

God's Nature: Omnipresence and Everywhere

Omnipresence describes the ability of God to be always everywhere. This is a difficult concept to grasp: God is present everywhere unconstrained by physical limitations and time.

1. Consider the challenge of understanding omnipresence. What do you observe?

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Gen 1:26-27, NASB)

Then Moses said, "Please, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion to whom I will show compassion." He further said, "You cannot see My face, for mankind shall not see Me and live!" Then the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen." (Ex 33:18-23, NASB)

Now Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register along with Mary, who was betrothed to him, and was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:4-7, NASB)

2. What do you observe about the Holy Spirit? Could this help you understand omnipresence?

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was a formless and desolate emptiness, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. (Gen 1:1-2, NASB)

Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. (Ps 139:7-10, NASB)

For this is what the high and exalted One
Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, says:
"I dwell in a high and holy place,
And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit
In order to revive the spirit of the lowly
And to revive the heart of the contrite. (Isa 57:15, NASB)

3. Observe carefully a part of God's New Covenant and Jesus' statement. What do you observe about the Holy Spirit and the Believer?

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Lord God says: "It is not for your sake, house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord," declares the Lord God, "when I show Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the lands; and I will bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and bring it about that you walk in My statutes, and are careful and follow My ordinances. (Ezek 36:22-27, NASB)

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever; the Helper is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him; but you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17, NASB)

They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; (Acts 16:6-7, NASB)

God's Nature: Omnipresence and Everywhere Teacher Notes

Omnipresence describes the ability of God to be always everywhere. This is a difficult concept to grasp: God is present everywhere unconstrained by physical limitations and time.

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Ask the student: what do you observe about the physical forms of God and Jesus?

God created human beings in His image. God and Jesus both have a body like a person.

Inform the student about pantheism. Pantheism is the belief that god is everywhere and without a form. The universe, and everything within it, is god.

Omnipresence is not pantheism. Though everywhere, the God of the Bible is distinct as a personal being as exemplified by human beings who bear His image and Jesus Christ who is God incarnate (God in human form).

If God is a distinct personal being, how can He be everywhere?

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Help the student understand the above passages.

Sheol is understood as “grave” or “burial site.”

Ask the student: there are at least two observations you can make about God’s omnipresence. Do you see them?

1. In our present life, God the Father knows our innermost thoughts.
2. In the Believer’s afterlife, God’s presence as the Holy Spirit can be seen / felt. This is not to say that God’s presence is limited to the Holy Spirit in the afterlife.

3. Observe carefully a part of God’s New Covenant and Jesus’ statement. What do you observe about the Holy Spirit and the Believer?

“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the Lord God says: “It is not for your sake, house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, “when I show Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the lands; and I will bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and bring it about that you walk in My statutes, and are careful and follow My ordinances. (Ezek 36:22-27, NASB)

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Ask the student: when God made the New Covenant, what did He promise to put in Believers? What will Jesus ask of His Father?

As a consequence of the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit is intimately and permanently present in each and every Believer. This form of omnipresence in the Believer is an assurance of the indwelling presence of the Jesus Christ.

Ask the student: how is God’s omnipresent in the non-Believer’s life? What do you see in Hebrews 4:12-13?

Through the Holy Spirit’s presence on earth, as in Creation (Gen 1:2), God is everywhere at all times. Through the Bible of which the Holy Spirit is author, He is physically present, and each human being is open and laid bare to the eyes of God (Heb 4:12-13).