

Colossians 2:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. This verse delivers theology with nuclear force. "Dwelleth" (katoikei, κατοικεῖ) is present tense—continuing permanent residence, not past event or future hope. "All the fulness" (pan to plérōma, πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα) repeats 1:19 with crucial addition: "of the Godhead" (tēs theotētos, τῆς θεότητος), meaning deity itself, divine nature and essence, not merely divine attributes or powers.

"Bodily" (sōmatikōs, σωματικῶς) emphasizes incarnation: deity dwells in actual physical human body, not symbolically or partially. This confronts docetism (denying Christ's real humanity) and any system diminishing Christ's full deity. The incarnation means the complete divine essence permanently inhabits Jesus Christ's human body—staggering claim elevating Christ infinitely above all created beings, angelic or human.

Historical Context

Greek philosophy typically viewed matter as inferior or evil, making divine incarnation impossible or distasteful. Gnostic systems emerging in this era taught that spiritual beings couldn't truly inhabit material bodies. Jewish monotheism strictly guarded divine transcendence. Paul's claim—complete deity dwelling bodily in human flesh—scandalized both Greek and Jewish sensibilities, yet stands as Christianity's non-negotiable foundation.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's full deity dwelling bodily affect your confidence in His ability to save completely?
2. What theological systems today minimize either Christ's full deity or His true humanity?
3. How should Christ containing all divine fullness shape your worship, prayer, and trust?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι	ἐν	αὐτῷ	κατοικεῖ	πᾶν	τὸ	πλήρωμα	τῆς	θεότητος
For	in	him	dwelleth	all		the fulness	of	the Godhead
G3754	G1722	G846	G2730	G3956		G4138		G2320

σωματικῶς

bodily

G4985

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 1:19 (Parallel theme): For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

John 1:14 (Parallel theme): 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 10:30 (Parallel theme): I and my Father are one.

1 Timothy 3:16 (References God): 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.

John 10:38 (Parallel theme): 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.

1 John 5:20 (References God): And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

John 14:20 (Parallel theme): At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

John 17:21 (Parallel theme): That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

Titus 2:13 (References God): Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Isaiah 7:14 (Parallel theme): Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.