

Lesson 8

GOD'S IMMENSITY

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GOD IMMENSITY (OMNIPRESENCE)

Dictionaries define Immensity as “Unusual largeness in size or extent or number” Saying that God is immense extends this definition beyond imagination, “The largest large without boundaries or limit in size, extent, number or magnitude.”

God’s omnipresence (Immensity) speaks to the fact that He is present in all places at all times. While God is in Heaven, His throne, He is also present in every place. Proverbs says that His eyes are in every place. Jeremiah says that God is close at hand and that no one can hide himself from God. The classic passage on God’s omnipresence is Psalm 139:7-12 where the psalmist says that he can never be out of the sight of God.

- *Psalm 139:7-12 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.*
- *Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.*
- *Jeremiah 23:23-24 “Am I a God who is near,” declares the LORD, “And not a God far off? (24) “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.*

A belief in God’s immanence holds that God is present in all of creation, while remaining distinct from it. In other words, there is no place where God is not. His sovereign control extends everywhere simultaneously.

Immensity means that God is so magnificent, so impressively beautiful, elaborate, or extravagant; striking, and of such magnitude that He fills everyplace with full His presence and His full being. He is above and over all things that exist and have been created. He is not partially in one place and partially in another place. His full presence is in every place in the same measure.

If God was not immense, than He would not be God and could not worship Him.

When we say God is immense, we mean that He is immeasurable and able to be in every place, fully. In attributing ubiquity to Him, we affirm that He is actually present everywhere. Before creation God was immense, but He was not actually present in all things as we know today, since things as yet did not exist. However, once we review our discussion on eternity, we find that God has always experienced being present in all things, in all times and non-times.

This is a very important characteristic of God because it provides the foundation for advancing our understanding of God Almighty who has made known it is His will to have a personal relationship with each and every person.

God fills all of space, not only our entire space-time universe but all eternity. This attribute is also called His omnipresence. God is totally present in all of His personality and attributes in every point of space. Neither is He present everywhere by being many gods, for God is one and indivisible. This presence is spiritual, not physical or material.

6-5. God Is Omnipresence (Immense)

The Scriptures frequently mentions God's immensity in terms of His omnipresence throughout the creation.

- *Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*
- We should remember that even heaven is described as a part of creation (*Ex. 20:11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.*)
- *1 Kgs 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!*
- *Ps 139:7-10, "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.."*
- *Isa 57:15, "For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on 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."*
- *Jer 23:23-24, "Am I a God who is near," declares the LORD, "And not a God far off? (24) "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.*
- *Acts 7:48-49, "However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says: (49) 'HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, AND EARTH IS THE FOOTSTOOL OF MY FEET; WHAT KIND OF HOUSE WILL YOU BUILD FOR ME?' says the Lord, 'OR WHAT PLACE IS THERE FOR MY REPOSE?*
- *Acts 17:27-28, "that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children. '"*

Some Scriptures seem to indicate that God is located in one place, or moves from one place to another. God is spoken of as dwelling in heaven, or in the tabernacle or temple, or as appearing in a particular place. The Lord's Prayer is addressed to "our Father, who is in heaven." When people built the tower of Babel, it is reported that "the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building" (Gen 11:5; cf. account of Sodom and Gomorrah). As far as God's dwelling in heaven is concerned, we understand that to mean that heaven is the place of His special manifestation of Himself. His being is found, for example, "between the cherubs" of the ark, refers to that place as being the place where He chooses to be seen. References to His moving from place to place refer to His special attention and actions; "going down to see" the tower of Babel is a literary device making the story more vivid, and emphasizing the relative puniness of the work of the proud builders. None of these passages contradicts the biblical doctrine of God's omnipresence. It is the infinite communicating with the finite.

Since God is everywhere, He hears the prayers of people in heaven and all over the earth and blesses His children (*cf. Ps 14:5, "God is present in the company of the righteous";* this is much of the point of Psalm 139). The omnipresence of God is important for such doctrines as the Holy Spirit's dwelling in believers, which Jesus Christ said involved Himself and His Father as well.

- *John 14:16, 17, 20, 23, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. . . . On that day you will realize that I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I am in you. . . . If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."*

This truth also impacts other doctrines, such as that of the Lord's Supper (*1 Cor 10:16, "Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?"*). The omnipresence of Jesus' Spirit enables Him to be present in our church gatherings and exercises of discipline (*Matthew 18:20, "Where two or three come together in My name, there am I with them"*).

God's immensity provides a warning to those who think they can flee from God. Jonah tried to escape God's presence:

- *Jonah 1:3, "Jonah ran away from the Lord"* But he discovered that God was not only on the ship to Tarshish, but even underneath, in the depths of the sea:
- *Jonah 2:2, 6, "From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry. . . . To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you brought my life up from the pit, O Lord my God."*

Similarly, wicked people may think that God does not exist, or if He does, may not be where they are to observe them. Such thinking is contradicted by Scripture's declaration of God's omnipresence:

- *Amos 9:1-4, "Strike the tops of the pillars so that the thresholds shake. Bring them down on the heads of all the people; those who are left I will kill with the sword. Not one will get away, none will escape. Though they dig down to the depths of the grave, from there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to the heavens, from there I will bring them down. Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, there I will hunt them down and seize them. Though they hide from me at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent to bite them. Though they are driven into exile by their enemies, there I will command the sword to slay them. I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good."*

God is immeasurable and able to be in every place, fully.