

STRICT AND PARTICULAR

AN ECCENTRIC CALVINIST VIEW

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2009

"The Godhead's Gone" - is That Bad?

One of the sinister signs of the Serpent's subtlety (sorry, it must be catching) that Gail Riplinger 'exposes' in her books is the fact that modern Bible versions have removed the word 'Godhead' from the Bible (Chapter 28 of NABV is titled "The Godhead's Gone". On P. 379 of NABV she gives a chart showing this. She states that the word "Godhead" means "Father, Son and Holy Ghost." However, Gail Riplinger's idea that 'Godhead' as used in the AV means 'Trinity' is an error, making a common term into a technical one, or in other words importing a systematic theological use of a term into a Biblical one. Let me explain my point further.

First of all, the term 'godhead', as used in the 17th century simply meant 'deity', as a perusal of Puritan literature will reveal. Thus in his *Commentary on John*, [1] first published in 1657, George Hutcheson writes that John's statement in John 1.3 that all things were made by Christ is "a proof of Christ's godhead" (P. 11). I might multiply quotations ad nauseum from Hutcheson, but it would serve no useful purpose. Matthew Poole wrote in 1685 on the same text that "The Divine nature and eternal existence of the Lord Christ is evident from his efficiency in the creation of the world." [2] Also note that this is a comment on the same passage as the earlier quote from Hutcheson, incidentally showing that the old term 'Godhead' is a (now obsolete in this sense) synonym for 'Divine nature'. Commenting on Colossians 2.9, [3] Poole uses 'Godhead' and 'Divine nature' interchangeably.

'Godhead' is in fact derived from the same root as the German 'Gottheit', Deity, that which makes God God, the essence of God. The Puritans - and the AV translators - use the word accordingly.

Second, Riplinger's argument is contrary to the Biblical usage of the term in the AV. In Romans 1.20 we read that creation reveals God's "eternal power and Godhead." Does creation reveal the Trinity so that it is "clearly seen"? Incidentally the Greek here is 'Theiotes', while in Colossians 2.9 it is 'Theotes'. Both are translated 'Godhead' in the AV. This may seem slight, but remember that at the Council of Nicea the difference between heresy and orthodoxy was this same letter, iota. This letter can make a great deal of difference in Greek. The fact Riplinger does not think so only exposes the fact that she does not know Greek. The word in Romans could be hyper-literally translated 'Godlikeness' (German, 'Gottlichkeit'). All of which is just to confuse you, of course. [4]

Colossians 2.9 is the passage that is most important in the discussion. There we read of Jesus Christ that "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Now, if we understand 'Godhead', when used in the AV as a technical term for the Trinity, it follows that the whole Trinity became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. The 'oneness' sects use this as a 'proof' for their false doctrine by importing the idea of the Trinity into the term 'Godhead', when a comparison with 17th century usage reveals that 'godhead' had not at that point the technical meaning Riplinger assigns to it. Thus switching to a word like "Deity" robs the Oneness teachers of a text they could otherwise pervert.

Nor is the term 'Divine nature' solely the property of the New Age Movement. The terms are common English ones. Just as Riplinger erroneously asserts that the term 'The Christ' is New Age (despite the AV itself stating that 'Jesus is the Christ', and never using the term 'the Christ' except in a positive way), so she has erroneously supposed 'Godhead' to refer to the Trinity, and 'Divine Nature' to be the sole property of the New Age. Now, I know the date of the origin of the New Age Movement is a bone of contention, but everyone agrees it is within the last 150 years, more or less. So you cannot accuse the Puritan

Matthew Poole of New Age tendencies when he wrote in 1685 on John 1.3 that “The Divine nature and eternal existence of the Lord Christ is evident from his efficiency in the creation of the world” (*Commentary on the Bible* [Reprinted Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1975], Vol. 3 P. 278).

Friendly Footnotes:

[1] Modern edition London, Banner of Truth, 1972. And no, I didn't go hunting through Puritan literature for the word, I have better things to do with my time, I just happened to be using Hutcheson when I noticed his use of "Godhead" and thought 'well, isn't that interesting'.

[2] Matthew Poole: *Commentary on the Bible* (Reprinted Edinburgh, Banner of Truth, 1975), Vol. 3 P. 278

[3] Vol. 3 P. 716

[4] From Eadie: *A Commentary on the Greek Text of Paul's Letter to the Colossians* (Reprint, Vestavia Hills, AL, Solid Ground, 2005) P. 141. The etymology of "Godhead" is quite interesting if you're into that sort of thing.

POSTED BY HIGHLAND HOST AT 3:43 PM

LABELS: BIBLE VERSIONS, KING JAMES ONLY, NEW AGE BIBLE VERSIONS, NONSENSE, RIPLINGER

19 COMMENTS:



The Puritan said...

Um, so what is your opinion of Sinaitius/Vatincanus? Do you ever get around to sharing your opinion on Riplinger's thesis, that the modern versions are translated from corrupt manuscripts? You write so many words, avoiding what is, I'm sorry to say, indefensible. I'm sorry to say it because you seem so intent on protecting all the corruption of God's word since the 19th century.

OCTOBER 8, 2009 AT 7:42 PM



The Puritan said...

Sinaiticus/Vaticanus.

Or, Satanicus and Vaticanus (notice you don't have to change the spelling of the latter to caricature it).

OCTOBER 8, 2009 AT 7:46 PM



Scott McClare said...

This comment has been removed by the author.

OCTOBER 8, 2009 AT 8:35 PM



Scott McClare said...

I'd say that Riplinger's "thesis," whatever it may be, is by now so thoroughly undermined by the fact that it sits on a foundation of proven falsehoods, that consequently she is now only believed by the gullible, the uninformed, and the dishonest.

I'll let the Puritan (or the Pure Satan, if poking fun of names substitutes for real arguments these days) decide for himself which camp to identify with most closely.

OCTOBER 8, 2009 AT 8:36 PM

Highland Host said...