

Greetings!

Have you ever been lost? I don't mean lost as in not knowing where you're going, but lost as in no one can see you? You are there, in the crowd, but it's like you're invisible to everyone around you.

Some people like being invisible while others cry out for someone, anyone, to hear them, to be there, just to touch them. We may think it is only in nursing homes where we will find them but, in reality they are all around us.

Do You See Me Now?

Her Facebook pictures change weekly as she posts her new self-portraits. She is attractive and intelligent and looks happy and contented with life, but her wall-post communicates otherwise. Her loneliness runs deeper than we can imagine. She has family and friends in her life, but she feels lost. *She thinks no one sees her.*

He sits among hundreds of Sunday morning churchgoers. They sing to the music and listen intently to the pastor's morning message, but he sits with his head down, staring at the floor. Occasionally he nods his head in agreement when the pastor's statements are about those who are hurting and struggling through life and yet, he looks around at no one. Half-heartedly he raises his hand a few inches at the pastor's invitation to receive Christ, but fails to go forward for the altar call. With the pastor's final farewell, he moves with the crowds toward the door. No one shakes his hand and he pauses for no one. *He came and left and no one knew he was even there.*

Taking a rest from the day's responsibilities, another man sits under a fig tree. With Rome's occupation of his homeland, he lives from day to day doing his best to make a living. For a moment, he has time to think and reflect on where his life is going. He wonders, will things ever change for the better. Their synagogues are nothing more than museums to a stale religion while Caesar taxes them beyond their ability to pay tribute without great sacrifice. He has learned to live with what he has, without expecting anything more.

Excited, his friend Philip comes to him with wonderful news; "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." With a hint of sarcasm Nathaniel responds, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" "Come and see." replies Philip.

As he approaches the one of whom Philip spoke, he is greeted with, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." "How is it that you know me?" Nathaniel asks him. "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, *I saw you.*" Jesus said.

Whether we move through life cloaked so as not to be seen, or we scream, “Do you see me now?” He sees us. Though others may not notice the changes we’re going through, or our emotional ups and downs, He sees us. He not only sees us, but also like Nathaniel, He knows our inner self.

If somehow our eyes were opened and, while sitting under our fig tree, we could see Him. He stands for a moment observing and then, sitting down next to us, our thoughts become His. Without any prejudice He listens to our heart’s cry, linking His compassionate spirit with ours. Within moments we are one, together, sitting under a fig tree. To Him we were never lost. He always knew where to find us.

If only we could see Him, then we would know.

And that's just a thought . . .

My Final Word

How is it that one could live among so many people and feel so lost? It seems impossible that this could happen, and yet, everyday there are those who pass by, and while glancing in our direction they wonder if we saw them.

Everyone knows that God is *watching*, but too often this is only thought of in terms of His judging us for our failures. Like a friend who, from across the crowded room, sees you and instinctively knows you need them by their side, He moves toward you. Even without you saying so, He knows that His companionship is welcomed.

I listened one night as a man, in the middle of a room of praying men, shouted, “*God where are you?*” The intensity of his voice sent shivers up my spine. We gathered around him and prayed, yet I am not sure that He ever felt God was there. I have come since then to understand that it is not my responsibility to prove God’s presence but, like Philip, it is merely to introduce them to Him. He knows better than I how to speak to their heart’s cry.

Never alone,

Chris

