

Pastor Paul Bawden
Grace Evangelical Church
Sunday, October 4, 2009 – Communion Sunday
“God – Everywhere At The Same Time”
Psalm 139:7-12

Two brothers, aged eight and ten, were always playing pranks and getting into mischief.

When things went wrong in town, at schools, at fairs, and at their place of worship, they were inevitably it. The parents were beside themselves so they decided to send the boys to talk to their pastor.

Having the first appointment, the eight year old sat across from the pastor’s desk. The pastor looked at the boy with a scowl and asked, “Young man, where is God?”

The boy said nothing. Again the pastor asked the young lad with a scowl on his face, “Where is God?” The boy slunk back in his chair.

The pastor, then with more force than before asked the boy the third time, “Where is God?”

The boy leaped from his chair, ran home, and hid in his bedroom closet.

Hearing the noise, his brother ran to his bedroom and found him shivering in the closet. “What happened?” he asked, starting to get scared himself.

“Oh, man, we’re in deep trouble,” said the eight-year-old, “God’s missing, and everyone thinks we did it.”

Yes, a humorous story, but I’m sure we’re grateful that the biblical can’t be limited to our way of thinking.

In fact the Psalmist, David, in our text today (Psalm 139: 7-12) is overwhelmed at the reality of the amazing presence of the biblical God. It seems that this is why the pastor was asking the young lad, “Where is God?” He wanted the little fellow to start thinking about the reality of God’s presence being with him at all times.

But note what the Psalmist says about the astounding presence of the biblical God.

1. No one can get away from the presence of the biblical God (Psalm 139:7).

“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?”

As we began this series on “The Only God To Believe In,” we started with the fact that the biblical God is Spirit. “God is Spirit” Jesus taught in John 4:24, meaning that the biblical God is a person, with a mind, emotion, and will.

We also considered that God is eternal. “From everlasting to everlasting, You are God,” as Moses penned in Psalm 90:2. The biblical God has had no beginning and has no end. He always has been, always is, and always will be. We know this is a historical reality because of the person and work of God’s Son, Jesus Christ, and our Savior through faith in HIM.

Last Sunday we considered king Solomon’s words in his prayer as he dedicated to the LORD the temple he had built for HIM. “But will God indeed dwell on earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built” (I Kings 8:27).

These words of Solomon, as we considered last Sunday, summarize the infinity of God, meaning He is boundless, He is measureless, and He is inexhaustible in His eternal person. Yet, He has come to us in His infinite Son taking upon Himself finite humanity to win for us His forgiveness and eternal life, so that He can reside in us so we can know God personally and serve Him for eternity in time.

Today we discover in Psalm 139:7 that the eternal, infinite, personal God has a presence from which we can never get away. He is always there, always around.

Yes, no one can get away from the biblical eternal infinite personal God — from His Spirit. No one can flee from His presence!

That is truly an amazing God! No other God like that!!

Which means secondly,

2. No matter where I go, or would like to go, the biblical God's presence is always there (Psalm 139:8-10).

"If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol (place of the dead), you are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me."

As David thinks about not being able to get away from God's Spirit – to flee from the biblical God's presence, he starts to think about where he might get away from God – in the heaven or in the place of the dead (start opposites, far from each other), regardless, God's presence is still there. Even if he could be up where the dawn is breaking (the east, where the sun comes up) or far away at sea (the Mediterranean Sea to the west) the biblical God in His eternal, infinite presence would still be there.

Since the biblical God is the eternal infinite Person, the same reality is for us today. No matter where you and I go, or would like to go, the biblical God is always there. We can count on it.

When we are at home or in the car. When we are at work, or at school, or shopping, or on vacation traveling on land or in the air, God's presence is there. If we think about some other place we would like to be that is warm and sunny, and we would like to be there, God is there as well.

But thirdly, this means that . . .

3. It is impossible to hide from the biblical God's presence (Psalm 139:11-12).

"If I say, 'Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night,' even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to you."

