by him all things consist."*

The One revealed in Jesus Christ is therefore not placed among created things as another creature. Scripture connects Him directly with the creation and continuing existence of all things.

This does not mean that the genuine humanity of Jesus existed before His birth. The man Christ Jesus entered human history in time. The eternal identity revealed through that genuine human life, however, is the God who existed before creation.

The Creator did not begin at Bethlehem. The humanity through which He was revealed did. This distinction allows us to preserve both the genuine humanity of the Son and the eternal identity of the God made known through Him.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How can the Creator be revealed in Jesus when His genuine humanity began in time?

Personal Reflection

Have you found it difficult to hold together Jesus' beginning as man and the Creator's eternal existence?

Action Step

Read **John 1:1–3** *and 1:14 together. Explain what you need to affirm about the eternal God revealed in genuine humanity.*

The LORD Created Alone and by Himself

The importance of Paul's statement becomes even clearer when we compare it with the words of the LORD through Isaiah. Isaiah wrote in **Isaiah 44:24**, where the LORD makes three unmistakable declarations:

> *"Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;"*

- He "maketh all things";
- He stretched forth the heavens "alone";
- He spread abroad the earth "by myself."

There is therefore no room for one Creator called the LORD and another separate divine Creator called Jesus Christ. If the LORD created alone and by Himself, and the New Testament says that all things were created by Jesus Christ, the Scriptures must be understood together.

The conclusion is not that two divine persons jointly performed what the LORD described as being done *"alone"* and *"by myself."* The conclusion is that the Creator revealed in Jesus Christ is the one LORD who created all things.

This agrees with John's testimony. John wrote in **John 1:3**:

> *"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."*

John has already told us, *"the Word was God."* He now declares that all things were made through that Word. The Word through whom creation came into being was not another Creator beside God. The Word was God Himself in His eternal expression and purpose.

When that Word was made flesh, the Creator was being made known in genuine human life.

The Creator Was Made Known in Jesus Christ

The testimony now becomes remarkably consistent. The LORD says, *"I am the LORD that maketh all things."* He says He created *"alone"* and *"by myself."* John says, *"All things were made by him,"* while Paul says concerning the Son, *"by him were all things created."*

These statements cannot be reconciled by introducing more than one Creator. Scripture has already established that there is one God and one Creator. They are reconciled by recognising who was revealed in Jesus Christ. The one LORD who created the heavens and the earth made Himself known through the Son.

This is another reason Scripture directs us to recognise the identity of the Creator revealed in Jesus Christ. The one LORD who created all things made Himself known through the Son.

Paul goes even further. He says, *"by him all things consist."* Creation not only came into existence through the power of God; it continues by His sustaining power. The One revealed in Jesus Christ is therefore connected not only with the beginning of creation but with its continuing existence.

The Creator and Sustainer are not two Gods. The God who created all things and the God revealed in Jesus Christ are the same one God. This brings together the testimony we have established throughout this Study Guide:

- The Word was God;
- The Word was made flesh;
- Emmanuel means God with us;
- Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God;
- The Father dwelt in Him;
- God was in Christ;
- All the fulness of Deity dwells bodily in Him;
- The God revealed in Him is the Creator of all things.

The evidence therefore continues to point in one direction. The one invisible God has made Himself fully known in Jesus Christ.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do Isaiah's words about the LORD creating alone agree with creation being attributed to Christ?

Personal Reflection

Has a description of Jesus ever made Him sound like a second creator alongside the LORD?

Action Step

Compare **Isaiah 44:24** *with* **John 1:3**. *Correct that description and explain what the one Creator means to your worship.*

CONCLUSION: THE ONE INVISIBLE GOD MADE KNOWN

BACK TO CONTENTS

This Study Guide began with the question: How did the one invisible God make Himself known to humanity? Scripture has answered that question repeatedly and consistently. The one God who is Spirit, invisible, eternal and omnipresent revealed Himself through Jesus Christ.

