



Acts 17:22-31 John 14:15-21

We are in God, and God in us!

Consider with me this metaphor. We live within God, like a child in the womb, and God lives in us, too.

Jesus, knowing that his time with them was short, told the disciples that he would never leave them orphaned. He said that there was a day coming when they would know that he is in the Father, and they are in him, and he is in them.

Paul, in his famous - if somewhat unsuccessful - sermon [only 2 converted that day, but ... others were interested enough to come back another day and hear more] ... In Paul's famous sermon in Athens, he says, "For in him we live and move and have our being."

What is this "I am in the Father and you are in me and I am in you?" What is this "in him we live and move and have our being?"

Someone has suggested that we can be assured that God will never leave us because we are in God, as a child living and growing in the womb. Therefore, though we cannot know all there is to know about God, just as a child in utero cannot know a lot about its mother, we know that we can be utterly dependent upon our God, that we can trust God and in God have everything that we need, that God will never abandon us.

What does it mean for us to be inside God? It's a vital question, one with which we would do well to live, wander around - one which we would profit greatly if we were to reflect upon it continuously.

A minister tells this story. She says, "When I was preparing to come to Tatamagouche, I was trying to tie up a lot of loose ends. My 3½-year-old child kept popping into my study and disturbing me. I told him that I needed him to leave me alone so that I could think. 'What are you thinking about, Mommy?' he asked me. I replied that I was trying to think about God. He looked me directly in the eye and said, 'So, what do you want to know?'" Out of the mouths of babes -

In Isaiah, God says, "I will never forget you; I carved you on my hand."

What does it mean for us to be inside God, to live and move and have our being in God? A new mother tells this story:

"After my son Ben was born, I remember getting up in the wee hours of the morning to nurse him. I would never turn on the lights, preferring the quiet darkness.

"In the first few months after Ben was born, this became my favourite time to hold and cuddle him as he nursed. I sat in the rocking chair in the living room with Ben in my arms.

"Sometimes I would listen to quiet music, sometimes to silence. One night as I held my son in my arms, I snuggled into the rocking chair, closed my eyes, and just enjoyed feeling his breathing and the warmth of his body. I enjoyed feeling him rest in my arms.

"In that moment, I knew that God was holding me in the same way I was holding my son. God had found me in the darkness and I rested in God's care." [by Denise Griebler]

Some of you know that my favourite Psalm is #139, especially the part where the writer says that God knew him even as he was being knit together in his mother's womb. That same writer asks some searching questions of God: "Where can I go to get away from you? Where can I go to get away from your spirit?" Then he concludes with a great deal of comfort and a

hint of distress, "No matter where I go, you are there."

A man tells this story:

My mother has always been deathly afraid of flying and it kept her from a lifelong dream to visit Scotland. After all the children finished college and my parents had some financial resources for themselves, Mom said, "I've just got to go to Scotland."

My father suggested they fly and offered some wonderful advice. He turned to Psalm 139 and said, "We're going to be flying out into the night over the ocean. 'Whither can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to Heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the farthest limits of the sea, your hand shall lead me, your hand shall hold me.'"

So they held hands during the flight and read that portion of scripture over many times. They went to Scotland, had a wonderful experience, and my mother has been free to fly ever since.

After the trip, my father was pulling the suitcases out of the trunk of the car and had a heart attack. They rushed him to the emergency room and hooked him up on all those fancy machines. As he lay on the bed, some words came to him. "Whither can I go from your Spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?" Even in that blinking, flashing, tube-filled emergency room, God was there.

What does it mean, that we are "in God" or that "in Him we live and move and have our being?" The pregnancy metaphor isn't a bad one, to help us know, really know with our heads and our hearts, that we are never orphaned, that we are graven/carved on the very hands of God, that God has known us, loved us before we were born, that God is our shepherd and that in God we have everything we need.