What's David saying here? It doesn't make any difference to God's presence as to what time of the day it is. God is there in the light and in the darkness. In fact darkness and light are the same to God's presence because His presence sees in the darkness.

Which means, it is impossible to hide from the biblical God's presence.

Jeremiah agrees wholeheartedly with David's description of the ability of the presence of the biblical God, as he records God's Word.

"Am I a God who is near" declares the LORD, "and not a God far off? Can a man hide himself in hiding places so I do not see Him?" declares the LORD. "Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" declares the LORD. (Jeremiah 23:23-24).

Growing up we loved to play hide and seek. We loved to try to find a place where the one who was "it" had real trouble trying to find us. Now our grand children love to play hide and seek in the house. But as the person waited to be found, God's presence was right there and knew where one was before being found. We can't hide from God's presence.

Why do those who break the law like to operate at night? They don't want to be seen or be caught.

Amos puts it this way, speaking to Israel as God will bring judgment on the nation for its idolatry, "Though they hide on the summit of Carmel, I will search them out and take them from there; and though they conceal themselves from My sight on the floor of the sea, for there I will command the serpent and it will bite them. . . . And I will set My eyes against them for evil and not for good."

Yes, the biblical God's presence is there seeing all that is done against Him and for Him.

Something all of us need to remember, adults, youth, and children.

That we can't get away from God's presence, no matter where we go or would like to go God's presence is there, and we can't hide from God's presence means fourthly. . . .

4. God's presence is everywhere at the same time (Psalm 139:7-12).

This is the summary of our text today in Psalm 139:7-12. The biblical God is able to be present everywhere at the same time. He is omnipresent – all present at the same time.

That is hard for us to grasp, for we know it will take a certain amount of time to get from point A to point B, whether we walk, use a bicycle, drive, ride in a car, or fly in an airplane.

The internet has made our communication almost instantaneous. Still, we have to wait for the email to come, for we are separated by the miles. The video chat has given us the opportunity to see each other as we talk to one another. It's great to talk to and see our grandchildren and they can talk to us and see us on the Web Cam.

But the reality of it is that we are in one place and they are in another place. There is no way that you or I can be where we are and then at the other location at the same time. We are created to be confined to one locality at a time.

The eternal infinite personal biblical God is not so confined. He is the Creator of time and not subject to its limitations. His presence can be everywhere at the same time. Mind boggling truth, no matter how many times you have heard that reality, or just hearing that reality for the first time.

This does not mean that all is God, such as pantheism, which means a tree could be god, or some animal be god, or humans are god. Neither is it pan-in-theism, where it is felt that god is in everything.

Rather to say that God is omnipresent means that He is universally present to all of space at all times. Even so, this does not mean that He is dispersed throughout the infinite reaches of space, so that every part of space has at least a little part of God.

In other words, God is not present in all space; He is, instead, present to all of space. This means that the unlimited God in His *whole* being is present at every point of our space. **Perhaps a better way to express God's omnipresence is to say that all space is immediately present before Him.**

God, then, is present in all places; however, our conception of Him must not be of Him filling space, as water fills a jug, for He has no physical or material dimensions.

It is as Spirit that He is everywhere, in heaven, earth and hell. However although He can be present in hell, He withdraws His presence from there, because hell (the lake of fire) is so awful for one reason because God is not present there. It's that place of judgment that lasts forever.

Yes, the biblical God is not an extension of His creation, although His creation shows the glory of His presence. He is separate from His creation, yet His presence is everywhere at the same time.

How does this teaching that the biblical personal, eternal, infinite God have application to our lives today?

5. The omnipresent biblical God applied to our lives.

Let's look briefly at the life of David for some application of the omnipresent biblical God to our lives today.

1) The omnipresent God was there before our beginning, at the time of our beginning, and at our birth (Psalm 139:13-16).

These are some amazing verses.

(1) Before our beginning.

God in His presence knew about us before we were born (139:16c).

****David is acknowledging God's presence in planning his life.**

****Jeremiah recognized God's presence on his behalf before he was even born.**

Yes, We were in the mind of God before being created.