Paul declared that *"God was manifest in the flesh."* John wrote that *"the Word was God,"* and then that *"the Word was made flesh."* Matthew identified Jesus as Emmanuel, *"God with us."*

Paul called Jesus Christ *"the image of the invisible God,"* while the writer of Hebrews described the Son as *"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."* Jesus Himself explained the revelation when He said, *"the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* When Philip asked to see the Father, Jesus answered, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

These statements do not direct us towards several Gods or several separate divine beings. They reveal the one invisible God making Himself known through the genuine human life of the Son.

Isaiah strengthens this testimony by calling the Son *"The mighty God"* and *"The everlasting Father."* Paul then states the relationship directly: *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."* The God revealed in Jesus Christ was not another God beside the Father. The one eternal God was present in and revealed through the Son.

The revelation was therefore not partial. Paul declares that 'all the fulness of the Godhead bodily' dwells in Jesus Christ. Nothing belonging to Deity is absent from Him, and the one true God was fully revealed through Him.

The testimony of creation leads to the same conclusion. The LORD declared that He created all things *"alone"* and *"by myself,"* while the New Testament says that all things were created by Jesus Christ. Scripture does not give us two Creators. The one Creator made Himself known in Jesus Christ.

The foundation established in the first Study Guide therefore remains unchanged: there is one God. This Study Guide has now shown how that one God was made known. The Word was made flesh, God was with us, the Father dwelt in the Son, God was in Christ, and all the fulness of Deity dwells bodily in Him.

The testimony of Scripture is therefore consistent from beginning to end. The invisible God did not remain distant or unknown. He made Himself known fully and personally in Jesus Christ.

The next Study Guide will take the revelation one step further. The same Jesus Christ who revealed the one true God does not remain distant from His people. Scripture declares the New Covenant mystery:

"Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do the Word made flesh, the indwelling Father and all the fulness in Jesus give one testimony?

Personal Reflection

Of the truths about the Word, the Father in Jesus and the fulness of Deity, which most challenges your beliefs?

Action Step

Identify one conviction this study has corrected or strengthened. Explain how it will now govern your trust and worship of Jesus Christ.

SUBMISSION TO COGMA FOR APPRAISAL

Instructions

Complete this section after you have finished the Study Guide. It must be completed online.

The link is located at the bottom of the online Study Guide — https://cogma.com.au/study-guides/

Your answers should reflect your understanding, your personal response, and how you intend to live by the truth you have studied. Answer honestly and be specific.

1. Main Truth

Explain how 'the Word was God,' God manifest in flesh, and Emmanuel describe the invisible God made known in Jesus. Why does His real humanity matter to this revelation?

2. Understanding

How do Jesus' words about the Father dwelling in Him help explain the image and express image descriptions? Use a verse to show why Jesus reveals God fully rather than standing beside another God.

3. Personal Reflection

What did you previously believe about how the Father is known through Jesus? Explain what Jesus' words to Philip have clarified or corrected for you.

4. Response to Truth

Jesus said that the Father dwelt in Him, and Paul wrote that all the fulness of Deity dwells in Him. What do these truths mean for your own trust in Jesus, rather than thinking of God as distant? Explain your answer.

5. Action Step

Which belief about the God revealed in Jesus will you examine this week using two Bible verses? Explain what it may need to change in your understanding or trust.

6. Early Response

Have you examined that belief against the Bible yet? If so, what changed or was confirmed? If not, what has prevented you from beginning?

7. Ongoing Practice

When you read about the Son, the Father, and the Creator, how can you keep remembering that the Bible reveals one invisible God in Jesus? Explain how reading the surrounding verses could help you.

8. Doctrinal Clarity

How do Isaiah's names for the Son, 'God was in Christ,' and the fulness of Deity in Jesus fit the one-God testimony? Explain why His genuine humanity remains essential.

9. Living the Truth

What does it mean for your own prayer or worship that the Creator was revealed in Jesus Christ? Explain how you would speak of Him in a prayer or a conversation.

10. Final Response

Bring together the Word made flesh, the Father revealed through the Son, and the Creator made known in Jesus. What has changed in your understanding, and how will you respond to Him?