

HE'S ALWAYS EXISTED

(15-20 minutes, easy set up)

Use this outline and any of the corresponding activities to share the Biblical truths with students.

Introduction: What is the greatest invention that man has ever made? The wheel? Gun powder? The printing press? Indoor plumbing? Automobiles? Space rockets? The personal computer? Cell phones? The Internet? The list of amazing inventions created by man is too long to print. All of these inventions had a beginning, a starting point, that probably rested on knowledge gained through another invention. But God, who has always existed, created the world from nothing.

1. God's self-existence is revealed through His work in creating the world (Genesis 1:1-5).

Biblical Background: In this first part of the study on the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit), we begin to look at the characteristics of God the Father's divine nature. The account of God's creation, and the beginning of His recorded interaction with our world, starts with the fact that God existed before anything else—God has always existed. There has never been, nor will there ever be, one second of time in which God was not a present (v. 1). God spoke, and from nothing more than the power of His voice, called the world into being, creating a formless mass that was void of anything that could sustain life. And that formless mass was in chaos—shrouded in darkness and covered in water (v. 2). And then, God brought organization to the world to prepare it for life. He brought light into the darkness (vv. 3-4), and separated day from night (v. 5). God pronounced that His work was “good,” meaning that what He created perfectly fit His purpose.

Illustration: Artists, such as painters, musicians, and writers, sit down before a blank canvas or a blank sheet of paper or a blank document, and create. They pull from what's in their minds—what they've experienced, seen, and felt—and they begin to create something unique, something new, from those experiences. But at the foundation of those experiences is God's created universe and the people He put in it. There is nothing these artists can create that doesn't depend upon God's creation.

Application: It is difficult to grasp that God has always existed. He isn't a created Being. He IS the creator. All that we have, all that we see and hear, all that we are . . . comes from God's creative work.

2. God's self-existence is revealed in His role as the Creator and Sustainer of life (Acts 17:22-25).

Biblical Background: On his second missionary journey, Paul went to Macedonia (northern Greece) and then on to Athens, one of the great cities of the first-century and a center of learning and philosophy. After Paul had preached about Jesus in the market place, he was invited to the Areopagus to explain his religious beliefs with a group of philosophers (v. 22). Paul drew upon his knowledge of the Greek culture in his discussion, and used their altar designated “TO AN UNKNOWN GOD” to proclaim the one true God who created the world and everything in it (vv. 23-24). Therefore, the creator God needed nothing that man could make—especially a temple made by human hands. Instead, God gives humans life and breath and all the things they need (v. 25).

Illustration: From the early age of two, Helen Keller was both blind and deaf. She lived much of her life in total isolation, unable to hear or speak or to communicate. Only through the work of a dedicated teacher did she overcome that isolation. Yet, even in that isolation, Keller felt the presence of God. When a preacher later shared about God with Keller through her teacher, she broke out in a smile and exclaimed, “I always knew He was there, but I didn’t know His name!” (Wilmington, p. 591)

Application: God has created us with such an innate ability to know Him, that even a young girl who could hear and see nothing could recognize His presence in her life. God doesn’t need us, but we desperately need Him.

3. God’s self-sufficiency means He needs nothing people can supply (Acts 17:25-28).

Biblical Background: Because God has already provided everything people need, He needs nothing that people can supply (v. 25). Paul documented God’s involvement in the world, stating that, from one man, God brought forth all peoples and nations, determined the times and territories they would rule, and gave them the desire to seek and know Him (vv. 26-27) to become children of God who “live and move and exist” in Him (v. 28).

Illustration: In the background of where Paul gave this address was the Parthenon, the most prestigious temple in Athens built to honor Athena, the city’s patron god. The temple was built during the mid-fifth century B.C., and had been standing in that location as a place of worship around 400 years by the time Paul arrived in Rome. Today, the Parthenon undergoes constant work to preserve the crumbling building that once housed the worship of Athena. The people who stood near the Parthenon to hear Paul preach all worshipped in that temple. Yet, the message they heard was that this architectural treasure of the ancient world was worthless as a place of worship because it was created by the hands of men, not by the all-powerful and self-sufficient God.

Application: God is totally self-sufficient. He needs nothing and He supplies everything. Any attempts by man to provide for God is unnecessary and trivial.

Conclusion: All creation, not just mankind, is dependent upon God’s provision to survive and thrive. We are dependent on God’s actions—He gives and satisfies, He sends His Spirit, He renews the earth—just as creation was dependent upon God for its very beginning. God’s creation is not a once-upon-a-time act, but a continuing process of provision and renewal. And all of it points to one thing . . . **God Is** self-existent and totally self-sufficient, and **God Is** the Creator and Sustainer of us all.