

Where God Dwells

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Where does God dwell? The scriptures teach us that God dwells in heaven, his holy habitation (Deuteronomy 26:15), but aren't we also taught that God is everywhere? Being in a place isn't the same as abiding there. God may be everywhere, but he doesn't abide everywhere. Abide means to remain, dwell, or reside. I can think of five places, besides Heaven, where God makes his abode.

God is everywhere. The psalmist voices this in Psalm 139:7-10. "Where can I go to escape your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle by the farthest sea, even there your hand will guide me; your right hand will hold me fast." God is so vast that he fills and encompasses all of his creation and nothing is hidden from him (Jeremiah 23:24). So, everything and every place is within God's view and overshadowed by his Spirit, but his abiding presence is limited to those places where he chooses to dwell. It is in these places where God imbues more of his Spirit and where he is more deeply encountered.

God Dwells in Love Itself

I John 4:16 says that "God is love. Whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in them." Where love is present, God is present, and since God is love, he dwells in love. If we love with God's love, we invite God's abiding presence into our midst. God makes his abode in love itself. So, when we are in the presence of unconditional love, then we are in the presence of God and can experience him and his love at such times.

The above verse also implies that when we dwell in love, God dwells in us, since God dwells in love. It's a wonderful circular flow of love. If we seek to experience God more, then we should seek to love as God loves, as love is an invitation for God to abide in us.

God Dwells in the Present Moment

God experiences all time at once: past, present, and future. But it is the present moment that he inhabits. We humans tend to focus on the past or future, but the active presence of God is found only in the present moment. Our fretful forays into the past or future happen within our minds and shift our focus away from God. If we wish to experience God, we will more likely do so when we inhabit the present moment. The present moment is real, the only real realm available to us. The past and future are not real realms that we can interact with—they are mental constructs that we cannot inhabit except through our memory or vivid imagination. When we inhabit the present moment, we engage what's real and we can engage God who inhabits this present reality.

In my book, "Four in the Garden," Creator says, "Only in the present, where We make Our abode, will you find Us and the peace We give." Rehearsing the past or obsessing about the future doesn't bring peace. God can give us peace if we stay anchored to the present and we entrust our past and future to him. With God's help, we manage the present, moment by moment. When we jump out of the present, we cut ourselves off from God by engaging our repetitive mind.

God Dwells in Jesus

Colossians 1:19 says, "For God in all His fullness was pleased to dwell in Christ." The fullness of God inhabits Christ who is the full expression of God. If there are degrees of indwelling, then Christ would be the most pure and glorious habitation of God, surpassing that of heaven itself. Christ is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). As such, he is the means by which we can understand and experience God because he is the revelation of God. By knowing and experiencing Christ, we come to know and experience God.

God Dwells in our Hearts

Ephesians 3:16-17 says that Christ dwells in our hearts through faith and that God's Spirit is planted in our inner being. In John 14:23, Jesus says, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them." The Father and Jesus offer to make their home in our hearts if we love and obey Christ. Our hearts become a dwelling place for his Spirit. We become a holy habitation for the triune God. Jesus knocks on the door of our hearts (Revelation 3:20) and we invite him to take up residence within us where we can have intimate relationship with him. He does not enter unless we invite him to do so by faith. Once Christ takes up residence in us, he is available to be our beloved companion and master over our lives.

God Dwells Among His People

2 Corinthians 6:16 says, "For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said, 'I will dwell with them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they will be my people.'" In this verse, Paul teaches that Christ's followers constitute God's temple and habitation, made of people, not stones. This implies that God can be found in the midst of his people, and not in a specific location, such as a physical temple. We already concluded that God is everywhere, but it seems that the Spirit of God is especially present when his people gather to honor and worship him. God's Spirit dwells in our hearts, but when we collectively function as God's temple, he also dwells in our midst. Not only can believers experience God in this circumstance, but anyone who is present in this setting can experience God as well, because God's Spirit is present.

In conclusion, if we seek out these places where God dwells, we will more likely be able to experience God. Better yet, if we can create a place within our hearts to be his abode and invite him there, then we can experience God in the most intimate way.

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