

THERE IS NO GOOD TRYING TO BE MORE SPIRITUAL THAN GOD. GOD NEVER MEANT MAN TO BE A PURELY SPIRITUAL CREATURE. THAT IS WHY HE USES MATERIAL THINGS LIKE BREAD AND WINE TO PUT THE NEW LIFE INTO US. WE MAY THINK THIS RATHER CRUDE AND UNSPIRITUAL. GOD DOES NOT: HE INVENTED EATING. HE LIKES MATTER. HE INVENTED IT.

C.S. LEWIS



The Fingerprint of God

It is the time of glorious spring, here in the Midlands. The view across our pond is transitioning from black and soldier-like tree trunks to a feathering of green lace as barren branches sprout their welcome to warmer temperatures. Peonies have moved quickly from their sparse, asparagus-shoot beginnings to the full bush that will soon produce blooms that rival the vaunted rose in both beauty and fragrance.

Surrounding hillsides and pastures are now first home to this year's new calves—frolicking, gamboling youth amidst their placidly serene mothers. The wrens have finally returned and are, along with other

feathered breeds, busily doing whatever is necessary to acquire a mate.

The spring air is clean and fresh. Everything in sight is coming back to life, growing. And one cannot stand in the middle of this bucolic scene without sensing the hand of God at work, and feeling deep within the soul His active presence.

Heavenly IT Pro

God—that is, God as represented by any member of the Tri-unity of the God-head—is an active participant in our lives. To imagine that one meets God only during weekly, corporate worship is a little like

imagining that one is only bound by one's marriage vows once a year during the anniversary celebration; the rest of the year one is free to disregard the commitment to, or even the presence of, the marital partner.

It is easy in our present culture to practice a comfortable, reassuring arrogance about what God doesn't know. Many is the time I have been stumped by something my computer is doing—or not doing. Often I have wracked my brain, trying in vain to come up with the solution to a problem, for example, in the writing of a computer program. Why in the world won't the code

segment...

```
While P <> 0 do
begin
  if P > 1 then
    WriteBit(copy(Str,1,pred(P)));
  Delete(Str,1,P);
  inc(X,pred(P));
  P := Pos('~',Str);
  Hi := not Hi;
end;
```

...do what I want? Why can't I get it to work properly?

Rarely, however, in the midst of my frustration over technical quandaries do I turn to my heavenly Father for help. Somewhere I, like many others, have picked up the arrogant concept that God, while useful for such things as emotional needs, interpersonal relationships or Scripture clarification, is surely befuddled by our modern technology. I mean, how could some old man with a white beard, dressed in old-fashioned flowing robes, know anything about the modern computer and my misbehaving program code? Well, He could, and He does, because He's the one who *invented* it.

"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things."

Acts 17:24-25

The Master's Hand

There is nothing in our world that God does not know, because there is nothing in our

world that God did not create. Since He created it, everything in the world bears His fingerprint.

In the early eighteenth century, Antonio Stradivari created violins, violas and cellos that are still considered the very finest stringed instruments around. An accomplished musician, such as the violinist Itzhak Perlman, can hear and feel the tonal quality of a Stradivarius without even checking for the name of the manufacturer printed



inside. The exquisite instrument itself bears the fingerprint—in this case, the sound—of the master craftsman. Likewise, the Spiritual person sees God all around, because everything bears His mark—the fingerprint of the creator.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Romans 1:20

The Nearness

We are free to disregard the signs of Him, but we do so by our own choice—and at our own risk. God has spread Himself around so liberally that we have no excuse not to discover Him where we travel and live.

He is in the breeze that cools us in the midst of summer heat. He is in the soft cooing of the baby, pleasant and content within its mother's arms. He is in the rhythmic lapping of small waves on the shore of the mountain lake, and the burbling song of the stream traveling over and around water-smoothed boulders. He is found in the chatter and shared intimacies of old friends over a weathered picket fence. He is found in the crushing, incessant noise of the city, as well as in the bucolic stillness of the country glen.

God is near us in every tragedy and joy, every sorrow and ecstasy. His life surrounds our own, holding us up, nurturing, coaxing, chastising and encouraging. He is there when we are aware of Him, and He is there even when we are not.

More than just a reassuring comfort, His presence actually *describes* God to us. He has left His fingerprint on everything about us—not just so that we would know that He is there, but that we might come to understand *who* is there. It is God's nature, His personality, His very essence that is there for the possessing, and we will remain something less than what we could be, until we avail ourselves of that knowledge.

Next Week: *We Can Behold Him*

*Lord of all being, throned a-far,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!*

*Sun of our life, Thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, Thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.*

*Our midnight is Thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is Thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch, Thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are Thine.*

*Grant us Thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for Thee;
Till all Thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame.*

Oliver Wendell Holmes