(2) At the time of our beginning (139:16a).

"Your eyes have seen my unformed substance." What does that mean?

David is referring to his embryo. His substance before He was born. God's presence was with Him.

"My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in secret."

Talking about God's presence being with him in his mother's womb.

(3) At the time of our birth (139:13-14).

"For you formed my inward parts, you wove me in my mother's womb. . . I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

David recognized as he looked back how the presence of God was with Him before his beginning, at the time of his beginning, and then when he came into the world.

The same is true for each of us. God's presence was there before our beginning, at our beginning, and at our birth. We are certainly fearfully and wonderfully made. We have God's stamp upon us, made in His image with a mind, will, and emotion. We have infinite value.

2. The omnipresent God was there in our childhood development, and is with those who are children and youth today (I Samuel 16:10-13).

Samuel records for us the time when he was directed by God to find a new king due to Saul's disobedience. Samuel was sent to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem. There out of Jesse's 8 sons, David was chosen to be the new king of Israel. David learned to tend sheep as he grew up in the household of Jesse. The text in I Samuel 16:12 tells us that young David was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and of handsome appearance. The word, ruddy, could mean as reddish, signifying the color of his hair and complexion. God in his omnipresence had been with David during his childhood and now had greater things for him to do. Evidently, he had placed his faith in LORD in the Old Testament sense, and had a sensitive heart to His presence.

Again, as the God in His omnipresence was with David in his childhood, so God has been with us who are now adults, and is with our children, our grandchildren, and our youth today. Always remember that regardless of how old you are. God is there with you.

3. The omnipresent God is there with us in our lives as we face the different challenges that come our way, wanting us to be victorious (I Samuel 17).

One of the greatest challenges that stands out in David's life is his encounter with the giant Goliath. David, a shepherd, faced off with the Philistine giant who was probably almost 10 feet tall.

The true story as been told many times, but David grasped what we need to continually grasp in our lives as we face our different challenges in life that the omnipresent God was with Him.

Hear David's words immortal words to Goliath, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted" (I Samuel 17:45).

Banking on God's omnipresence with him, David with one stone in his sling shot struck the giant in the middle of his forehead, and the giant came tumbling down dead. The Philistines were defeated.

The omnipresent God wants us to bank on His presence with us when we face our challenges, waiting on Him to give us the victory through His all powerful name.

Even in the dark times, God wants to keep trusting His presence with us to help see us through.

Isaiah 41:10 – “Do not fear, for I am with you, do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

Also, those great words from Isaiah 43:2-3b, “When you pass through the waters I will be with you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel your Savior.

I think of Hagar who was treated harshly by Sarah, and Hagar fled with her son, Ishmael to the wilderness by a spring. The LORD seems to have provided the spring for her. The angel of the LORD showed up to comfort her and provide direction. After the angel of the LORD quit speaking to her, Hagar called the name of the LORD, “You are a God who sees.”

Elijah also comes to mind, who fled some 70 miles from the presence of Bathsheba and her threats. He requested to God that he die. An angel came to minister to Him.

God's presence is always with us regardless of the challenge we are experiencing in life!

4. The omnipresent God is there to guide us in our decisions in life (II Samuel 7:1-12).

David wanted to build a house for the Lord, for the ark of the covenant. That was a good thing. David's heart was for the Lord. But God had other things in store for David. David would not build a house for the Lord, his descendant would do that, who would be Solomon. But God told David that rather than building Him a physical house, God would make David's kingdom an eternal kingdom for he would have an eternal seed, which of course we know today is Jesus Christ. If any iniquity was committed, God would discipline, but God's lovingkindness would not depart from David and his posterity.

What happened to David was that God's physical “No” to David became God's eternal “Yes” to David. David responded by praising the Lord and acknowledging His sovereignty over all.

The Omnipresent God is always with us guiding us in our decisions. James tells us if we lack wisdom we are to ask of God who gives to us liberally. If we don't have peace in our lives with God about what we should do, it may be best to wait and see what God has in mind. Of course, that's what God's word is all about to give us wisdom in our decision making for Him.

