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# CHAPTER — ONE


Have you ever had the feeling that something is missing—especially during those rare pauses in the day or even rarer contemplative moments? For Christians, the feeling is probably the gentle prompting of the Holy Spirit reminding us that we are neglecting our relationship with our Lord. It lies behind the first question God raised to Adam and Eve after they had fallen in sin:

*Where are you?*

Now, this question doesn't mean that God couldn't find Adam and Eve.

On the contrary, he knew exactly where they were.

The question derives not from God's omnipresence or omniscience, but from his immanence (present-ness). Due to their rebellion against God's command to them, Adam and Eve's relationship with God was broken. They sensed this and were hiding from God's presence. He called out to them so they would recognize the depth of their separation.



# **CAN YOU FEEL GOD'S HEARTBREAK OVER THE RIFT?**

**THE THOUGHT OF GOD  
WALKING ALONE IN  
THE GARDEN WHERE  
THEY PREVIOUSLY  
WALKED TOGETHER  
MAY BE ONE OF THE  
MOST HEART-BREAKING  
EVENTS IN THE WHOLE  
OF THE BIBLE.**

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# 66

*In the Garden and elsewhere in the Bible, God reveals to us that he is both transcendent and immanent (present). He is not some divine clockmaker who wound up the universe and set it off on its way until it eventually winds down with a gasp and a whimper. He is, in fact, deeply committed and concerned about our lives. Despite his complete “otherness,” he wants to be known.*





"Where are you?" He still asks us that today—in the busy chores and family responsibilities, in the day-by-day challenges at work, in the ever-demanding pull of entertainment. We dismiss that nagging feeling that something is missing. Something deep within our souls lacks fulfillment. Something that was meant to be a primary part of us—our relationship with our Creator—has instead been squeezed into an hour on Sunday, or forced out by an overflowing To Do List, or maybe remembered a few moments before we fall asleep.

We desperately need God's presence—not just his omnipresence, but his immanent presence. He is there to support us, to prompt us in the way we should go.

*In the simple and hard things  
of everyday life, his still,  
small voice speaks to us.*

And when we are in communion with him—practicing his presence—our relationship deepens daily.

For some, however, like Moses, the yearning for relationship with God becomes the major pursuit of life. Following the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, Moses asked God to "teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you" (Ex 33:13). God responded with a promise that his presence would go with Moses and that he would bring the Israelites into rest.





But notice also how Moses' revelationship did not stop with the initial promise. Moses' pursuit of God's presence led him to request that God reveal his glory. We cannot miss what F. F. Bruce pointed out regarding this: when God passed by to reveal his glory to Moses, he declared his goodness. There is a close connection between God's glory and the revelation of his character—of which his goodness is an essential part. To know God in deeper ways means to understand his character more and more. God desires to fill the earth with his glory, and that means revealing his character.

*This shows us how  
revelationship works.*

God revealed himself to Moses and the relationship was deepened. Then because of the relationship, Moses asked for further revelation.

God greatly desires revelationship. In fact, where we might expect God to describe the Exodus only in terms of leading the people of Israel to the Promised Land, God describes it in relational terms: "I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself" (Exodus 19:24). In a similar way, when Jesus prays about leaving the disciples soon for heaven, he describes it in relational terms: "I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and to see my glory" (John 17:24).

When we turn a few pages of the Bible beyond the Exodus to the story of Gideon, we find another clear example of revelationship. During Gideon's lifetime, the Israelites were in the Promised Land, but found themselves oppressed by the raiding Midianites. Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to hide it from the raiders when an angel appeared to him and called him a mighty warrior—rather ironic considering the circumstances. (Can you just see Gideon looking around wondering who the angel is referring to?)



The angel promised Gideon his support to defeat the Midianites and thereby bring peace. Through all this, Gideon had a revelation of God as Yahweh-Shalom, meaning, “the Lord is our peace.” Through several consecutive tests, God not only revealed himself to Gideon and to Israel, but also revealed who Gideon could be through God’s grace. Over time, Gideon became that mighty warrior God predicted.

God sovereignly revealed himself to Gideon through the revelation of his name (the Lord our Peace), and thereby revealed his nature to meet the deepest need of an oppressed nation. Gideon then asked for further revelation when he laid out each fleece. As a result of this revelation, Gideon learned to trust God. Revelation brought an understanding of the faithfulness of God for the coming deliverance and Gideon learned to walk in unquestioning obedience to God.

