

Looking Or Seeking

On numerous occasions, our children have been sent to find an item only say "I cannot find it." Afterward, Regena or I would go and get it ourselves. The problem usually centers around the item being covered, behind a door, or out of place. I must admit to being a victim of "I cannot find it" only to learn the item was indeed around me. While eyesight may have a little part to play in this problem, it is more closely connected to the amount of effort and focus of the individual.

It is at this point that Regena reminds us the difference between looking for and seeking. To seek means to show diligence, move "things" to look under, in short, to make sure the item is not around. Looking means to walk through a room and if it is not easily seen to leave the room without finding the item. I remember my Dad saying, "If it was a snake it would have bitten you" when he had to go and get the hammer or shovel.

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). The wording of Jesus is very precise in our passage. Jesus did not say to merely look but to seek first the kingdom of God.

There is a difference between casually trying to serve God and diligently trying to please Him. Let me illustrate it this way. We stay in your house for a week. After getting home, we realize we have left a sock or child. As we call you we may say, "We have no idea where it or the child is" in this case you will have to go through your home and search until to find it or the child. On the other hand, we may be able to tell you where they are. You still search but it is much easier. This is also true with the kingdom of God.

We are not hopelessly searching for the truth. There are people looking to the words of Mohammad, Buddha, Confucius, Joseph Smith, and many others to find the will of God. To quote my Dad; "If it were a snake it would have bitten them." God has told us where to seek. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, Hear Him!" (Matthew 17:5) Through the words of Jesus, we can enter His kingdom. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). The people at Berea searched the scriptures daily to learn the truth, Acts 17:11. Jesus did not come to conceal the will of God, but to reveal it. The one obstacle Jesus could not overcome was indifference to His message.

Part of seeking is to be genuinely interested in finding whatever it is we are seeking. Christ used the word "first" to stress the priority we are to give in seeking the kingdom of God. As I have said before in numerous lessons, most people believe in God and do have Him on the list of priorities. Usually God is not number one on their list. He comes somewhere below family, job, and recreation. Jesus said our desire to find God should be first in our lives. How important is your soul to you?

Many people are not interested in finding the "kingdom of God." The multitudes were interested in the kingdom as long as Jesus fed them. They wanted an earthly kingdom and power. Once Jesus pointed out the spiritual nature of His kingdom, they lost interest. "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more" (John 6.63a, 66).

Today people want the kingdom of God to be physical in nature. Whether it is the doctrine of Premillennialism or the social gospel, people are not finding the kingdom of God. Give the people food and fun and they will come to "church" but offer them sound Bible teaching and they will not. Those that still followed Him were seeking the

kingdom of God. There are some people today genuinely interested in learning about God but they are looking in the wrong place. If they would study the Bible for themselves, they would find the truth.

We need to constantly search the scriptures to learn more of God's will and obey. Honest people are lost due to a lack of diligence in their search for the truth. We also need to be willing to tell others where they can find the kingdom of God.

Have you ever been lost physically? I was about six years old when the boy next door and I decided to run away from home. We lived in the Westend section of Louisville, Ky. and decided to walk to the Ohio River. Once arriving, we watched the boats and played until it got late and we were hungry. It was time to go home. Unfortunately, we were lost. Two 6-year-old boys wandered up and down streets until a car pulled up and asked us our names. People were searching for us and we made the local news. Due to the efforts of others, we made it home safely. How many people around us are lost spiritually? They are wandering in man-made churches and are in need of us to seek them out. D.T. (Reprinted from the January 12, 2003 Stone Street Tablet).