5. The omnipresent God is with us when we are tempted (II Samuel 11:1-13).

The righteous king David, the man after God's own heart was tempted to sin. He was tempted to commit adultery with Bathsheba. David certainly knew the law which said that a person should not commit adultery. He had a choice to make. Would he depend on the presence of God to say, “NO,” to the temptation, and do what God said?

Sad to say that this man of God, this successful king of Israel, who was used mightily by God, didn't depend on the omnipresent God and obey God's Word. Rather David yielded to temptation, sinned against God and against Bathsheba and her husband Uriah. Adultery then led to the murder of Uriah, and David took Bathsheba as his wife. The child that was born by this illicit relationship died.

Temptation is going to come to all of us. Jesus, Himself, was tempted. But God tempts no one to sin. Yet, temptation is not sin. Yielding to temptation is sin against God.

That's why all of us, regardless of our age, if we know the Lord as our personal Savior, should be like Joseph, who when tempted by Potiphar's wife, told her that how could he do this great evil and sin against God?" When she tried to seduce Joseph one day, he fled from her presence. Tempted, Joseph did not yield. He knew God was there and he must obey God's Word, to not commit adultery.

Children, youth, adults don't yield to temptation, whether disobeying Dad or Mom, getting involved in a relationship you know isn't right, or lusting after something or someone you shouldn't.

The omnipresent God is always with us encouraging us on to be strong in Him and the power of His might and not to yield to temptation.

6. The omnipresent God wants us to be quick to confess our sin when we disobey Him (I Samuel 12; Psalm 51; 32).

After David sinned against Bathsheba and took her as his wife, he evidently didn't repent of his sin before the Lord right away. His hardened heart evidently caused Him to think that he wouldn't be caught. David's sin caused him to be tainted in his thinking about the omnipresence of God who sees everything anyone does.

To prick David's conscience to the sin he had committed, the LORD sent Nathan the prophet to convict him of his sin. In fact the law stated that adultery and murder deserved death (Leviticus 20:10; 24:17). David was convicted of his sin and confessed, "I have sinned against the LORD" (II Samuel 12:14). Nathan told David that the LORD had taken away his sin and he would not die (II Samuel 12:14).

Psalm 51 & 32 give the confession of David at this time. Psalm 32 depicts that David felt very guilty before Nathan came, and God used Nathan to cause David to repent of his sin.

When we do disobey the Lord, we need to be quick to confess that sin to the Lord, and if need be make restitution if another person is involved. **In fact that needs to be done first, before confession is made to the Lord. We need to confess our sin to the Lord who is faithful and just to forgive our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

7. The omnipresent God forgives when sin is confessed, but some times the consequences of sin will linger (II Samuel 12:10; 14).

The omnipresent Lord forgave his sin, but he told David through Nathan that the sword would not depart from his house since he despised the LORD and took the wife of Uriah as his wife. Also the child died from the illicit relationship.

Taking time to read the rest of II Samuel 13 and following, one is made quickly aware how the sin of David affected his household which became a mess not glorifying the Lord at all.

A reminder that we need to keep short accounts again with our Lord and continue to acknowledge His presence. Sins of the fathers can be passed unto the third and fourth generations, so one needs to keep sensitive to the Lord, and when one does sin, acknowledge that to the Lord and seek to do His will.

8. The omnipresent God has become physically present in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (II Samuel 7:16; Matthew 1:21; Isaiah 7:14).

The prophecy given to David in II Samuel 7 that David would have an eternal posterity has come true in the first part. The announcement to Mary in Luke 1 was that Jesus who would be born through her, and would reign on the throne of His father David. Jesus was born. He will establish His millennial reign later.

Matthew was told that the one born to Mary would be called "Immanuel," meaning "GOD WITH US" (MATTHEW 1:21), which was quoted from Isaiah 7:14.

Now the omnipresent God is in sinless human flesh. He has confined himself to a body which means now we can see how the omnipresent God acts. At the same time, Jesus still had the ability on earth to be omnipresent as He told Philip that He saw him under the fig tree before Philip came to Him (John 1:48).

