

What or Who dwells in Whom in Colossians 2:9?

Colossians 2:6 "As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, even as you were taught, abounding in it in thanksgiving. 8 Be careful that you **don't let anyone rob you through his philosophy** and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the elemental spirits of the world, and not after Christ. 9 **For in him all the fullness of the Deity dwells bodily**, 10 and in him you are made full, who is the head of all principality and power. 11 In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of **God, who raised him from the dead**. 13 You were dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,"

Once again, we must identify the "God" of whom Paul speaks of in this passage. In verse 12, we see it was the God who raised Christ from the dead. What is His identity?

Romans 6:4 "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as **Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father**, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Galatians 1:1 "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by **Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;**)"

Of course, it was Christ's Father who raised Him from the dead. What else did His Father do?

Hebrews 1:1 **God...** 2 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;**

1 Corinthians 8:6 But to us **there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things**, and we in him; and **one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things**, and we by him.

Here we see that Christ's Father is the Creator, Who created all things through His Son, Jesus - the Christ. Now, what is the name of Christ's Father, as identified in the Old Testament?

(ASV)Genesis 2:4 These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that **Jehovah God made earth and heaven**.

(ASV)Exodus 20:11 for in six days **Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is...**

(ASV)Nehemiah 9:6 Thou art **Jehovah**, even thou alone; thou **hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them**, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

There are many OT texts declaring Jehovah(Yahweh) as the Creator. Here are some: [Gen2:4](#); [Ex20:11](#); [Neh9:6](#); [Ps96:5](#); [Is37:16;45:7,11-12,18;66:2](#); [Jer10:10-12](#). So, now we can see that Jehovah created all things through His Son, Jesus the Christ and also raised Jesus from the dead. Jehovah is the name of the "God" whom Paul spoke of in the passage.

With that context, let's now consider our central verse of study: "**For in [Christ] dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily**." -Paul (Col2:9). There is often disagreement as to the

meaning of that word "Godhead". So, I wonder if there might be a better word to use. As it turns out, many Bible translators have used different words:

New International Version

For in Christ all the **fullness of the Deity** lives in bodily form,

New Living Translation

For in Christ lives all the **fullness of God** in a human body.

English Standard Version

For in him the whole **fullness of deity** dwells bodily,

Berean Study Bible

For in Christ all the **fullness of the Deity** dwells in bodily form.

Berean Literal Bible

For in Him all the **fullness of the Deity** dwells bodily.

New American Standard Bible

For in Him all the **fullness of Deity** dwells in bodily form,

New King James Version

For in Him dwells all the **fullness of the Godhead** bodily;

King James Bible

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

Christian Standard Bible

For the entire **fullness of God's nature** dwells bodily in Christ,

Contemporary English Version

God lives fully in Christ.

Good News Translation

For **the full content of divine nature** lives in Christ, in his humanity,

Holman Christian Standard Bible

For the **entire fullness of God's nature** dwells bodily in Christ,

International Standard Version

because all **the essence of deity** inhabits him in bodily form.

NET Bible

For in him all **the fullness of deity** lives in bodily form,

New Heart English Bible

For in him **all the fullness of Deity** dwells in bodily form,

Aramaic Bible in Plain English

For all **The Fullness of The Deity** dwells in him bodily.

GOD'S WORD® Translation

All of God lives in Christ's body,

New American Standard 1977

For in Him all the **fulness of Deity** dwells in bodily form,

Jubilee Bible 2000

For in him dwells all the **fulness of the Godhead** bodily,

King James 2000 Bible

For in him dwells all the **fulness of the Deity** bodily.

American King James Version

For in him dwells all the **fulness of the Godhead** bodily.

