

“OH GOD, WHERE ART THOU?”

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By Rev. Paul R. Shockley

Scripture reading: Psalm 139:1-18

I. Introduction:

- A. In many of my classes there are certain students who tend to stand out among the rest. In one particular class at A&M one of those outstanding students asked for my counsel. We arranged a time to talk and this is a portion of his story.

Raised in a near perfect Christian home, brought up in loving godly family with Christ at the center, I could quote massive portions of Scripture I whole heartily sought to obey Christ, and attempt to share the gospel of Jesus Christ as often as possible. I also know all the major doctrines of the Bible. Being trained musically by my family, I would find myself leading congregations in worship to God. But while I was faithful to Christ from all accounts one could observe, I hid within myself a painful problem, one that plagued me to such an extent that I now find myself being swallowed up by depression. With a voice that began to choke, he softly cried out, *‘Professor Shockley, I can’t feel God! Where is He?’*

1. Because He couldn’t feel God, within himself, he began to seriously doubt whether or not God actually existed.

- B. Indeed, where is God?

1. If some of us were honest, really honest, this is a question we may have asked deep within our hearts, one whereby we have not found an answer. Well, this morning message is titled, *“Oh God where Art Thou?”* We will examine the biblical concept of God’s presence by drawing upon several passages of Scripture. My hope is that the truths regarding God’s presence will become dearer to you. But, to be honest, I’m not just addressing those of us who have this angst, this existential struggle within about God’s presence.
2. There are people in this room who are hurting, afflicted, and burdened by problems, issues, and what seem to un-surmountable. Perhaps some us feel like we can’t tread the water anymore, we are on the edge of giving up; where’s the rescue ship: *“God, where are you; I need you!”* *“We call out to you, but you are silent.”* For some of us, the Christmas season is lonely and depressing. From single parents to widows, from those of us who have outlived our loved ones, to those of us are haunted by frightening memories of our childhood, from men and women in the military, to those whose family members might be in prison, Christmas can be tough!
3. Then there are those of us, if we are brutally honest, who are trying to ignore God’s presence because we want to live the way we want to live. We may even go to great depths in an effort to rid his voice and evade His presence. But my prayer is that you will respond to God’s love, mercy, and grace, and turn to Him;

allow him to soften your heart; He knew all that you would do in rebellion against Him, and yet He still chose you to be in His family.

1. So this morning I'm addressing those of us who are carrying this angst because we can't seem feel God; those of us who are hurting and are calling out to Him, but don't see Him, and those of who are trying to ignore Him because we are deliberately choosing our will over God's.

C. Before we begin by turning to 1 Kings Chapter 19, let me make two preliminary comments.¹

1. First, what do I mean when I say God's presence? In essence, what I'm talking about is God's omnipresence which means that God is everywhere present. He is present everywhere though separate from the world and the things in it. This is contrast to pantheism that states that God is everything. God is not creation. Rather, God is the Author of creation.
2. And second, it is just staggering to see how little work has been done by theological scholars on God's omnipresence! God's omnipresence is a fact that is absolutely plain in Scripture. There is little discussion on the matter in many of the theological works I examined on the topic. But it is a plain fact, nevertheless. For example, in Jeremiah 23:23-24, God states, "*Am I only a God nearby... and not a God far away?*" The idea here is that God is both "*near*" and "*far off*." In fact, there is no place in creation where a man can hide from the presence of God. "*Do not I fill heaven and earth?*" (23:24).
3. While there are a multitude of passages we can examine, we will be examining examine several major portions of Scripture. Let's begin by turning to 1 Kings 19.

¹ Interesting comments worth noting.

First, consider this statement by A. W. Tozer:

Few other truths are taught in the Scriptures with as great clarity as the doctrine of the divine omnipresence. Those passages supporting this truth are so plain that it would take considerable effort to misunderstand them. They declare that God is imminent in His creation, that there is no place in heaven or earth or hell where men may hide from His presence. They teach that God is at once far off and near, and that in Him men move and live and have their being [A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1961), p. 80].

