

g. Practical relevance of God's omnipresence

- (1) One implication of God's omnipresence is that God is everywhere without exception.

No matter where we may go, God is already there. As far as space is concerned, God is no more present in a church building than in our home. He is no more spatially present at a Bible conference than at our place of work. He is no more spatially present in a great tabernacle than in a large supermarket. He is not more spatially present in a believer's home than in an atheist's home. He is no more spatially present in a cathedral than in a pool hall. He is no more spatially present in a hospital than in a house of prostitution. He is no more spatially present in Philadelphia than in Moscow. He is no more spatially present on earth than on the moon. He is no more spatially present in heaven than in hell. And He is no more spatially present in the body of a believer than in the body of an unbeliever. God is everywhere without exception!

The idea of God being present in hell may occasion some pause, especially if hell is defined primarily as "separation from God". Hell is certainly separation from God's favor and grace and mercy, but there is nothing in this that requires spatial separation.

If the objection arises from such Scriptures as Habakkuk 1:13 -- "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (A. V.) -- then it should be remembered that God beholds human beings committing all kinds of iniquity every day. In fact, Habakkuk 1:13 goes on to address the Lord and say: "wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devour the man that is more righteous than he?" (Incidentally, the NASB translates Habakkuk 1:13a to say, "Thine eyes are too pure to approve evil, and Thou canst not look on wickedness with favor.")

If we realize that God is omnipresent, and is therefore present in hell, not in blessing but in judgment; and if we recall that the wrath of God rests on sinners in hell; then perhaps this implication of God's omnipresence will have a rationale and not be too difficult to accept.

- (2) However, presence is not manifestation. God is everywhere, but He does not reveal Himself everywhere in special manifestations of His power and glory, or in grace or judgment. And yet He does manifest His presence; and we have experienced His power and grace in our churches, at Bible conferences, in tabernacles, in the homes of believers, in cathedrals, in hospitals, and in the lives of fellow believers, in a way that we have not experienced in certain other places. And we often pray that God will make His presence known in our midst as we gather to worship Him, by pouring out His Spirit and giving us blessing and conviction, joy and victory.