

“AN OMNIPRESENT GOD”
Psalm 137: 7-10; Romans 8:38-39
Holiday Island Presbyterian Church
January 27, 2019

INTRODUCTION:

**One of the primary beliefs of Christianity
is that God is *omnipresent*.**

**It is a belief that is based more upon faith
than upon philosophy or science.**

**The belief is that God is immanent –
- God is present in all of creation –
- and yet God remains transcendent –
- above or beyond that which God created.**

**God is everywhere in the universe at the same time,
although God is not limited by space or time,
there is no space or time where God is absent.**

**It's not just a part of God that's everywhere;
God Himself is everywhere – God is spirit, John 4 says.**

**Omnipresence is different than pantheism,
pantheism holds that God is the trees and the forest, etc.**

**The Bible doesn't say God *is* the world,
it says God made the world,
and God is in it without being of it.**

There is always a distinction between creation and Creator.

**The omnipresence of God
means there is no place where God is not.**

Jonah tried to flee from God.

Adam and Eve tried to hide from God after sinning.

Their son Cain didn't do much better,

when he tried to hide his murdered brother

and pretended he didn't know what happened.

What Christians believe

is that God created all that is,

God is present in all that God created

and God is at the same time transcendent.

If I have confused you,

just hang on.

OMNIPRESENCE EXPLAINED:

In its simplest form,

we believe that God is completely immersed in Creation,

that God can interact with creation as God chooses

and God cannot be excluded

from anyplace or object within creation.

And in a way we may never fully understand,

God can be everywhere at the same time.

That is the basic meaning of an ever-present God.

Until we can grasp an understanding of eternity

we are unable to fully comprehend the omnipresence of God.

As humans,

we view events along a sequential timeline –

past, present and future.

**What is happening now will soon become our past,
what will happen next will soon become our present.
What has not yet happened is our future.**

**Since God is eternal – having no beginning or end –
God is not limited by time.**

Consider this quote from Book of Revelation:

“I am the Alpha [Beginning, First] and the Omega [End, Last]...who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty” (Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13).

**God rules *simultaneously* over all human history,
beyond the physical limitations of any timeline.**

**Are you beginning to see what it means
to say that God is *omnipresent*?**

**It means the only limits that restrict God
are the limits God imposes upon Himself.**

**In other words,
there are no limits!
None!**

**I recently said there is no place we can hide from God.
Through God’s spirit, God reaches the darkest corners,
the outer reaches of the universe
and into the hearts of us all.**

**And that brings us to the importance
of understanding an *omnipresent* God.**

BIG GOD OR LITTLE GOD?:

Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, a scholarly, godly Hebrew professor at Princeton Seminary once said this:

“Some people have a little God, and they are always in trouble with Him ... They mistakenly believe God doesn’t intervene on behalf of His people. They have a little God.

“There are others who have a great God,” Wilson continued. “God speaks, and it is done. God commands, and it stands fast. God knows how to show Himself strong on behalf of them that fear Him.”

So, let me ask:

How big is your God?

Is your God big enough to handle your prayers?

**I have known good, faithful Christians
who were reluctant to pray for themselves;
for the little things they might need
because they didn’t want to “bother” God.**

Really? Yes, really.

That would be a very small God, indeed.

**Do you believe that God is big enough – strong enough –
to bring peace to a violent situation?
Peace and stability in Venezuela?
And end to drug trade and human trafficking?**

**The *size* of your God is in direct proportion
to the *strength* of your faith!**

**Is your God big enough to see every sin and transgression
of which we are guilty
and *still* love us enough to forgive us?**

**The answer to all those questions – and more –
is a resounding “YES!”**

**The God we worship is an omnipresent God.
An all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present God!**

**We have all heard that the troubles we face as a nation
can be traced back to the decision
to take “God out of schools.”**

**The point of Psalm 139
is that you can’t take God out of anything.
God is and always will be in schools.**

**God is there whether or not we pledge allegiance to Him;
God is in courtrooms even if the Ten Commandments are not.
God is present at every atheist meeting,
and God is with those who refuse to believe.**

**That’s a BIG God.
And God is even bigger than that!**

**Even though God is with us in this Church,
God cannot be confined to any church.**

**The temple was to be a nearby and constant reminder
of God’s presence and holiness,**

**but we don't have to pray facing Mecca
or Jerusalem or the Wailing Wall,
because God is omnipresent.**

Paul explained it this way to the philosophers:

"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with human hands ... [he goes on to say we should seek God] though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being " (Acts 17:24, 27-28)

**Jesus tried to explain the omnipresence of God
to the woman at the well.**

The woman at the well said to Jesus in John 4:

"Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."

Jesus said to her,

"Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father ... an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. " (John 4:20-23)

Paul made the omnipresence of God very clear in his letter to the Romans:

[38] For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, [39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

An illustration:

John Franklin was an Englishman in the Navy in the 19th century who survived a number of battles including the New Orleans attack defended by General Andrew Jackson. He has been credited with discovering the Northwest passage and his Arctic explorations led to many honors from Oxford and Westminster Abbey. He was also a devout Christian who made his last trip in 1845 searching for the Arctic passage. Two cheering letters came from him, then news ceased. Years passed, and the fate of John Franklin was unknown to family or country. His wife spent a fortune searching for him. Finally a boat was found frozen in the north. In it were two skeletons and Sir John Franklin's Bible. Psalm 139:9,10 was underlined: *If I ... dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me* (KJV). – *One This Day*, April 16

CONCLUSION:

The bottom line is:

**we live and speak differently
when we know someone else is watching.**

**Maybe you and your spouse are in your car
and you're arguing about something
and pulling up next to you at the stoplight
is someone from church.**

Uh-oh.

Your attitude changes, right?

**Or you're heading to Rogers
and the road goes from two lanes to four lanes.
You pass the slowpoke who has been putting along.
And you see a police officer.**

Uh-oh!

**You might watch different TV shows
or change the channel quicker
if certain people from church are in the living room.**

But the Holy Spirit is always on the couch.

**When we come to a better understanding
that God is omnipresent –
- always present with each of us –
it will make a difference in our actions.**

**When we decide to give in to temptation,
when we consciously act with disregard for God,
we have temporarily forgotten
that God sees all.**

**So, if you remember nothing about this sermon
please remember this:
God loves each of us enough to be with us
- constantly –
and may we act accordingly.**

PRAYER:

Loving, All-powerful, All-knowing, Ever-present God, help us to recognize that we live in the light of Your presence, your all-seeing, all-knowing intimate presence. When I sin “in secret” I am more foolish than Jonah trying to hide in a boat, or Adam trying to hide behind a bush. When I harbor sinful thoughts, I am not really believing in your omnipresence.

We need your grace to believe what we know. We don't need more information, Lord, we need more application.

Help us to apply what we have heard here today, that it would be the thought that comes to our minds next time we am tempted.

Forgive us for the times we have not taken your attributes seriously, and help us to live more in light of your presence. In Jesus' Name, AMEN.