We should also notice that, as with both Moses and Gideon, sometimes God reveals himself through angels. Several generations of my family have had angels appear in person and in dreams. In one such dream, I (Randy) was standing on the porch looking out toward the woods at night. God showed me demonic spirits on the edge of these woods who were mocking me. Suddenly, they grew quiet, and a look of dire concern crossed their faces. I turned and looked over my right shoulder to see what they were looking at. Just over my shoulder stood a large, mighty angel staring at the demons. In this revelation, God was showing me that his power and authority were present—though often unseen—to provide protection.

When God meets our needs, he often reveals something about his character. To Moses and Gideon, it was that God would establish peace through victory over their enemies. To Randy, it was a reminder that he could rest in the protection of God against demonic forces. Through them all, revelation with God deepened.



Of course, when we look to the New Testament, we know that God revealed the deepest part of his nature through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He did this so that we might know the Father and the Son and thus obtain eternal life—eternal relationship with God (John 17:3) in his presence.

God's desire and plan has always been to restore the intimate relationship broken by Adam and Eve in the Garden, answering once and for all the haunting question, "Where are you?"



# When I consider...

When God meets our needs, he often reveals something about his character. To Moses and Gideon, it was that God would establish peace through victory over their enemies. Consider the examples in *Revelationship*, the Bible, in the lives of men and women who have lived godly examples on this earth, and in your own life. How has God revealed his character as he meets the needs of his people?

1. Consider a character in the Bible...

1.

2. Consider one of the "greats" in Christian history...

2.

Consider your own life...how has God revealed his character to meet a need in your life?

3.

# For Review

How do you work devotional time into your day? Do you ever feel the quiet nudge of God for fellowship? What is the one thing that prevents you?

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Have you worshipped God for His characteristics—His goodness or omnipresence—for example? Has this deepened your *revelation*?

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Have you ever sensed God's glory? What was it like?

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Have you ever seen or sensed an angel or know someone who has?

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# For Review

What need or lack are you facing? What aspect of God's nature and character specifically addresses that need or lack?

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Have you ever thought of the Gospel as an eternal relationship with God in His presence?

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To you, how is religion different from a relationship? (In other words, religion might require rites and traditions, while relationship draws us closer to God to spend time in His presence.)

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## The Garden of His Love

*by Dr. Randy Colver*

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I stopped along my walk to watch a Husbandman at work.  
His slow, determined labor seemed unnatural for its worth.

Against the picket fence I leaned to gain a closer look,  
For something in the way he sowed caught the glance I took.

Though many cars and people passed he did not seem to mind,  
But methodically he worked that soil, planting seeds of every kind.

I watched Him press and mold each mound and cover every grain,  
He seemed to count each kernel and give them tears for rain.

He whistled some old church hymn, the name beyond recall,  
Still rung within my breast and throat of a distant altar call.

When he reached into his seed bag I glimpsed an ugly scar,  
And then my eyes were opened to this place I'd come so far.

Each seed was but a blessing from the grace of God above.  
The ground his heart was working was my garden of his love.



# Journal

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Song or poem:







*Now this is eternal life: that they may know  
you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ,  
whom you have sent. - John 17:3*

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# Journal

## Going deeper

How intimate is the relationship that Jesus desires? What has God given us that we might be one with him? How does God continue to make himself known to us? Is love a part of his glory?

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What is the greatest insight you have received from this passage?



# Reflection & Prayer

We desperately need God's presence—not just his omnipresence, but his immanent presence. He is there to support us, to prompt us in the way we should go. In the simple and hard things of everyday life, his still, small voice speaks to us. And when we are in communion with him—practicing his presence—our relationship deepens daily.

»Where are you?«

God's desire and plan has always been to restore the intimate relationship broken by Adam and Eve in the Garden, answering once and for all the haunting question, "Where are you?" When God called out to Moses from the burning bush—and much later, when God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac—Abraham gave a single-word response: *Hineini*. Simply translated, it means, "I am here!" This is not a "here" in the simple way of being present at school during a roll call but a deeper response, "Behold! I am here, on hand, and ready."

Take time in prayer to hear this question and give your answer.

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