

With us is God

Even though our God is omnipotent (all-powerful) and omnipresent (boundless), when connecting with Him on a daily basis we must envision Him being “present” somewhere. Essentiality God is universal or infinite but He occupies specific locations in order to be seen, felt or experienced. Believers probably recognise and respond to God: (1) *On the throne*, (2) *in His children*, and (3) *with His children*. Let’s examine this and find out for ourselves which location we identify with most.

Turn with me to **Isaiah 6**, reading **verses 1 to 9**..... Isaiah has a threefold vision, in 3 distinct spheres, and there are three significant facets to this vision. It was an “upward vision” [*he saw the Lord*]; it was also an “inward vision” [*he saw his own failings*]; and finally it was an “outward vision” [*he saw the needs of the nation*] - **upward, inward and outward**. Accordingly, the vision had “height” [*he saw the Lord high and lifted up*]; the vision had “depth” [*he saw the recesses of his own heart*]; and the vision had “breadth” [*he saw a forlorn world*] – **height, depth and breadth**. It’s obvious from this quick study that Isaiah’s vision had height, depth and breadth bringing about *confession, cleansing and commission*. Notice, God was located on the throne!

When ever you have a glimpse of God’s majesty, His holiness, magnitude and awesome power, it will inevitably give **height** to your image of Him and causes you to enter into a state of true worship. To Isaiah, God was “**high and lifted up**,” and the angels clearly worshipped a Holy God - “**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.**”

Next, when the Holy Spirit *unveils* intimate things in your heart, exposing anything that may be offensive to Him, this will bring about a **depth** of revelation concerning who you really are and in turn correct your image of “self.” The Psalmist expressed it beautifully in **Psalm 139:23**, “**Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting**”.

Finally, after you have looked up and seen God on the throne “high and lifted up,” and after you’ve searched deep within yourself to see who you really are, your focus automatically shifts outward to receive the broadest and clearest view of other peoples needs. This gives **breadth** to your image of life in general, and it will embrace God’s redemptive plan for all of mankind. You cannot be narrow-minded concerning the needs of others. This is exactly what we need at Christmas time.

The next location (position) believers are familiar with is “God living inside of them.” In **John 14:23** Jesus says, “**...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to Him and make Our home with (in) him.**” When referring to the Holy Spirit a few verses earlier, Jesus states, “**But you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.**” **Philippians 2:13** says “**For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.**” In **John 17:26** Jesus says “**I have declared your Name to them, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.**” By being “God inside” minded you will benefit greatly in your Christian walk and establish a true sense of harmony.

Your God – “*in you*” - will lead and guide your life toward the fulfilment of your God given destiny! Your God “*in you*” will establish every victory! “**For greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world**” – **1 John 4:4.**

Notice, we've seen God through Isaiah's vision, *seated on His throne* – “high and lifted up.” And we've met with our Heavenly Father, who has chosen to make His home and abide “in us.” Now let's make a connection with Immanuel – our “God 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

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” – John 1:14

Immanuel, “*with us is God*” is a symbolic name taken from the prophecy of Isaiah and applied in later years to Jesus the Messiah. To Judah it was a symbol of hope in the midst of adversity (**Isaiah 8:8-10**). God promised to manifest Himself and be with His people, in spite of the devastation wrought by the forces of the Assyrians (**Isaiah 8:7-8**). Immanuel offered a future and a hope for those who would choose to place their trust in God.

However, regardless of Isaiah understanding, Matthew rightly recognised that hope for restoration through the house of David (*Judah*) reached its ultimate fulfilment only with the Lord Jesus (**Matthew 1:23**).

With the coming of Jesus, God is “with us” in the most profound sense. Through the virgin birth, God made a way to be with us *always*, even to the end of the age (**Matthew 28:20**).

Coming up to Christmas, the question I'd like each of you to ask yourself is this, “*What god is with me?*” “*Is it the god of this world, with all its tinsel and bright lights? Or, is it the God who chose to become flesh and dwell among us?*” Furthermore, what is going to be your vision of God this Christmas time?

Remember, “**Immanuel**” (**God with us**) offers a future and a hope for anyone who chooses to place his trust in Him. Therefore, why not purpose to see “*Immanuel*” in everything? Right now!