

Just Checking In - In His Presence

October 1, 2009

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In reading through the Bible each year, I am repeatedly confronted by a crucial concept... ***The Presence of God***. This idea that *all things are before God's face, in His presence, unhidden, open, clearly seen, observed, "in His face"* as it were.. is one of the most constant and arresting in all of scripture. Such phrases as "***before the Lord***"... "***in the eyes of the Lord***"... "***in the sight of the Lord***"... "***the Lord saw***"... indicate both *God's immediate presence and His full and unobstructed view and knowledge* of us. To live "in His presence" or "before His face" is to recognize that all I think, will and do is done in the full knowledge and presence of God my Judge and Savior.

The first reaction of Adam and Eve to the reality of their sin and shame was to run from the presence of the Lord. **Never has man attempted something so preposterously futile or permanently fatal than to flee from the presence of God.** God is already where they are as well as where they are going!

David was astounded by this very concept... Jehovah Shama... The Ever-present Yahweh

Psalm 139 O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. ***You comprehend my path and my lying down,*** And are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. ***You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me.*** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it. ***Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?*** If I ascend into heaven, ***You are there;*** If I make my bed in hell, behold, ***You are there.*** If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, ***Even there*** Your hand shall lead me, And ***Your right hand shall hold me.*** If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; Indeed, the darkness ***shall not hide from You,*** But the night shines as the day; ***The darkness and the light are both alike to You.*** For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was ***not hidden from You,*** When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ***Your eyes saw*** my substance, being yet unformed. And ***in Your book they all were written,*** The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. How precious also are ***Your thoughts*** to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be ***more in number than the sand;*** When I awake, ***I am still with You.*** Oh, that You would slay the wicked,

O God! Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men. For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain. Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And **see if there is any wicked way in me**, And lead me in the way everlasting.

In the Old Testament, the word for "face" *paniym* is found 1890 times. Most of the occurrences referring to God's presence are used in Exodus and Numbers in the Tabernacle context and in the Major Prophets in view of coming judgment.

In the New Testament, the word *enopion-ενώπιον* (before the face of... in full view of) is found 89 times, the vast majority referring to God. Luke, Acts and Revelation use it the majority of times, with Hebrews 4:13 being perhaps the most comprehensive statement of all.

On the one hand, we always live in His presence. This is a sobering and inescapable fact. But on another level, we are called to live in the constant mental and emotional awareness of the fact, which is transformational. This is the reality of a Psalm 139 epiphany. Let us pursue Him in a living awareness that delights in His presence and knows no greater joy than to bask in its reality as Psalm 16:11 and Psalm 27:4,8 so clearly display.

In His Presence!

Questions to Consider:

1. When was the last time you were keenly aware of the presence of God? What effect did it have on you? Why?
2. When was the last time you did something because You knew you were in His presence? How did the reality of His presence motivate you?
3. When was the last time you refused to do something because you knew you lived in God's presence? How did the reality of His presence motivate you?
4. Write down ten words that come to mind when you think about the presence of God. Ask someone else to do this too, and compare and discuss the words you chose and why you chose them.

For Further Study:

Do a Bible phrase search of the following: "the eyes of the Lord", "the presence of the Lord", "before the Lord", "in His sight", etc. Do a word study on the Greek word "*enopion-ενώπιον*" (Strong's #1799) in the New Testament, Think about the following verses: Gen 4:16; Gen 6:8, 1 Pet 3:12, 1 Kgs 15:11; 2 Chro 19:9; Prov 15:3; 1 John 2:28-3:3; Jude 24-25; Rev 20:12; Rev 22:12

Yahweh Shama, there is nothing hid from You, for You are altogether-everywhere-all-the-time. I bless You, O Lord Jesus, Thou that said "I am with you always", for Thy blood that

cleanses and justifies me, removing all fear of Thy presence. I bless You, O Spirit-from-Whom-I-cannot-flee, for Thy regenerating work, making me truly alive in Thy presence and living in me, never to leave me. I bless You, O Sovereign Father, for Thy welcoming arms that bid me come into Thy presence continually. How should I, a wretch deserving of Thy judgment, a worm that should shrivel in the heat of Thy holiness, a sinner that should call on mountains to fall and crush me to hide me from Thy awesome presence, instead be bid to come into Thy presence and run like a child with outstretched arms to find the heavenly embrace of Thee, THE GOD WHO IS THERE, and shall always be? Blessed be Thou, Yahweh Shama, in Whose presence is everlasting joy. Blessed be Thy name forever. Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we are praying for you. May you find in Christ your joy complete, your strength sufficient and your vision clear... all the way to "that day"!

*Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4 **Ron & Val Berrus** rsb@abwe.org*

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows, spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts. We are Pilgrims in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY.

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