

# The Case for God's Involvement

Psalms 139:7-10, Deut 8:2-5, Phil. 2:5-11

We must be able to trust and defend God's love, particularly when suffering and evil cause some to doubt.

Many people have no problem agreeing that God exist. But they have trouble seeing him as active and personal. They think God is far away and removed.

We have hope because we can see ways that God is already involved in our lives.

## **GOD IS PERSONAL AND PRESENT (Ps. 139:7-10)**

What we think about God and our relationship to Him determines what we think about everything else that makes up our busy world—other people, the universe, God's Word, God's will, sin, faith, and obedience.

If God knows so much about us, perhaps the wisest thing is to run away and hide, but all “escape routes” are futile. If we go up to heaven or down to sheol, the realm of the dead, God is there; if we travel the speed of light to the east or west (the Mediterranean Sea is west of Israel), His hand will catch us and tenderly lead us. We cannot hide even in the darkness, for to the Lord, the darkness is as the light. God wants to walk with us and guide us, because His plan for us is the very best. Why should we want to run away and hide? Adam and Eve tried it and failed (Gen. 3:8), and so did the prophet Jonah, who only went from bad to worse. We need God's presence with us if we want to enjoy His love and fulfill His purposes.

### APPLICATION -

- 1 - God is not like an absentee landlord but is all knowing and all present.
- 2 - Some people seek to escape from God in various ways

## **GOD GUIDES AND PROVIDES (Deut. 8:2-5)**

We need to remember the way of the Lord.

Oliver Cromwell told the artist painting his portrait that he refused to pay even a farthing for the painting unless it truly looked like him, including “pimples, warts, and everything as you see me.” Apparently the Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland was as courageous sitting for a portrait as he was leading an army on the battlefield. Most of us aren't that brave. We're uncomfortable looking at our photographs, and we'd certainly willingly pay for a painting that improved our appearance.

We need to see ourselves as God sees us and then, by His grace, seek to become all that we can become in Jesus Christ.

The three essentials for Israel's conquest and enjoyment of the Promised Land were: listening to God's Word, remembering it, and obeying it. They are still the essentials for a successful and satisfying Christian life today. As we walk through this world, we can't succeed without God's guidance, protection, and provision,

How we respond to the tests of life reveals what's really in our hearts, especially when those tests involve the everyday experience of life. The people of Israel were frequently hungry and thirsty and weary from the journey, and it was on those occasions that they became fretful and critical. The devil tempts us to bring out the worst in us, but God tests us to bring out the best in us.

When God allows a difficult circumstance to test us, we will either trust Him and become more mature, or we will tempt Him and become more miserable. The difference? Believing the promises of God and relying on the Lord to care for us and bring us through for His glory and our good.

Vs. 3 - Each morning during their wilderness journey, God sent the Jewish people “angels’ food” (Ps. 78:21–25) to teach them to depend on Him for what they needed. But the manna was much more than daily physical sustenance; it was a type of the coming Messiah who is “the bread of life” God was teaching the Jews to look to Him for “daily bread” (Matt. 6:11) and to begin each day meditating on the Word of God. Those who obeyed God in the daily responsibility of gathering manna would be inclined to obey the rest of His commandments. Our relationship to the Word of God (manna) indicates our relationship to the God of the Word.

Vs 4 - Not only did God feed the Jews “miracle bread” each morning, but He also kept their clothes from wearing out and their feet from swelling.

The same Lord who provided Israel’s needs without human means can provide our needs by using human means.

Vs. 5 - God saw the children of Israel as His own children whom He greatly loved. “Israel is my son, even my firstborn”

#### APPLICATION

- 1 Good memories are the gifts from God
- 2 God is at work for good in our lives
- 3 God guides and provides for His people.

#### **GOD STEPPED INTO HISTORY (Phil. 2:5-11)**

Vs. 5 - The “mind” of Christ means the “attitude” Christ exhibited. “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus”. After all, outlook determines outcome. If the outlook is selfish, the actions will be divisive and destructive.

Vs. 6 -Certainly as God, Jesus Christ did not need any- thing! He had all the glory and praise of heaven. With the Father and the Spirit, He reigned over the universe. But Philippians 2:6 states an amazing fact: He did not consider His equality with God as “something selfishly to be held on to.” Jesus did not think of Himself; He thought of others. His outlook (or attitude) was that of unselfish concern for others. This is “the mind of Christ,” an attitude that says, “I cannot keep my privileges for myself, I must use them for others; and to do this, I will gladly lay them aside and pay whatever price is necessary.”

Personal – It is my experience that the time I am the happiest is the time I am serving others.

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A reporter was interviewing a successful job counselor who had placed hundreds of workers in their vocations quite happily. When asked the secret of his success, the man replied, “If you want to find out what a worker is really like, don’t give him responsibilities — give him privileges. Most people can handle responsibilities if you pay them enough, but it takes a real leader to handle privileges. A leader will use his privileges to help others and build the organization; a lesser man will use privileges to promote himself.” Jesus used His heavenly privileges for the sake of others — for our sake.

#### APPLICATION

1 If we have the mind of Christ the we will live in humility and love.

2 Jesus Christ laid aside heavenly glory to come to earth and give Himself up for us.

3 Christ’s coming and living and dying are the ultimate examples of God’s involvement in human history.