

**GOD INCARNATE**  
*The Fullness of Christ's Deity*  
 Omnipresence

In the movie “Cast Away” a man named Chuck Noland who works for FedEx is dominated by his cell phone and pager from that job, with his marriage and family life taking the brunt of it. But one day in a FedEx plane crash, he finds all of it stripped away. The plane he is on crashes into the ocean and then he drifts to this remote island in the middle of nowhere. In one moment, all of his devices are gone. Even the antique pocket watch he was given, stops working. And so it's just him alone on this island for 1500 days, along with some drifting FedEx packages from the plane crash that drift upon the island shore as well. And in one of these packages is this volleyball. Some of you know the name of it.

One frustrating day as he's trying to start a fire with two sticks, he ends up cutting his hand open and then throws the volleyball out of anger and it leaves this bloody handprint mark that he later realizes sort of looks like a face. He actually cleans it up and further defines the face, naming it Wilson, and the volleyball becomes his company on the island. Extremely lonely, he has conversations with the volleyball and gets mad at it and has to save it on occasion. He shares his life with this volleyball named Wilson. And I've wondered hypothetically that, if Chuck was a Christian and knew the truth about God, he would realize He didn't have to talk to this volleyball. He'd talk to God because He'd realize he was never alone because **God is omnipresent** – He is ever present – even on an island like that (ask apostle John). He is a very present help in time of need. His outlook on the island would have been completely different because the omnipresence of God is an incredibly comforting reality for those who find themselves in lonely situations.

Loneliness is one of those situations many are finding themselves in this year because of the regulations being yoked on societies. Many people, out of health concerns, have hardly left their home since spring except to purchase necessities. A Joel Rosenburg email I received last week said Israel hasn't let a single tourist in the country since March and it's devastating the economy. Many peoples' work is all tourism there. And to top it off, they're now in their 3<sup>rd</sup> full lockdown for at least 14 days.

Loneliness is a real problem right now, and in winter months in particular. But let us not forget that even surrounded by people, we can feel lonely. And the only answer is to look to the God of the Bible. C. S. Lewis said, “Look for yourself and you will find loneliness and despair. But look to Christ and you will find Him and everything else.” In seasons of loneliness, we want to look for Him because we know He is all-present and ever present with us and in us.

If you're just joining us this morning, for our Christmas series this year we've been studying the attributes of God in light of the incarnation. The core teaching of Colossians we've seen is that Jesus Christ is God of very God, God in the flesh. Colossians 2:10 says that Christ is the **fullness of Deity in bodily form**. Hebrews 1:3 tells us that He is the **reflection and radiance of God's glory, even the exact imprint of God's being, God's nature**. Jesus Himself said while He was on earth that **if you've seen Him, you've seen the Father** (John 14:9). That's something we've been testing this Christmas by studying the attributes of God and then focusing on the incarnation, seeing some of those attributes in Jesus Christ's life.

**I. DIVINE ATTRIBUTE: GOD IS OMNIPRESENT.**

Omnipresence is just a two-part word that means God is **all-present**. Because **God is Spirit**, He is **able to be wholly present everywhere** at the same time.

**Omnipresent = He is all-present.**

The Bible speaks clearly about this, that no matter where you go, you can't escape His presence. The psalmist said in...

**Psalm 139:8**

*“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 [the netherworld], you are there. If I take the wings of 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.”*

The psalmist is contemplating the fact that **there is not a place where God is not**. He says, *“Where can I go or flee too that God isn't?”* And he answers his own question with, *“Nowhere.”* He emphasizes it by suggesting that even in the farthest of places, the remotest parts of the seas, God is there. And even there, God's hand would lay hold of you and lead you. It's said of the Santa Clause character that He can go around the world in one night, but God is everywhere around the world at the same time and everywhere man can't go.

Sometimes this attribute of God is referred to as His **immensity**. Immensity is helpful and biblical because it carries the idea of **God's filling** – that He fills the universe. According to Jeremiah 23:24, He doesn't makes the best hide-and-seek partner because He's everywhere you hide – no surprises!

