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Prayer for the missing

Beverly Goldsmith

People go missing every day—in Australia, about 30,000 adults and children every year. Sadly, some are never found—like Daniel, a 15-year-old Queensland boy who, in 2003, entered a stranger’s car and hasn’t been seen since. Other people are located—like Cornelia Rau, a mentally ill woman from Sydney who was discovered three months after disappearing, mistakenly held as an illegal immigrant in a South Australian detention centre.

For families, friends and colleagues of the missing, not knowing the fate of a loved one is deeply distressing. That’s why every time I hear a report of a missing person, I stop and pray. Prayer can help bring a resolution.

Although mystery may surround someone’s disappearance, I like to remember something Jesus said: “There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.” To me, this means no situation can remain cloaked in secrecy or uncertainty. No one is lost to God. His all-knowing, all-seeing love is on duty 24/7.

Their son had not come home from school.

Here’s an example: when my husband, David, was a teacher at a local high school, he received a call from the parents of one of his students late one Friday night. Their teenage son, who’d been extremely depressed and under great pressure for several days, had not come home from school. They begged my husband to come to their house right away.

As he put the phone down, David expressed surprise that the parents had called him. He wasn’t sure what he could tell them. He didn’t know this boy very well. But as we talked, I began to feel there’d been a deeper purpose for their call.

I knew that in moments of crisis, there is a need for support and encouragement. On a basic level my husband’s visit would certainly provide this. But I’ve learned—as someone who practices Christian Science healing personally and professionally—that true comfort and support come from a spiritual source.

My prayer could include everyone involved.

I decided that while my husband was visiting the family, I could pray. My prayer could include everyone involved—my husband, the missing boy and his parents.

I’d never prayed for a missing person before, so I decided to start where I usually do—with God. I affirmed that:

- God’s tender love for all His dear children is ever-present.
- The divine, all-knowing Mind knows where each child is.
- This boy wasn’t out there somewhere on his own—God was with him.
- God’s guiding presence was keeping this child safe from harm.

I thought of something else Jesus said: “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” So I prayed, “Dear Calming Ever-presence, You are there, giving each person hope and peace. May they know You are watching and caring for them and this boy. They can be fearless. They can have faith in Your safekeeping.”

Another strengthening Bible verse helped me as I continued praying: “God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” I realized that none of us needed to be afraid—not the boy, his parents, my husband or me.

God had created this young person in His image and likeness. This meant he was calm and mentally balanced, just as God was. Stress couldn’t cause him to go missing. This teenager was dearly cherished by God—and his parents, family and school friends, too. He must, and would, feel this love surrounding and supporting him.

Divine Love, his Shepherd, was protecting him.

By now two hours had passed. I prayed on. I had the inspired thought that divine Love, his Shepherd, was protecting the boy. I thanked God for His comfort and encouragement. My heart lifted, and I felt sure there would be a good outcome. When my husband came home, I told him of the inspiration I'd had. He said that my prayers had been helpful—the parents had calmed down and were now much more hopeful of their son's safe return.

Over the weekend, whenever I thought of the boy and his parents, I acknowledged God's love and care for them.

Late on Sunday night, three days after he had first gone missing, the boy's parents phoned to say their son had returned home safely. He was calm and well. He'd apologized to his parents for giving them such a scare. On Monday after class, he thanked my husband for his assistance and said he was sorry for causing so much trouble. As far as I know he never went missing again, and the rest of his high school years went smoothly.

While this story has a happy ending, there are families who continue to wait for word and others whose loved ones don't come home. At such distressing times, God's loving presence is still able to comfort and bring peace. In the midst of grief and sorrow, it may be tempting to think that God is testing one or has even caused this event as a way of punishing one for past deeds. But the loving God I know—and that Mary Baker Eddy discovered—would never want anyone to suffer. From a spiritual perspective, no child of God is ever out of the divine Parent's sight. Their whereabouts is not a mystery to God. He is loving them and looking after them.

Resolution, a sense of closure, is possible. Divine Love can lead the missing home. It can also heal the brokenhearted and help those left behind find answers that bring peace.

Under Love's protection:

Science and Health:

[578:5 DIVINE](#)

King James Bible:

[John 14:27](#)

[II Tim 1:7](#)

[Luke 12:2](#)

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