

Where Are The Lost?

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The Lord commissioned us to go and teach them. The commission must still remain valid because Jesus said, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Mt. 28:20b). Obviously, the world has not ended yet, so the Lord must still be with us in the satisfaction of his charge concerning seeking the salvation of the lost. He has not given up on the lost nor will we. In order to help us find them, let’s attempt to answer the question, “Where are the lost?”

Outside of Christ

The deduction is logical and right that since all saved people are in Christ by having been baptized into him, then all those outside of Christ, sadly, are lost. The Bible says, “Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (II Tim. 2:10). Salvation is “in Christ.” Again, the Bible says, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). Baptism puts one “into Christ.”

Outside of the Church

When a person is baptized into Christ where salvation is, he is added to the church of Christ. Acts 2:47 reads, “Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Therefore, the lost are outside of the church (see also Eph. 5:23).

In the World

At Ephesus in the first century, before they were baptized into Christ Paul told them, “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). The lost are without Christ, without spiritual standing before God, without promises, without hope, and without God. Where does this condition obtain? In the world. So, the lost are “in the world.”

Yet in Their Sins

In “the resurrection chapter” of I Corinthians 15, the apostle reasons that should it be the case that the gospel is empty of meaning and truth, then they would be “yet in their sins” (v. 17). The gospel is the “power of God unto salvation” and its truth is the means by which souls are “begotten” (Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18). Those who have not been “begotten by the gospel” are lost. Therefore, the lost are “yet in their sins.”

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In Darkness

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life,” wrote the apostle John in John 8:12. The lost are not following Christ, therefore are they “in darkness.”

Blinded

The lost have had their minds blinded by the Devil. Paul said, “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Cor. 4:4).

Seeking the Lost

Now that we have considered where they are, shall we exert every effort to find the lost? This is the grand story of the love of God and Christ about which the Holy Spirit informs us in the cherished golden text of the Bible, John 3:16. Luke 19:10 says, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” “Go ye, therefore....”

Are Any of the Lost in the Church?

What leading fact do you know about the following Bible characters? Ananias, Sapphira, Hymenaeus, Alexander, Philetus, Demas, Diotrephes. Look them up. Were they members of the church? Yes. Were they lost? Yes. Can you be a member of the church and still be lost? Yes.

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (I Cor. 10:12).

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (II Cor. 13:5).

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Heb. 3:12).

“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Mt. 13:41-42).

The Most Important Question Today

Where are you?