II. God's Presence: Don't Pursue the Dramatic!

A. **1 Kings 19:** Let me briefly set the context:²

1. In chapter 17 we are introduced to the prophetic ministry of Elijah. He was introduced after Jeroboam divided the kingdom and its worship. To be sure, there were other prophets before Elijah, but they did not perform miracles as Elijah did. In fact, the prophets who ministered to Judah, the southern kingdom, did not need miracles because God's testimony was still central to their lives. But Israel, the northern kingdom, had rejected the presence of God. In fact, the worshipped golden calves. Thus, Elijah's ministry of miracles was a testimony to the people that God was still in their midst and He demanded their attention. Thus, God intended to shake them up so that they would see how far they had moved away from Him.
2. *God does that! Sometimes he gently nudges us... but when we do not respond, he creates a crisis in our lives that wakes us up and forces us to make a decision to offer our utmost for His highest (January 1 of Oswald Chambers' My Utmost for His Highest).*

B. If we examine Elijah's ministry to wayward hearts, we see that he shuts up the heavens and it does not rain for three years. He then called down fire from heaven upon the sheriffs and others who were sent to arrest him and bring him before the king. These miracles caught the attention of the people and produced at least a degree of repentance. They realized that God was chastising them.

C. Then in Chapter 18:

...we come to the famous judgment against Baal, and the two philosophies in Israel come to a climactic clash on Mount Carmel. There Elijah challenges four hundred priests of Baal to a contest to determine which deity has the power to send down fire from heaven. In a remarkable scene, he taunts them as they slash their flesh and cry out to their god. "Shout louder!" he said. Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened! (1 Kings 18:27).

When the pagan priests have exhausted themselves to no avail, Elijah rolled up his sleeves and goes to work. He repairs the altar of the Lord, which has fallen into disrepair, then orders four large jars of water to be poured over the bull and the wood upon the altar. He intends to make sure that the demonstration of God's power is not merely spectacular but absolutely astonishing. Then he calls upon God, and God sends down a fire so intense that it not only consumes the sacrifice but the water and the stones of the altar! Once judgment is exercised, the heavens open again and rain pours down upon the land.³

² For this portion on Elijah, I've largely adapted Ray C. Stedman's *Adventuring Through the Bible: A Comprehensive Guide to the Entire Bible*, 180-1. He simply offers some of the best summaries of historical accounts of Scripture I've ever read.

³ Idem.

- D. But then something unexpected happens after that unbelievable miracle affirming that the power and presence Almighty Jehovah: Elijah fears Jezebel!

1 Kings 19: 1-8. Read passage:

1. In essence, here's a fella that was so courageous when he faced four hundred priests on the mountaintop and now, he is running in terror from one angry woman! He's so defeated that he hides under a juniper bush, and begs God to take his life. But God shows him grace.
2. First, God puts Elijah to bed under the juniper tree and gives him a good night's rest. And second, God gives him a good meal, divinely provided by an angel of the Lord.
3. Verse 8 records that he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Mt. Horeb, "*the mountain of God.*"
4. But it is verses 8-12 that interests me for our purposes: **Read verses 8-12:**

- E. Let's make some observations about Verses 8-12:

1. First, look at verse 8 and let's consider location: Elijah ends up Mt. Horeb. Now, why is this important? Well, it is another name for Mt. Sinai.
2. I submit to you the possibility that Elijah wants to experience the presence of God as Moses did when he climbed this mountain. Listen to the words of **Exodus 19:16-20:**

So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. 19 When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. 20 And the LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

3. Just as Moses experienced God's glory in the most spectacular way, it seems to me that Elijah wants the same. Why? He wanted to receive the same experience for his own reassurance. What's my justification for this view? **Consider 1 Kings 19:11-13:**

11 So He said, "Go forth, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. 12 And after the earthquake a fire,

but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing. 13 And it came about when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice came to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

4. What’s my point? The young man who was crying out to me about not feeling God... was looking for reassurance in the dramatic. Don’t be like Elijah and only seek assurance in the dramatic. Sometimes God’s voice comes in a small whisper through such things as:
 - a. Witness of Creation (Psalm 19)
 - b. Witness of Conscience (Romans 2:14-16)
 - c. Correction (Hebrews 12)
 - d. Conviction of sin
 - e. Consequences (Colossians 2)
 - f. Comforting Protection (Psalm 91: A Psalm of trust)
 - g. godly counsel.
 - h. Answered prayer.
 - i. Even when you use your spiritual gift (Romans 8); there is a hand-in-glove sensation; you are maximized and feel most content as if this is what you were always meant to do.
 - j. The Scripture: When the Word of God is animated and illuminated before you. It comes alive like animated drawings.

