

SERMON STARTERS

WHERE IS YOUR GOD?**Psalm 42:3**

***“My tears have been my food day and night,
While they continually say to me,
“Where is your God?”***

A mother, exasperated by the continual mischievousness of her two young sons, took them to the Pastor, asking him to have a talk with them, hoping that he could assist in correcting their wayward ways. The Pastor took the older of the boys into his study, intending to talk with the two separately.

In the privacy of his study, he tried to impress upon the boy the truth that God is everywhere and sees everything we do. He then asked him, “Now, where did I say that God is?” The boy was silent. The Pastor repeated, “Where is God?” Again, no response from the boy. Growing somewhat exasperated, the Pastor, raising his voice said, “Where is God!” After this stern question, the boy bolted from his chair, rushed out the door grabbing his younger brother’s hand saying, “Let’s get out of here; they’ve lost God and they’re trying to blame it on us!”

Unbelieving onlookers, observing the trials and testings of God’s children, often jump to the wrong conclusions. They may conclude that either God has abandoned His own or that they have lost touch with God. The psalm writer’s tormentors derisively asked, “Where is your God?” Let us refresh our memories by thinking of where God is relative to His trusting children. The plain statements below should bolster our faith and trust in the Omnipresent One.

GOD IS WITH US

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” (Matthew 1:23)

We are never alone. Whether recluse or hermit, a runaway or a hideaway, in sick-bed or on sorrow’s couch, in prison or in public, at home or homeless, at Ground Zero, in war zones or atop Zion we are never alone! “God with us” is precious, consoling and uplifting truth. He is unseen but seeing; unfelt but feeling; untouchable but “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” (Hebrews 4:15)

GOD IS IN US

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

“Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27)

- I am not lifeless for the living Christ within gives me life - Galatians 2:20;
- I am not hopeless for the Christ of hope within gives me hope – Colossians 1:27.

We are “partakers of the divine nature” (II Peter 1:4) which results in an internal Presence and an eternal union. The indwelling God, in Christ, is a “very present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1) The God Who is with us is the God who is within us! Mysterious? Yes! Marvelous? Yes!

GOD IS FOR US

“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31)

His presence with us and His Person within us assures us that His purpose for us will succeed. He sponsors no flops, backs no losing battles, and never comes off second best! He is never at a loss, left in a lurch, done in, done up or done for! We’re on the winning side if and when we are on God’s side, because He is for us!

He can fix our failures, bankroll us if we are bankrupt, pick us up when we fall down, heal our hurts and do “exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” (Ephesians 3:20)

God with us, in us and for us means, we win! Be a soldier with a chest full of battle ribbons that testify to the presence of the God Who is! So

- “Strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees...” (Hebrews 12:12).
- “Shampoo and comb your hair, brush your teeth, wash your face. God doesn't require attention-getting devices. He won't overlook what you are doing; he'll reward you well.” (Matthew 6:18 *The Message*)
- Get a smile on your face, a song in your heart, praise on your lips, a lightness in your step and make a fist at the devil! “In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” (Romans 8:31)

“Christ be with me, Christ within me,

Christ behind me, Christ before me,

Christ beside me, Christ to win me,

Christ to comfort and restore me,

Christ beneath me, Christ above me,

Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,

Christ in hearts of all that love me,

Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.”

- Patrick of Ireland, C. 460

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