

The Gathering Church

Dan's message 7/5/26

Know God As He Is – Omni-present – Wk4

God is Everywhere
Can't Outrun God
God's Manifest Presence
Set Apart People
Sin Causes Callousness
Connect With Him
Practice God's Presence

**"What comes into our minds when we think about God
is the most important thing about us."** AW Tozar

Today I am jumping into a topic about one of these pretty big theological words. There are **three OMNI characteristics of God**.

He is **Omnipotent** (Hallelujahs Chorus: "for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth").
Omni- stands for "All". Something that is "Potent" is powerful. So God is All-powerful.
He has the power to do anything he wants.

He is **Omniscient**. He is "All- knowing." Psalms 139:1-6 Highlights His ability to know all things.
*"O Lord, You have searched me and known me.
2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar. Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O
Lord, You know it all."*

And the 3rd Omni which I want to discuss today is God's
God is **Omnipresent**: **God is Everywhere**. The following song comes to mind when I think about this
part of God's character although it is not a song about God, but it should be:

*"He sees you when your sleeping, He knows when your wake,
He knows if you've bad or good so be good for goodness sakes."*

David says in the same Psalm 139:7–12

*7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?
8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.
9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,
10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night,"
12 Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and
light are alike to You.*

- **David** couldn't escape God's Presence (**Highest place** (Heaven), **Lowest Place** (Hell), to the **extreme West** (to the remotest part of the Sea), how about **Darkness** (God is Light). He is everywhere.
- **Jonah** couldn't outrun God. He tried to and ended up in a belly of a whale. Not much good that did for him.
- I like to say when we truly commit out lives to God in salvation, we **Can't Outrun God**. Because He is **omnipresent and is everywhere**; in salvation we are in essence giving His spirit

the permission to find us; to chase us down and root out everything in our lives that is not of Him.

Tozer's Ocean Illustration

God's Presence is like the Ocean. Imagine standing in the Atlantic Ocean. We are like buckets. Drop a bucket into the ocean and it fills and drops to the bottom of the ocean a mile deep.

God surrounds everything. We can't get out of the ocean whether we are children of Him or not.

Acts 17:28 "In Him we live and move and have our being."

Quote of Tozer: **"God is nearer to you than you are to yourself."**

He is nearer than our own breath. This is an important thought, and I will come back to it later.

I think that is why David says at the end of Psalms 139 says (I surrender),

"23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

Tension to this characteristic: "If God is everywhere, which is what the Bible tells us about Him, why do some people experience Him while others do not?"

"Why is God present everywhere but only revealed to some?" Why is God like the Ocean surrounding everything and in everything but not all humans in the world experience His nearness.

The answer is not really about God's location; it's about our ability to see Him and know him. **Are we in a position to be aware of His presence?**

Tozer uses a phrase that captured my attention when I was reading His words on God's Omnipresence. He kept using the word the **Manifest Presence of God**.

Ezekiel 28:25-26 (Prophecy about God restoring the fortune of Israel after the Babylonian Captivity)

*Thus says the Lord God, "When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and **will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations**, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob. **26** They will live in it securely; and they will build houses, plant vineyards and live securely when I execute judgments upon all who scorn them round about them. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God."*

God is going to again place his **Holiness in them to be a Set Apart People** to reflect His character once again. He is going to make Himself Present to them. And they will know Him again.

The Apostle Peter declared the same thing over the **early church (1 Peter 2:9)**

***9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation**, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

Something happened early in the story of man, where man lost his innocence and holy connection to God. It's the story of Adam and Eve and the Fall.

Genesis 3:8 *"and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden."*

God was Still walking in the garden.

It was man because of his sin that separated him from the presence of God, due to sin's effect.

Why are some men unable to experience the manifest presence of God? The answer is Sin.

Sin creates distance between us and God. **Sin Causes Callousness.** Paul alludes to this in Ephesians as he encourages the saints not to live like the Gentiles around them.

***Ephesians 4:17-19.** So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, **18** being darkened in their understanding, **excluded (alienated) from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; **19** and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.*

Man became alienated and excluded from knowing God's presence because of sin.

Sonia reminded us of **God's holiness** during the first week of the series when she shared about this attribute of God. Each vision of God created within those that were near God created a sense of them being unworthy to be around His holiness.

Last week when Sonia shared about God's mercy and she again alluded to an interaction between Moses and God. Moses asked God to show Mercy to the children of Israel who were wandering in the desert and then asks to see God's Glory. God hides Moses in a cleft of the rock and covers Moses with his hand until he passes by.

God shows Himself to Moses but tells Him, **"You cannot see My face and live."** Exodus 33:20

God is everywhere. **Yet His holiness prevents sinful man from beholding Him fully.**

Because of the Fall, we as sinners are no longer similar to God. We were made in his image but when we fell we became dissimilar. There is a dissimilarity between fallen man and God. **But the Good News today is that the Gospel** makes us similar again.

2 Corinthians 5:21** He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that **we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 John 4:9-10** By this the love of God was **manifested in us**, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. **10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation for our sins.

Our **conversion** and what Jesus did at the Cross removed the barrier that existed in the old Testament between God's presence and human beings. He has placed within us the Holy Spirit and has called us holy because of what Jesus did for us. **Anybody grateful for that today?**

You and I now have what we need to see, hear and feel God's presence. We can literally know and experience His Presence. Not just mentally but experientially.

Conversion is God giving us the life required to live in His presence and to know Him. We are no longer separated from God.

***Romans 8:15** For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"*

***Galatians 4:6** Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"*

"Abba! Father!" is the language of adoption, assurance, intimacy, and inheritance. Paul is showing that through Christ, believers can relate to God in the same family relationship that Jesus Himself

enjoys. This is the same thing Jesus says to the father in Mark 14:36. Jesus uses the word Abba Father and we can know because of what Jesus did at the cross.

