

Loss or Lost?

I have a habit of getting lost when driving on unfamiliar roads. I know where I want to go, but often turn the wrong way if I don't have directions. The term "lost" is not much of a stretch when I am traveling.



My father passed away at the age of 99. At the funeral home visitation many people said they were "sorry for your loss." It was a very appropriate statement to make, knowing we would miss Dad very much. We are a close-knit family. But if people had said Dad was "lost," the statement would be completely false. We know exactly where Dad is, both physically and spiritually. Dad's body is resting at White Haven Memorial Park next to Mom. His soul, however, is in Heaven with Jesus. He certainly is not lost. Scripture tells us, Dad is in the presence of Jesus Christ and will be reunited with loved ones of the faith. He already has been reunited with Mom.

People without a relationship to Jesus Christ have a totally different story. They *are* lost. They need direction to find their way.

As Christians we have the opportunity to help other people avoid being lost. We can encourage people to welcome Jesus into their lives so they will experience God's Grace and Mercy. We do this in a gentle, loving way, just as Jesus did. If someone is not ready, be patient and hopeful they will eventually accept God into their life. Ask God to give you guidance on how to reach someone. Our role is to soften hearts by being an example of how God's love has changed us. We plant seeds, and when people are ready, the Holy Spirit then works its magic.

Scripture: *Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us (Romans 5:1).*

Question: How do you encourage others to accept Jesus Christ into their lives?

Prayer: Dear Lord, we know You offer eternal life to all believers who ask forgiveness for their sins. Help us to influence others to accept You into their lives. Amen.

Additional Verses about God's Grace and Mercy

Mercy:

- *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).*
- *And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:12-15).*
- *Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin (Psalms 51:1-2).*

Grace:

- *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:4-5).*
- *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Romans 3:23-24).*

Our Response:

- *Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16).*