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Lost and Found Pt. 1

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Lost and Found

Many businesses and institutions have a Lost and Found department, where articles misplaced by their owners are kept until claimed. When those whose property has been thus retained make enquiries, they usually are required to give some proof of ownership before whatever they had lost can finally be declared as found. When we have lost something that we later found or had restored to us, we are certainly relieved, and likely grateful.

Relief at finding a missing item puts an end to the anxiety we might have experienced and restores our emotional balance. But gratitude, when we allow or encourage such a movement in our hearts, goes well beyond mere balance to the addition of a spiritual gain which was not previously ours. If we thank a person who participated in the finding of whatever we had lost, we add positively to that person's life, and in so doing, to our own. If we thank God for the restoration of something, we grow in our personal relationship. In a possibly amusing paradox, we sometimes gain by losing – at least when it is only a material thing that we had lost.

When one of our valued possessions is missing, thoughts can run in a number of disheartening directions, causing us a further loss that also needs recovery, if we are to regain peace of mind and heart. Even if our lost article is found, we have still lost something in our spirits that is not restored automatically. The surest means for recovering from a bout of negative thinking, such as, "No one will ever turn it in" or "It's my own fault," is to deliberately focus on causes for gratitude. We can quickly become honestly aware of all that we still have, whether or not we ultimately find the one thing that was lost. In so doing, we regain interior stability, ready to accept the return of whatever was missing or to live peacefully without it.

In addition to searching for whatever is lost, and consulting with people who might be able to assist us, we can also pray. Though people make jokes about favorite Saints who help us to find things, any act of trust we make in God's all-encompassing interest in every concern of ours is, like gratitude, already a gain for us, no matter what tangible results we do or do not receive.

The famous song "Amazing Grace" celebrates being lost and then found, not of a material property, but of one's very self. "Being found" can make "being lost" appear as the sort of dirt and soil that are the necessary foundations for healthy and beautiful growth. Becoming aware of how God has been carefully and insistently inviting us to recover from any of the forms of selfishness or negativity that have taken us away from the home of our hearts, is always a cause for gratitude.

When we are lost in spirit, we cannot “find” ourselves by our own efforts alone. But when we enquire at the “Lost and Found department” within us that is staffed 24/7 by the One who loves us and is always with us, we will be found.