How does the omnipresent God act in sinless human flesh? That is what the four gospels are all about. **Jesus calls His disciples to minister with Him. Actually He is training them for service once He returns to His heavenly Father. Jesus heals the sick, causes the blind to see, forgives sinners, raises the dead, stills the storm, confronts the religious leaders giving them scathing condemnation – whited sepulchres full of dead men’s bones.**

But Jesus reason for coming is not just to serve. He came from heaven’s glory to show us how the omnipresent God would act on earth, but ultimately to pay the penalty for breaking God’s law which is death. That’s why He went to the cross to be our sin bearer, satisfy God’s righteous demands, be buried, and rise again the third day, demonstrating that God’s justice has been satisfied, and forgiveness and eternal life are available to all who believe in Him as personal Savior.

And believers in Christ have the wonderful promise of Christ before He returned to heaven that “He would be with them until the end of the age.”

What a promise is that! The omnipresent God-man, Jesus Christ would always be with His people regardless of what happened in their lives, and then the promise in Acts 1 that He would return for all believers.

But there is more than just the promise of omnipresent Christ to be with His believers, His followers with each of us who follow the Lord.

9. The omnipresent Christ becomes spiritually present in our lives through faith in Him as our personal Savior (Colossians 1:27).

The personal God who is Spirit comes to live in the believer in Christ (I John 4:15). The eternal God comes to live spiritually in the believer (I John 4:15). The infinite God comes to live in the believer. He is God’s temple (I Corinthians 6:10-20). Now the omnipresent Christ comes to live in the believer in Jesus Christ. All of this takes place through the death, burial and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ as the believer trusts in Him.

Christ (the omnipresent Christ) in you (the believer), the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).

(1) We know that we are infinitely valuable for we have been created by the Lord and redeemed by Him – I am in Christ. I am a child of God. I am a saint. I am accepted in the beloved. I am His forever.

(2) His presence gives us strength in our challenges and the tough times.

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me ” (Philippians 4:13).

(3) He becomes our wisdom (I Corinthians 1:30). Christ became to us wisdom from God – how to live for God.

We are to follow in His steps (I John 2:6), for now God’s presence is lived out through our lives as we live by faith in HIM. We are to be Christ to others, touching them with His love and grace.

(4) Since He was tempted, He can identify with us in our temptations, and help us overcome those temptations as we rely upon Him (Hebrews 4:15). He is there saying don’t yield to temptation. Do my will!!

(5) When we sin, we can immediately confess my sin to Him, bank on His forgiveness and go in the strength of the Lord in fellowship with HIM. We can also forgive others as God has forgiven us.

(6) We have minute by minute access into His presence through His victorious name, the name of Jesus (Hebrews 4:16; John 14:14).

(7) Christ is our hope – in the midst of our challenges. His working out His plan for us and the world. His return for us for us could be at any time.

10. The omnipresent God in our lives must be permitted to search out our lives to see if we are living pleasing to HIM (Psalm 139:25-26; Hebrews 4:12-13).

**Search me, O God, and know my heart . . . see if there is any hurtful or wicked way in me.”
What a gracious God we know through faith in Jesus who desires our fellowship, and wants our lives to demonstrate that He lives in us for our good and His glory.**

God’s eternal Word is how that happens as we interchange with His Word each day (Hebrews 4:12-13).

11. The omnipresent God can only be worshipped (Psalm 139:14).

“Wonderful are your works.”

The omnipresent God in our world and in our lives can only cause us to worship, to bow down before Him and give Him the adoration and praise that He alone deserves. What an awesome God He is. May we never take His presence in our lives and in the world for granted.

The Song Writer puts it this way:

**In the presence of Jehovah God Almighty Prince of Peace.
Troubles vanish, hearts are mended,
In the presence of the King.**

May we enjoy being in the Lord’s presence this week, while giving Him the freedom to be at home in our lives to use us for His glory.