**Jeremiah 23:24 says,**

*“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.”*

It's even biblical to say that God is our environment.<sup>i</sup> Paul, preaching in Acts 17:28 said, “In Him we live and move and exist.” I read a story this week about a young Sunday school lad on his way to Sunday school when a man asked the boy sarcastically, “If you can tell me where God is, I'll give you an apple.” And this learned Sunday schooler replied with, “Sir, I'll give a whole bucket of apples if you can tell me where God isn't!”

But even though the terms omnipresence and immensity are used interchangeably, it could be that omnipresence (His presence, His being there with you) emphasizes more His **near-ness** while immensity emphasizes His **transcendence** (His beyond-ness). So think, **near or far, God is there.**

\* **Near or far, God is there.**

Another magnificent truth for us to grasp is that:

\* **God can be everywhere and yet said to be residing in one place at a given time**

Such an apprehension is difficult for the mind to formulate but it is what Scripture reveals. It reveals that **all 3 Persons of God can be everywhere and yet resident in one place at a given time (have a special presence someplace)**. Lewis Sperry Chafer says, “Of the Father, the statement is: “Our Father which art in heaven” (Matt. 6:9); of the Son it is said that He, upon ascending from the earth, “sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3); and of the Spirit in relation to the Church it is written, “in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit”

(Eph. 2:22; cf. Ps. 113:5; 123:1; Rom. 10:6, 7; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19). On the other hand, the Father is said to be in the Son as the Son is in the Father (John 17:21); the Father is “above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:6); the Son is present where two or three are met together unto His name (Matt. 18:20; cf. 28:20; Col. 1:27). The Spirit, like the Father and the Son, is said to indwell every believer (Rom. 8:9).<sup>iii</sup> So, difficult as it is for us to grasp, each member of the Trinity has this omnipresent attribute. We’ll look more at the incarnated Son later.

I think much difficulty arises for us when we try to think of God as though He is like us and not an infinite Spirit being. All beings, including angels, are restricted. We have one given place at a time.<sup>iii</sup> Google maps and Siri can track our location and give us directions. If we are here, we are not there. If we are there, we are not here. We occupy one given place in space, as all material things do. But God is **the Primary Cause** of all space and matter. He created it from outside of it and is therefore, **He is not subject to it like us**. He can operate in it or outside of it.

I think it’s helpful to think of a 2 dimensional box representing the universe and then write the word “God” inside and outside the box. Being infinite, He has no bounds. He is not limited by the bounds of the box. Like a bucket submerged in the ocean, so can the universe contain God.



David’s son, Solomon, you’ll remember, built an incredible temple for God. The thing was big, ornate, and a wonder of the world. It would have been the greatest architectural structure in its day. But as incredible as this thing was, Solomon knew it wouldn’t contain God. At the dedication of the temple, this is what he prayed.

#### 1 Kings 8:27

“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!”

Solomon was reminding the people through this worshipful prayer that even though God’s presence would indeed dwell in this temple in a special way – His visible Shekinah glory would be there – it was by no means limiting the infinite God. He is everywhere but by a manifestation like that, makes it clear He is present in a special way.

Another point to be made about God’s omnipresence is that we mustn’t get it confused with pantheism – the idea that God is everything.

\* **Omnipresence is not to be confused with pantheism. He is everywhere but He is not everything.**

Pan = all & theos = God so pantheism is like saying “All is God”. Pantheism makes God out to be the sum-total of everything that exists – which would make the trees God and you God and your dog God. Everything there is makes up God. Canon W. G. H. Holmes of India told of seeing Hindu worshipers going around tapping on trees and saying, “Are you there?” to the god they hoped might reside within.

But if this were so, that would mean God is in parts and can be only partially present, with minute parts of Him in every place. He would be like a Hershey's chocolate bar where you break pieces off and hand them out (we're talking fractions here). But God is not present in minute fractions. He is **wholly** and **equally** present and at all times.

\* **God is always wholly present.**

Such a truth is too fantastic for the finite mind to fully take in. Even the psalmist admitted that (Ps. 139:6). But it is reality and it produces for us, like the psalmist, some wonderful effects in our lives.

## II. **THE PRACTICAL EFFECTS OF OMNIPRESENCE IN OUR LIVES.**

There's two main effects it has on us:

### 1. **Omnipresence produces purity.**

Knowing that God is everywhere all around us helps to purify us. We know that He is there, which means that He is aware and knows everything going on. Omnipresence and omniscience are closely related. It's symbolically depicted in Heaven by the four living creatures around the throne of God who have wings and these wings are covered in eyes.

