

A CONCERT OF WORSHIP ON THE ATTRIBUTE OF: OUR OMNIPRESENT GOD DECEMBER 12, 1993 6 P.M.

HOW CAN GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE IMPACT OUR LIVES?

Over forty years ago a Pastor in Chicago had a heart for his congregation's need to get closer to God. He wrote what has now become a classic. It can challenge you if you will listen with your heart and not just your ears. A. W. Tozer wrote:

What does the divine immanence mean in direct Christian experience? It means simply that GOD IS HERE. Wherever we are, God is here. There is no place, there can be no place, where He is not...No point is nearer to God than any other point. It is exactly as near to God from any place as it is from any other place¹

God is here when we are wholly unaware of it. He is MANIFEST only when we are aware of His presence. On our part there must be surrender to the Spirit of God, for His work it is to show us the Father and the Son. If we cooperate with Him in loving obedience God will manifest Himself to us, and that manifestation will be the difference between a nominal Christian life and a life radiant with the light of His face.²

So when we sing, "Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer blessed Lord," we are not thinking of the nearness of place, but of the nearness of relationship. It is for increasing degrees of awareness that we pray, for a more perfect consciousness of the divine Presence. We need never shout across the spaces to an absent God. He is nearer than our own soul, closer than our most secret thoughts. Why do some persons "find" God in a way that others do not?...I venture to suggest that the one vital quality which they had in common was SPIRITUAL RECEPTIVITY... Without attempting anything like a profound analysis I shall say simply that they had spiritual awareness and that they just went on to cultivate it until it became the biggest thing in all their lives.³

The idea of cultivation and exercise, so dear to the saints of old, has now no place in our total religious picture. It is too slow, too common. We now demand glamour and fast flowing dramatic action. A generation of Christians reared among push buttons and automatic machines is impatient of slower and less direct methods of reaching their goals. WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO APPLY MACHINE AGE METHODS TO OUR RELATIONS WITH GOD. WE READ OUR CHAPTER, HAVE OUR SHORT DEVOTIONS AND RUSH AWAY, HOPING TO MAKE UP FOR OUR DEEP INWARD BANKRUPTCY BY ATTENDING ANOTHER GOSPEL MEETING OR LISTENING TO ANOTHER THRILLING STORY TOLD BY A RELIGIOUS ADVENTURER...The tragic results of this spirit are all

¹ A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God, Tyndale: Chicago,n.d., p. 62.

² Ibid., p. 64.

³Ibid., pp. 66-67.

about us. Shallow lives, hollow [Christian living] ... mistaking of dynamic personality for the power of the Spirit.⁴

The POWERFUL Doctrine of God's Omnipresence

A. God fills all the Universe

1 Kings 8:27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! (NKJV)

B. God is able to act anywhere

Psalm 139:7-10 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou [art] there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou [art there]. 9 [If] I take the wings of the morning, [and] dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. (KJV)

C. God Transcends Time

Isaiah 57:15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name [is] Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy [place,] With him [who] has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (NKJV)

D. God is Everywhere Present

Jeremiah 23:23-24 " [Am] I a God near at hand," says the LORD, "And not a God afar off? 24 Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?" says the LORD; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the LORD. (NKJV)

E. God is present in Church Discipline

Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (NKJV)

F. God has Promised His Presence Always

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and Lo, I am with you always, [even] to the end of the age." Amen. (NKJV)

G. God is Approachable

John 4:23-24 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." (NIV)

A SUMMARY OF OUR OMNIPRESENT GOD

"God the Father is especially manifested in heaven"...

Mark 1:9-11

"God the Son has been especially manifested on Earth"...

John 3:13

"and is now in Heaven."

Acts 7:56

"God the Holy Spirit is manifested everywhere:"

1. IN NATURE Genesis 1:2

⁴Ibid., p. 69.

2. IN ALL BELIEVERS John 14:16-17

3. WITH UNBELIEVERS John 16:7-11

"Through the Spirit, the Father and the Son dwell in the believer."⁵ John 14:17-23

And now comes the point of truth. So, what difference does the Omnipresence of God make in your life?

1. It can mean a life of HOLINESS as in the life of Joseph. Genesis 39:9 "[There is] no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you [are] his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (NKJV)

2. It can mean a life of PEACEFULNESS as in the life of Stephen. Acts 7:54-56 When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with [their] teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, 56 and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" (NKJV)

3. It can mean a life of FRUITFULNESS as in the life of Paul. Acts 24:16 "This [being] so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men. (NKJV)

How about it?

Are you ready to cultivate slowly and surely a life of practicing the OMNIPRESENCE of your God?

By God's grace may it be so.

⁵ R.A. Torrey as quoted in the concise and conservative book of Christian Doctrines called Elemental Theology by E.H. Bancroft, May Press: Hayward, Ca., 1948, p. 53.