

## SEEK THE LORD

### Finding God in Unexpected Places

Some years ago, Dr. Leslie Weatherhead told about counseling with a married couple who wanted to adopt a baby. They had tried for some years to have children, but no luck. Then one day they came in and their faces were bright with joy. After all those years, they had found out they were expecting ... and they were thrilled beyond belief.

Months later, Dr. Weatherhead received a call from the husband. The Baby was born ... but there was a problem. Could he come? When Dr. Weatherhead got off the elevator at the hospital, the man was waiting for him. The baby was a little girl ... and she was fine except for one thing. Her right arm was malformed. She just had a little stump down to right below her elbow. The man said, "I don't know how to tell my wife. I wanted you to come help me tell her.

Together they decided to just take the baby in to her ... not tell her ... but just to take the baby to her. "Is she alright?" the new mother asked. When they didn't say anything, she opened the blanket to examine the baby and saw the little stump of an arm. At first, there came across her face a terrible, desperate expression ... and then quickly it subsided ... and hugging her daughter tightly and holding on lovingly to that little arm, she said, "God knew how much we needed her ... and He must have known how much she is going to need us!"

Among others things this would be one of those times when we find God in unexpected times and places. It was a place of disappointment for the couple with the baby. The truth is God is never nearer to us than when we are hurting.

There is an amazing statement of faith in the Bible in the Book of Genesis, chapter 28, Jacob says that great phrase. “Surely, the Lord is in this place and I didn’t know it.” Can you identify with Jacob as he speaks these time-honored words? He had been in a lonely place in the desert, running for his life from his brother Esau. Esau had plenty of reason to be upset after Jacob stole Esau’s birthright.

On the first night of his escape, Jacob dreams of a ladder going up into heaven. There God speaks to him and makes a covenant with him to watch over him. “Wherever you go, whatever you do, I will be with you.” When Jacob wakes up he speaks those words in hushed reverence – “Surely, the Lord is in this place and I didn’t know it.”

What unexpected places have you found the presence of the Lord? It is a common theme in the Bible. Moses was brooding in the desert and finds God in a burning bush. Isaiah in Babylon with his exiled people finds God in a strange land. Job in the midst of great pain finds God was there. Paul was on a vigilant hunt, looking for Christians to persecute and kill, he finds the Risen Lord on the way to Damascus.

Prayer: Our Lord, may we be aware of your presence in surprising and unexpected places. Amen

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