5. Here’s my first major point: ***Don’t pursue the dramatic. Look at the ordinary and if you will open your eyes and look around, the ordinary becomes extraordinary.***
 - a. For example, I asked that young man if he had ever led people to Jesus Christ. He said “yes.” - Is that not an evidence of God’s presence?
 - b. I asked him if he saw believers dramatically turn their lives around from a path of rebellion against God to a path of abandonment to Him. He said “yes.” - Is that not evidence that God is able to soften rebellious hearts and restore brethren to Himself?
 - c. I asked him if ever seen anyone unexpectedly healed. He said, “yes!” - Is that not evidence of God’s presence.

- c. I asked him if he ever received answered prayer. He said, “yes!” - Why isn’t that sufficient for you?
 - d. I don’t know if you have ever done this, but one of my favorite scholars, Gary Habermas, and his wife, for several years documented every prayer request they offered to God. They discovered that God answered 67% of their requests.
 - e. What does all this say? It says that God’s presence is seen in the ordinary events of our lives but in extraordinary ways.
 - f. The young man’s only criterion was the dramatic. He wanted to have a dramatic encounter with God. But even fire coming down from heaven was not enough for Elijah! He flees and rushes off to Mt. Sinai. The dramatic events he received were not enough; He wanted more! If we only look at the dramatic, it will only take another dramatic event; we have an insatiable thirst for it!
6. ***But once again, don’t pursue the dramatic! Look at the ordinary and if you will open your eyes, the ordinary becomes extraordinary. But at the same time, don’t dismiss the dramatic when it does come!***

III. Don’t pursue the Dramatic but Anticipate the Dramatic!
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- A. In both the Gospels of Matthew and Luke we have detailed account of God’s presence. To be honest, the story about when he first appeared is not a cute story, but one that is actually quite cruel. See, it occurred during the reign of the Roman Empire and just outside of a small hotel in an obscure Jewish village a sweet, innocent lady was forced to give birth to her baby in a stable. Not only were there no vacancies in this hotel, but no one staying there even offered a bed to help this woman in labor. But perhaps they were just too preoccupied with other things to consider the needs of another. But let us take this lesson: a simple offer of kindness from anyone at that inn to an ordinary couple would have resulted in the opportunity to witness the most extraordinary event in human history-God is with us! Nevertheless, she cradled this God-man in a cattle-trough. The Baby born at Bethlehem was God. Therefore, God drew near to people in the flesh when He came to earth adding humanity to His deity in the Second Person of the Trinity.
- B. There is another way to look at this.... I can imagine the inn-keeper after closing the door to this couple and saying, *“I’m so busy! There are people everywhere! I’m completely overwhelmed! And now a lady is going to give birth in a stable! Oh, God, where art thou?”*
- C. Zecharias, who was filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied this coming event when he said in Luke 1:68-75:
 - 68 **“Blessed is the Lord God of Israel,**
 - 69 **For He has visited and redeemed His people,**
 - 70 **And has raised up a horn of salvation for us**
 - In the house of His servant David,**
 - As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets,**

71 **Who *have been* since the world began,**
That we should be saved from our enemies
And from the hand of all who hate us,
72 **To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers**
And to remember His holy covenant,
73 **The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:**
74 **To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies,**
Might serve Him without fear,
75 **In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.⁴**

He visited and redeemed His people. God left his heavenly home and pitched his tent to save His people in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. **Read Matthew 1:18-24:**

1. Thus, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14, His name was Immanuel, meaning, “*God with us.*” Thus, Matthew makes it clear that God made his presence known; God drew near to save.
2. **Hebrews 1:1-3 put it this way: God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,² has in these last days spoken to us by *His Son*, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;³ who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.**
3. The upshot is that biblical history records that Jesus, who is God, made His presence visible to save. He demonstrated that He was God-Man, the Messiah, the Savior, by controlling nature, fulfilling Bible prophecies, feeding thousands, healing the sick and the lame, speaking the greatest words ever spoken, turning water into wine, doing the greatest deeds ever done, never committing a sin, declared innocent six times by his accusers, and revealing His shekinah glory!
4. ***Said differently, he used the dramatic!*** Even with the dramatic, even with all those evidences, there were those who did not want Him around. In fact, at the cross of Calvary, the crowds of people yelled, “*Away with Him!*” They were more comfortable with a murderous Zealot than they were with Immanuel (Luke 23:18).
5. So, they nailed him to a cross [pause]. They nailed him to a cross.
6. ⁴⁵ **Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.** ⁴⁶ **And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”**
⁴⁷ **Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, “This Man is calling for Elijah!”** ⁴⁸ **Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.**

⁴The New King James Version. 1982 (Lk 1:67-75). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴⁹ The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.”

⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His Spirit [It is finished!].

⁵¹ Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³ and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

⁵⁴ So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!”⁵

~ Matthew 27:45-54

7. For some, like the Roman centurion, the dramatic event was sufficient. But even Jesus’ closest friend .His disciples, who saw the miracles Christ performed in his three years of public ministry, found themselves not anticipating the dramatic as when he prophetically revealed his future resurrection from the dead as recorded in the Gospel of Mark.

8. What’s my justification? Consider Luke 24:33-43:

³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

³⁶ Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” ³⁷ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. ³⁸ And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

⁴⁰ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” ⁴² So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. ⁴³ And He took *it* and ate in their presence.⁶

a. The physical nature of Jesus’ resurrected body was confirmed by the fact that he ate broiled fish and honeycomb.

9. We could go on and look at the account of doubting Thomas, but I believe you get the picture!

10. **Don’t pursue the dramatic! Look at the ordinary around you and you will see the extraordinary. His handiwork, His presence, and His guidance can be seen. But anticipate the dramatic as the Bible proclaims it to be.**

⁵The New King James Version. 1982 (Mt 27:45-54). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁶Ibid.

11. For example, consider the dramatic this way God answers prayers.

In this congregation we can look and see time and time again that God answers prayer. For example,

- a. Mr. Beyer's father became a Christian at 103.
- b. We've seen people here healed by the Lord!
- c. I saw God show up in an amazing way in view of how he powerfully used our own Dan Enright last Thursday.
- d. For sure, it does not always happen the way we want it to, but when I give God my prayers, I can expect Him to answer it the way He intends. And when He does not answer our prayers the way we want Him to, this too is evidence of His tender presence; He knows what is best.
- e. That young man who poured out his heart to me took comfort in knowing that God will never do anything less than His infinite perfect best. We can trust Him even when our whys are not answered. His silence can be a gift. **Let me put it this way: you don't want God to answer all your prayers the way you want them to be answered.**

- E. Before I move on to my last point, I do want to mention one other dramatic scene that the Bible predicts regarding our future presence with God; this is drama as the Bible proclaims it to be! Listen to these words from Revelation 22:

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.² In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.³ And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.⁴ They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.⁵ There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.⁷

IV. Don't pursue the dramatic; look for the extraordinary in the ordinary. But anticipate the dramatic as the Bible proclaims it to be. But don't merely anticipate the dramatic, allow the dramatic to live through you.

- A. God's presence is not only among His people but is now in His people, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 51:11; 139:7; John 14:17-18, 23; 16:7-15). Consider, just before Jesus' crucifixion, in the Upper Room Discourse, why would Jesus tell His disciples it was better for Him to depart from them (John 16:7)? Why?

⁷The New King James Version. 1982 (Re 22:1-5). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- B. While on the earth in His physical body, our Lord was present among His people and His disciples. But when the Lord ascended into heaven, He sent His Holy Spirit to dwell in His people, so that He is ever-present with EVERY believer, no matter where he or she might be, what their background is, or what they have done. Upon receiving salvation, the Holy Spirit of God conveys the presence of God in His people.⁸
- C. I return to the sermon I gave last summer on Phil. 2:12-13 whereby we examined the fact that it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Christ predicted that “*rivers of living water*” would flow from within the Christian (John 7:37-39).
1. Like the story of Corrie Ten Boom when she faced one of her prisoner guards, God can work in you in such a way that you can love the unlovely, stand alone with confidence, when everyone else is against you, minister to those who are hurting even if it costs you, face your enemies with the love of Christ, and flee from intoxicating pleasures. Afterwards, you look back on those events and you can only claim that God used you! He used you in a certain place at a certain time for a certain purpose.
 2. Therefore, we should consistently seek to be controlled by the Holy Spirit! The spiritual life of the believer is the life of Jesus Christ reproduced in the child of God by means of the Holy Spirit.
 3. There is not really a feeling that comes with the Holy Spirit’s presence; we have to know that He is there in His Word and we see evidences in it when we bear the fruit of the Spirit and our spiritual gifts are used.