#### **Revelation 4:6**

"and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal;  
and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind."

Then there are four wheels to God's throne that correspond to these beings' movement, directed by the Spirit, which are covered in eyes:

#### **Ezekiel 1:18**

"As for their rims they were lofty and awesome,  
and the rims of all four of them were full of eyes round about."

I point these out to us because someday we are going to see these things for ourselves and be floored by the sight, but secondly because His omnipresent Spirit is represented in Heaven by these things. He sees all things because He is all-present.

#### **Proverbs 15:3**

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the good and the evil."

#### **Proverbs 5:21**

"For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord,  
and He watches all his paths."

God's omnipresence has the same effect on us as security cameras. They stop a lot of crime from happening. Knowing someone is watching, acts as a restraint on evil and omnipresence helps combat sin in our lives. Just knowing He's in the room with you and sees it all, has an incredibly purifying effect on us.

Which brings up a good question: *How is it said that some are nearer to God than others?* Because our nearness to God isn't a matter of distance or geography but of relationship.

When we sense God's presence it's because we, at that moment, are more aware of His presence. We're paying attention. Listening. Obeying. We're close relationally. When we sin as believers, we don't lose fellowship with Him totally and need to be resaved all over again. We don't need salvific forgiveness but relational forgiveness. And when we walk with Him, obeying Him, we are "closer" to the Lord in that sense and might sense His presence more. But our nearness to God or farness from Him isn't a matter of distance any more than Satan being in heaven accusing folks (Rev. 12:1; Zech. 3; Job 1) would make him part of God's kingdom.

## 2. **Omnipresence produces consolation (comfort).**

It produces comfort. Why? Because no matter what you go through or what situation you're in, **you know that God is with you and He sees you. You know He is aware. You know He is able to help you.** He is called **Beer-lahai-roi (the Living One who sees me)** for a reason (Genesis 16:13). Even if you can't feel Him or see Him, He is there. Hagar, feeling alone and helpless, sitting in the wilderness in distress came up with that name when God spoke to her. When no one else saw her in the wilderness, God did. And He helped her.

He is a very present help when we need it.

### **Psalm 46:1**

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

I love that because He is not just a present help, but a VERY present help in trouble. Omnipresence assures us of **ready and effectual aid**.

"Oh! how delightful the thought that He, in whom they repose confidence, is so near that they may always assure themselves of ready and effectual aid! This thought is fitted to enliven every scene, and to sweeten every condition. It will make the springs of joy burst out in the parched and thirsty wilderness, and clothe the naked and cheerless waste with verdure [growing vegetation; health; vigor]. It will give a relish to a dry morsel, and a cup of cold water. It will lighten the pressure of poverty, and soothe the pangs of affliction. It will dissipate the horrors of a dungeon, and console the exile from his country and his friends. How transporting the thought, that we cannot go where God is not! A good man may be bereaved of his reputation, his liberty, his earthly all; but the deadly hatred of his enemies can never so far succeed as to draw from him the mournful complaint, "Ye have taken away my God, and what have I more?" With whatever afflictions his faith and patience may be tried, and whatever change of circumstance a wise providence may appoint him, and no kind hand to perform the offices of friendship, he can express his faith and joy in the words of an ancient saint, "Nevertheless I am continually with Thee; Thou holdest me by my right hand. Thou wilt guide me by Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to Thy glory."<sup>iv</sup> Amen?

But what about omnipresence in the incarnation?

### **III. OMNIPRESENCE EVIDENT IN THE INCARNATION.**

It's interesting to note that God's presence dwelt among us in a new way. It was more personal than ever because the Son of God took on flesh like us.

### **John 1:14**

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

The word that John uses for **dwelt** when it says God “dwelt among us” is a verb [skenoō] used in the NT to refer to God dwelling among His people. It’s translated tabernacle elsewhere – He tabernacled among us. Like in the OT, the God of the tabernacle and temples had now taken on flesh. How profound and revolutionary for them to realize that God was right there, at hand, next to them!

