

Lessons from a Tomb - Part 2

by Pastor Susan Schmidt

PRAY THAT JESUS WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON YOUR LOST FRIENDS.

Jesus is pictured repeatedly in the Scriptures as a man of compassion. Only toward religious hypocrites did he ever show his wrath. When Jesus encountered a demoniac, a prostitute, a tax collector; or even a Pharisee with a genuine need or interest in what he had to offer, His heart seemed to break for them. Matthew reflected on Jesus' compassion when he wrote, "When He (Jesus) saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36).

When you're praying for a lost person to be saved, you are praying for someone who truly is a sheep without a shepherd. You can pray confidently for Jesus to deal compassionately with him or her, because He's already proven in His Word that He will.

When Jesus arrived at Mary and Martha's house, He quickly revealed His true heart towards the situation. It didn't take long for Jesus' emotions to surface when He was confronted by all the pain there. His good friends Mary and Martha were grieving. His friend Lazarus had suffered and died. Many of their friends had gathered to share in their grief. John summed it up well when he wrote, "When Jesus saw Mary weeping. And the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and troubled....Jesus wept" (John 11:33,35).

When you're praying for Jesus to be moved with compassion over the plight of a lost person, you're on solid biblical ground. We know about the horrible condition of unbelievers because the Holy Spirit led the biblical writers to record His thoughts on the matter. In other words, everything we know about the spiritual state of the lost we learned from God. He knows better than anyone just what "lost" really means. And He was so concerned about it that He sent His Son to deal firsthand with the problem.

But just what is the plight of lost people? We've already seen that they are dead spiritually. Worse than physical death is the spiritual death that sin brings. Beyond that, however, there are other conditions facing unbelieving people that we need to be aware of and pray against.

*** UNBELIEVING PEOPLE ARE SPIRITUALLY BLIND**

In 2 Corinthians 4:4, the apostle Paul tells us they are unable to see the light of God's truth.

*** UNBELIEVING PEOPLE ARE SPIRITUAL CAPTIVES**

The frightening reality is that the same sinister source that blinded unbelieving people did so to control them. Obviously, unbelievers have no idea that they're actually being held captive by the world's most vicious tyrant. In Ephesians 2:1-2, Paul tells us that spiritually dead people walk and live according to the very courses and paths set out by the "ruler of the kingdom of the air"- Satan.

***UNBELIEVING PEOPLE ARE ALREADY CONDEMNED.**

Of all the conditions affecting an unbelieving person, this one may be the most upsetting for a Christian. According to Jesus himself, those who walk through life without Him are living under God's hand of judgment. Jesus said, "Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son" (John 3:18).

When you pray for the lost people, speak to the compassionate heart of Jesus. Call on the loving and merciful God to move on behalf of captive people

PRAY THAT HE WILL REMOVE THEIR BLINDNESS, SET THEM FREE, AND SECURE THEM IN ETERNITY.

God loves you and so do I,

Love, Susan