V. How Should We Then Live?

Consider the following four principles:

- A. **First, when it comes to God’s presence, how much evidence do we really have to have in order to remove our doubts and trust Him with our daily affairs, no matter how painful they are?**
1. I suggest, following Pascal and Peter Kreeft, that God’s purpose is to show or give us enough data to help us to believe, but not enough to coerce us. God wants us to come to Him; He wants us to pursue him; He doesn’t want to force us to love Him.
 2. Consider what Paul Moser has to say. He argues that too much evidence may actually have the result of satisfying us without our ever coming to God,

⁸.Proofs of Indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit whereby he takes up residence in the believer: John 7:37-39; Acts 11:17; Rom. 5:5; 8:9; 11; 1 Cor. 2:12; 6:19-20; 12:13; 2 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 3:2; 4:6; 1 John 3:24; 4:13. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to make His Church His residence, indwelling every believer.

thereby satisfying our senses, but not contributing much to us in developing a personal relationship with him.⁹ God simply becomes a collection of facts.

We need to remember that Jesus gave "doubting Thomas" a mild rebuke for his lack of belief (John 20:29). Though Thomas had not yet seen the risen Jesus for himself, he still should have believed the good testimony of his colleagues who *had* seen him.

B. Second, God's presence should be a source of comfort to us!

1. As Psalm 139 declares, God is always with us. So, no matter what I'm going through, God is present.
2. Written to Christians, the author of Hebrews states, "*Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you*" (Heb. 13:5).
3. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who never leaves His sheep in a time of danger (John 10:11-12).
4. Illustration from my brother's death.

C. Third, God's presence should also serve as a warning! HE SEES ALL!

1. As recorded in Revelation 2, He walks in the midst of the Seven Churches! Nothing escapes his eyes, his mind, his ears, and his touch.
2. Personal illustration: Placing Jesus in a Drawer!
3. Even in hell unbelievers, who raised their fists in rebellion against him, will bow down at His name (Philippians 2).

D. *And fourth, God's presence can be known apart from arguments and evidences.* You can intimately experience God's presence when you place your faith in God, believing that He is God, who died on the cross for your sins and rose bodily from the dead. When you receive His love gift of salvation in the open arms of faith, you will receive over 215 benefits that can never be removed. Some of those benefits include Him taking residence inside of you; another is that you are now his child who will spend eternity with Him, never away from His everlasting and abiding love.

⁹ Paul Moser, in *Why isn't God More Obvious?: Finding the God Who Hides & Seeks* [RZIM Booklets, order at: 1-800-448-6766].

VI. In Conclusion:

Don't pursue the dramatic; look for the extraordinary in the ordinary. But anticipate the dramatic as the Bible proclaims it to be. But don't merely anticipate the dramatic, allow the dramatic to live through you.

Let's Pray:

*Oh Lord God, you who inhabit eternity,
The heavens declare your glory;
The earth your riches;
The universe is your temple;
Your presence fills immensity;
Otr of your pleasure you created life, and communicated happiness;
You made us what we are, and gave us what we have;
In you we live and move and have our being;
Your providence has established the boundaries of our habitation, and you wisely administer all our affairs-with goodness.
We thank you for your riches to us in Jesus Christ, for the unclouded revelation of Him in Your Word, where we are able to behold his person, character, grace, glory, humiliation, sufferings, death, and resurrection;
Give us a deep passion and burden to walk in continual intimacy with you, and cry with Job, "I am vile; with Peter, 'I perish; with the publican, "Be merciful to me, a sinner."
Subdue in us the love of sin.
Let us know the need of renovation as well as of forgiveness in order to serve you whole heartily and walk with you intimately;
We come to you in the all-prevailing name of Jesus Christ. With nothing of our own to plead. No works, no worthiness, no promises.
We are often straying, often knowingly opposing your authority, often abusing your goodness; In fact, I suspect that much of our guilt arises from our religious privileges, our low estimation of them , and our failure to use them appropriately-as you intend..
But we are not careless of your favor regardless of your glory;
Heavenly Father, as we leave today impress are upon us deeply with a sense of your omnipresence, that you about our paths, our ways, our conversations, the plans we conceive, the deeds we do and don't do, our lying down, and our end.¹⁰*

¹⁰ Adapted, modified, and expanded from Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*.