I don’t think there has never been a more intimate, relatable presence of God than when His presence walking around on two flesh and blood legs with us – among us – on the same streets man walked with the same fleshly weaknesses man had (minus a sin nature because He wasn’t a conceived of man but of the Holy Spirit). Fully God and fully Man. Still, we find ourselves comforted by the thoughts that He has lived in this world and faced similar struggles we face. But it was also clear when He was here, that He is God. He had a divine presence.

\* **He had a commanding divine presence that called forth worship.**<sup>v</sup>

His own disciples and many who met Him, found themselves worshipping Him – an act worthy of God alone. No priests, no veil, no temple courts – they worshipped the God who was near and touchable. His presence caused dusty streets, hillside trails and fishing boats to become worship centers. His Deity was so tangible that they couldn’t not worship Him. They didn’t care if it was socially acceptable or not, or that to worship Him might be considered heresy or blasphemy to the Pharisees. They just did it because His divine presence was that overwhelming. Should men have been silent, Jesus said the stones themselves would’ve cried out in worship at times (Lk. 19:40).

Matthew 14:33

“Those in the boat worshiped Him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God.’”

Matthew 28:9

“They came to Him, took hold of His feet, and worshiped Him.”

Matthew 28:17

“When they saw Him, they worshiped Him.”

These people knew that God was in their midst and this wasn’t the average man. **He had a commanding presence** everywhere He went. He was always in charge. He even had to walk the soldiers through their own arrest of Him (John 18:6). He became their commander.

Even though He took on flesh, **His Deity, we need to remember, was not reduced**. Jesus proved that He was omnipresent God.

\* **He saw things that only an omnipresent God would see and did things only an omnipresent God could do.**

Just a small example, He told Nathanael that He saw him under the fig tree before Philip called for him to come see Him. Nathanael was floored by that, saying, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.” We know by Nathanael’s response that it wasn’t with his two eyes but supernaturally, He saw Nathanael (Jn. 1:46-51). Another example is that in order for Him to heal people from a distance it required omnipresence. He would do it and tell them it had been done, saying “The disease has left” or “the demon has left your daughter” and He could say that because He did it. And then the person would go and find it having been done just as He said.

And you know what’s really great about the presence of Christ today? It’s that for all who trust in Christ, the Bible says that Christ is in them.

In 2 Corinthians 13:5

“Or do you not recognize yourselves that **Jesus Christ is in you?**”

Galatians 2:20

“It is no longer I who live but **Christ who lives in me.**”

In Colossians 1:25-27, Paul said there is mystery revealed to this generation and it’s “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Paul is saying in that context to Gentiles like us (non-Jews), that once we were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, living far from the Temple where His special presence was, but now He lives within us! It’s an incredible privilege we take for granted, but if contemplated, should move us or stir us to worship.

\* **Christ dwells in us.**

1 Corinthians 6:19 says, we are temples of the Living God (1 Cor. 6:19). And when I think of Christ’s presence, you know what I think? I think of two things:

One is peace. Christ desires we have an inner peace in our lives because of Him. Like He said to the disciples who were hiding in their room, “Peace be with you.” In a fear and anxiety filled world, may peace be with you because the **Prince of Peace** (Is. 9:6) is in you.

But secondly and lastly, I think of how we don’t need Wilson’s in our lives. Because **He is always with us and will never leave us or forsake us** (Heb. 13:5-6). In fact, Christ’s last words to the disciples before He ascended was: “I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20).

\* **We are never alone.**

Greatest than all the “presents” under the tree is the presence of Christ. But I must challenge us a bit this morning...if you have Christ in you, “*How are you allowing His presence to be a gift to others this year who need it?*”

*Lord I thank you that no matter what we going through and what we are facing, we know that You are with us and in us. You have by Your omnipresence, taken up residence in us and will never leave us nor forsake us and on top of that, you there is no where we could ever go that are not already. May our thoughts be lifted, our nerves be steadied, and hearts be strengthened. And may each of us sense the purifying and comforting presence of You in our lives at church, at home, at work, and anywhere we go.*

<sup>i</sup> A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (New York, NY: Harper One, 1961), 74.

<sup>ii</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1948, 1976), 219.

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> John Dick, *Theology*, p. 102.

<sup>v</sup> Don Everts, *God in the Flesh*.