

WHERE THE LORD CAN BE FOUND

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Lesson: Luke 24: 1-9

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?” (Luke 24:5).

Can you imagine the disappointment of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary when they arrived at the tomb of the Lord on Easter morning? They were seeking the body of the Lord to anoint it with sweet spices. Of course they were pleased to see the heavy stone rolled away, but certainly sad to find the body was not there. It was not until the angels spoke to them and reminded them of the Lord’s own words—how He would rise from the dead on the third day—that they became happy. And it was then that they learned the true meaning of Easter.

It was a similar situation that many of you children surely have experienced. How often have you asked yourself, and others, “Where is the Lord?” The answer given to the women who came that first Easter morn was, “Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.” But can you and I also learn from those angelic words?

Perhaps you have looked in the right places, but did not know what to look for. For example, is the Lord in the Word? Or is it like the tomb, the place of the dead? Can we see the Lord in His holy temple on the Sabbath? If so, where is He in a building? Can we find Him in the Easter story, or in the Easter recitation? After all, books are not living, are they? Buildings don’t live like you and I. Certainly it would be difficult to find the Lord in the words describing the first Easter, as in our lesson from Luke. Those are just stories, read from the printed page. So what can we learn from this story about where to find the Lord?

Our best clue can be found in what we bring to the Lord in His temple on Easter morn. We bring flowers, the breath of spring and the sign of new life in the earth. Now, just looking at the flowers does not in itself show us the Lord, although they may be very beautiful. No, we must see that spring flowers are a sign of new life. They live! It is the life within them that we know comes from the Lord Himself. In fact, life, wherever we find it, is a sign of the Lord. The Lord not only provides life in all the flowers, but in you and me as well. Whatever lives does so because the Lord inflows with His life. We live because God lives.

Then why do we say that the Lord can be found in His Word? It is because His words contain great truths within them, like life within a flower. Those truths from the Lord are living, especially when we begin to live according to them in our lives. As we obey His Commandments, we begin to live the life of an angel, which is to really live. As we apply the teachings of the Word to our life, guiding each step toward heaven, we can feel the presence of His joy and happiness in our minds and hearts. We begin to see the Lord in our neighbors each time they practice His teachings in their lives. We can see love in them, and that is to glimpse something of the Lord.

The same is true of His temple, on the Sabbath. As we come before Him with songs of praise and joy, we can feel the presence of the Lord around us. He is with the living, that is, the loving people who are the true neighbors. Their presence in the church is what reflects the Lord's presence there. Easter morning is a time for rejoicing. We know the Lord lives and is present among us. He is not with the dead things of life. We cannot find Him when we are thinking false ideas, or when evil loves are in our hearts. Evil is the absence of the Lord. He is not there, for evil is as a tomb. No, He lives and is felt only where we see truths like the light of heaven in our minds. He is present where love reigns for that is where life is.

And so, children, if we seek the Lord, we have only to turn to what is living around us. He is present in all of nature, as in the Easter flowers. He is present wherever His Word is—in our copies of the Word, and in our memory, as in the Easter recitation. He is as near as loving parents who watch over you. He is in His Temple when we come to praise Him. And He can be within us, if we but seek Him in the form of great truths we have learned, and in the very good loves we feel when we reach out to help our neighbor. Yes, the Lord is not among the dead, but among the living! Whatever truly lives is the presence of the Lord—in the world of nature; in the faces of those about us; in the love He teaches in His Word; and in our own hearts, when we keep His Commandments. Let us be as the women that first Easter morning. “They remembered His words, and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things...” For they understood the angelic news: “He is not here, [in the place of the dead], but is risen!” (Luke 24:5-6, 8-9). And so can we live and see the Lord, if we but invite Him to dwell within us! *Amen.*