

# The Nearness of God

by Octavius Winslow

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*God is near to us, and we can experience His special and personal presence through Jesus Christ, prayer, and living a life of communion with God.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 46:1, Psalm 145:18, Isaiah 55:6, Jeremiah 23:23, John 14:9, Romans 8:38, Ephesians 2:13, Hebrews 4:16, James 4:8

**Topics:** "God's Presence", "Prayer and Communion"

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## Description

Octavius Winslow emphasizes the nearness of God, highlighting that through Jesus Christ, God is intimately present in our lives. He reassures believers that the blood of Christ brings them close to God, eliminating the barriers of sin and guilt. Winslow encourages prayer as a means to experience God's immediate presence, reminding us that He is a very present help in times of trouble. He urges the faithful to live in constant communion with God, avoiding anything that creates distance between them and their Creator. Ultimately, he points to the hope of fully experiencing God's presence in eternity.

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## Transcript

"A God at hand, says the Lord."--Jer. 23:23

More saints than Luther have felt a personal interest in the forty-sixth Psalm--"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble;" thus drinking with him of the "river the streams whereof make glad the city of God." My soul, are you not one of them? Has not your praiseful exclamation often been, "You are NEAR, O Lord!" God is everywhere, but it is only His own children who forcibly feel, and gratefully acknowledge, and holily exhibit, not His omniscience only, but His especial and personal presence. Look at this precious truth, my soul, in connection with two or three features of your varied experience.

He is a God at hand in the person of Christ. The Lord Jesus brings God very near to us. He is not only the revealed One of God, but He is in His own person really and absolutely God--"He who has seen Me, has seen the Father." Could a mere creature, a man only, say this? Impossible, with any truth, and without blasphemy. Oh, how near to us has Jesus brought the Father! Come to Jesus, look at Jesus, listen to Jesus, and realize that in so doing you approach to, gaze upon, and hear the voice of, God your Father in heaven.

God is near in the work of Jesus. The blood brings us sinners near to God, as it brings a sin-pardoning God near to us. "You that were afar off are made near by the blood of Christ." See then your true and present standing, O my soul! Nothing comes between you and God but the atoning blood of Jesus. His blood annihilates all your sin and guilt. Robed in His imputed righteousness, you are to God nearer than the highest angel in heaven--and nearer you can not be--and God draws near to you and speaks--"A God at hand, says the Lord."

God is near at hand when you do approach Him in prayer. Oh, comforting truth! A God at hand to hear the softest breath of prayer--to listen to every confession of sin--to every cry of need--to every utterance of sorrow--to every wail of woe--to every appeal for counsel, strength, and support. Arise, O my soul! and give yourself to prayer; for God is near at hand to hear and answer you. Listen to His word, "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto Me? says the Lord." "You meet him that rejoices and works righteousness, those who remember You in Your ways."

A God at hand is He in every time of trouble. "A very present help." Not far have you to travel for the guidance and deliverance you need. If forsaking the Lord your God you go down into 'Egypt' for help, and trust in the chariots and horses thereof, then will you be ashamed of your confidence. But why fly to creature help, when the Lord your God is near unto you in all that you call upon Him for? Cease from man; for God in Christ is very near, and one step of believing prayer will bring you to His feet.

Oh, live as in His presence! Be your life a life of communion, doing and enduring, toiling and suffering, as beholding Him who is invisible. In a little while we shall pass from our partial and imperfect realizations of His presence when on earth, to enjoy His full, unclouded, and eternal presence in heaven! Then shall our eyes see the King in His full unveiled beauty, not as now, through a glass darkly, but then face to face. And, oh transporting thought! we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Guard vigilantly and strive prayerfully against that which creates a conscious distance between God and your soul. Is it the world?--come out of it. Is it the creature?--relinquish it. Is it the flesh?--mortify it. Is it sin?--forsake it. Is it unbelief?--nail it to the cross. Oh, let nothing separate you from Christ--no earthly good or carnal delight cause a distance, or coldness, or shyness between God and your soul. Give Jesus your undivided heart, and let God be your all in all. Then shall your happy experience be--"You are NEAR, O Lord."

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