American Standard Version

for in him dwelleth all the **fulness of the Godhead** bodily,

Douay-Rheims Bible

For in him dwelleth all the **fulness of the Godhead** corporeally;

Darby Bible Translation

For in him dwells all the **fulness of the Godhead** bodily;

English Revised Version

for in him dwelleth all the **fulness of the Godhead** bodily,

Webster's Bible Translation

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

Weymouth New Testament

For it is in Christ that the **fulness of God's nature** dwells embodied, and in Him you are made complete,

World English Bible


For in him all the **fulness of the Godhead** dwells bodily,

Young's Literal Translation

because in him doth tabernacle all the **fulness of the Godhead** bodily,

Strong's Concordance: G2320: theotes (used only once in the NT)

theh-ot-ace; from 2316; **divinity** (abstr.):--godhead.

2320. θεότης **thēōtēs**, theh-ot'-ace; from 2316; **divinity** (abstr.):—godhead. 

G2316: theos theh'-os of uncertain affinity; a deity, especially (with 3588) the supreme Divinity; figuratively, a magistrate; by Hebraism, very:--X exceeding, God, god(-ly, -ward).

2316. θεός *théōs*, theh'-os; of uncert. affn.; a deity, espec. (with 3588) the supreme Divinity; fig. a magistrate; by Heb. very:— X exceeding, God, god [-ly, -ward].

Young's Analytical Concordance: "Deity"

3. Deity, θεότης *theotēs*.
Col. 2. 9 dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead

What, then, is the best translation for G2320, which is only used in Colossians 2:9?

- Strong says "divinity" or possibly "godhead"
- Young says "Deity"
- 11 translations favor "deity" or "Deity".
- 11 translations favor "Godhead".
- 7 translations favor Jehovah's nature or Jehovah Himself
- Only 1 translation favors something related to divinity

Since Strong, Young, and Ellen White all lived in the 1800's, it may be helpful to look at [Webster's Dictionary definition of "Deity" in 1828](#):

DEITY, noun

1. Godhead; divinity; the nature and essence of the Supreme Being; as, the deity of the Supreme Being is manifest in his works.
2. God; the Supreme Being, or infinite self-existing Spirit.

(I have omitted 2 additional definitions since they applied only to false gods)

As near as I can tell, Webster's definition encompasses all of the authoritative sources we have looked at. So what can we say then about our initial question: **What or Who dwells in Whom in Colossians 2:9?**

1. "Whom"? We know from Col 2:8 that this is **Christ**.
2. "Who" or "What"? From all the sources we've looked at, we can say that this is either **Jehovah Himself** or the **nature of Jehovah -- His Deity/Divinity**.

Whatever we call it, this is what lives(dwells) in Christ. Let's see if we can get some more clarity on the "Who" or "What", from Scripture(KJV):

JESUS SAID:

- the Father is in me(Jn10:38)

- I am in the Father, and the Father in me(Jn14:10)
- the Father that dwelleth in me(Jn14:10)
- the Father in me(Jn14:11)
- thou, Father, art in me(Jn17:21)
- I in them, and thou in me(Jn17:23)
- I live by the Father(Jn6:57)
- the Father hath...given to the Son to have life in himself(Jn5:26)

JOHN SAID: God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son(1Jn5:11)

JOHN THE BAPTIST SAID:

- God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.(Jn3:34)
- The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.(Jn3:35)

PAUL SAID:

- God was in Christ(2Cor5:19)
- the love of God, which is in Christ(Rom8:39)
- Jesus: Who, being in the form of God(Php2:5-6)
- thought it not robbery to be equal with God(Ibid)
- God also hath highly exalted him(Php2:9)
- and given him a name which is above every name(Ibid)
- the truth is in Jesus(Eph4:21)
- the will of God in Christ(1Th5:18)
- For in [Christ] dwelleth all **the fullness of the Godhead** bodily.(Col2:9)

I just love how Scripture explains itself so beautifully. Praise God!

Where else might "the fullness of the Godhead" dwell?

Ellen White says that, at Pentecost, Christ's apostles "received of **the fullness of the Godhead** and were **fashioned in the likeness of the divine.**" [AA 49.3](#)

Paul says, in Ephesians 3: "11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:... 14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 **That Christ may dwell in your hearts** by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, **that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.** 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."