"The new birth is the implantation of the divine life." - Tozar

It is a relational invitation to be a part of the Trinity.

Why can some know God's presence and others cannot: **Conversion**. The Holy Spirit has given us the ability to now relate to the Trinity. **God is Everywhere and we can Connect With Him.**

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 *But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. 15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life.*

*1 John 3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that **we would be called children of God**; and such we are. For this reason the **world does not know us, because it did not know Him.***

The World does not know him and our fragrance doesn't make sense to them. We are set apart. If we are walking with him and his love is flowing through us we will be different. Paul reminds the early church to enjoy their difference; you are aliens to this world. Don't be like it. They cannot know and experience God. But you can.

Heaven vs. Hell

Tozer talks about Heaven and Hell and he says (and I'm paraphrasing Tozar) *"even if Hell is not as bad as scripture talks about, there is no "fire and eternal torment" and heaven is not as great as Scripture talks about, "streets of gold, mansions, crowns, etc."* **Hell would still be hell because** those there would not be able to know God's manifest presence and would be forever excluded from the enjoyment of seeing God's face.

And even in heaven, if streets of gold were not there and there were no mansions ... it would still be heaven because we will see Christ's face and be changed into his likeness. **We will know his manifold glory** like we have never seen it before. All the rest would pale in significance to being able to know Him and rest in Him.

We taste of His presence now, but then we will see him truly as He is. The early church fathers call this the Beatific Vision.

This is the greatest promise of eternity.

Not mansions. Not crowns.

Seeing God ... God's Presence (His Full Omnipresence)

Why does knowing and experiencing God as omnipresent now matter and is the most important thing about us? Because if we live in this world as though the stuff of this world will fill us, we will miss what He has created for. **We are truly thirsty to know His presence and to make His presence known in this world.** All else pales in comparison to this.

Paul says it this way (**Ephesians 3:8-10**) *"I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the*

*righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, **10** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; **11** in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

Scuba Illustration

Imagine standing beside the ocean. The ocean is beautiful. You can look at it. Touch it. Listen to it.

But there is an entire world beneath the surface.

You can't really get to know it or be surrounded by it until you become like it. And you can't be like it without scuba equipment.

Without scuba equipment... you cannot enter that world. Not because it isn't there. Because you lack the life support required. The scuba tank doesn't create the ocean. It enables you to live in the environment that already exists.

5 items you need to be able to survive in the ocean: a Mask, a wet suit, fins, a BCD, and a regulator and compressed air tank.

The most important device is the regulator and compressed air tank. If you can't breathe underwater you will die. This regulator and compressed air tank gives me an hour of "dive time" under water. Without it I can never see the aquatic world personally. Oh I can watch videos and hear about it from others, but personal experience takes me putting on the equipment and diving in the ocean.

Likewise...

God's presence surrounds everyone.

But **apart from the Holy Spirit ...** the "pneuma" His very breath poured into us ... **fallen man cannot breathe God's presence.** We can't find delight with him. We can't enjoy what he enjoys and truly know him as He is. We can go to church and hear about God and think about God, but in order to get the "**Christian Scuba Gear**" required to live in God's presence; we have to receive Him as our Lord and Savior and begin breathing His presence.

Conversion is God giving us the life required to live in His presence.

The Holy Spirit becomes the very breath of our souls. **(The Holy Spirit is our Scuba Tank)**

Now we begin experiencing what has always been there.

We must take the course in Spiritual Scuba; WE must PRACTICE THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

Recall that "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." AW Tozar.

How does knowing God is everywhere (omnipresent) change how I think about myself? Here are some closing thoughts:

1. If God is everywhere, there is no place I can go to escape him. **I can rest in His knowledge of me;** that He knows me better than I know myself and with David in his Psalms say "*Search me Oh God*"

and know my heart, try me and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in your way everlasting.” (Psalms 139:23-24)

2. If God is everywhere, **I am never alone or will never be abandoned**. Oh, I might be physically alone. But at no time am I without a direct line to his comfort, care, correction, power, knowledge, mercy, love, forgiveness etc).
3. If God is everywhere *“in Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28);* **our lives are held in H is hands**. He knows my past, my present and my future. He knows the plans he has for me (Jeremiah 29:11). He is a Good Shepherd in the Psalms 23 He is leading me in paths of righteousness for His sake. He is preparing a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. He has anointed me to reflect His glory in this life, and His goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in my heavenly home forever.
4. I really have no need to fear or be anxious about my life. “He said he will never leave me nor forsake me.” (Deuteronomy 31:6-8) And this gives me hope. I have the *“the Right Man on my side, the Man of God’s own choosing. You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is He, Lord Sabaoth His name, from age to age the same, and He must win the battle.” (Hymn; A Mighty Fortress is our God)*

When feelings of loneliness creep in, be reminded that God is everywhere and you have access to Him.

When days are long and you wonder if you have what it takes to move forward: remember He is there reminding you not to grow weary in doing well.

Last thing: “The attributes of God are not merely truths to be studied; they are invitations into relationship, to know Him and to have communion with Him.”

Do you know Him? Do you know his Omni-presence? Are you living, aware that **God is Everywhere**? And are you hungry to hear Him, experience Him, breathe Him and reflect His glory?

Rest in His Presence, Move in His Rhythm. We don’t want to figure it out ourselves, we want Him to lead!

Jesus told us the Greatest commandment is to *“Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves.”* How much is our mind involved in the great commandment to love Him? We need to activate all our heart soul mind in strength in getting to know God now. And loving him and others with all of who we are.