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Seek and Find

by Joyce Rupp

How do we know when God is seeking us out? Many times God is seeking us when we sense the following:

- *restlessness within or an unnamed loneliness
- *a hunger for bonding
- *questions that keep surfacing
- *sudden awareness or clearer vision about life's meaning
- *an unexpected sense of deep contentment or peace
- *darkness that has the aura of mystery or searching
- *a desire for greater truth
- *a hopefulness that rises in one's spirit
- *a yearning for justice
- *an overwhelming awareness of God's mystery
- *a bonding with beauty



How do we know when we are seeking God out? Again it is not

always a known or certain thing, but some aspects I have experienced are:

- *willingness to sit and listen with the unnamed stirrings within
- *the disciplines of reflecting, pondering, meditating
- *confrontation of fears, anxieties, concerns
- *deliberate decisions to go deeper
- *owning and claiming one's inherent goodness
- *savoring the beauty of creation
- *entering into situations that involve risk and struggle
- *actively bonding with a community or others who seek God
- *welcoming the goodness in others

As we continue on the journey of seeking and finding, remember that it is usually a slow process; it takes patience and a strong belief in the power of discovery. We must keep warming the heart with the embers of remembered glimpses or feelings of home. It is also vital to have companions to share the journey with us. We experience great comfort and strength when others are seeking along with us.

When we discover kinship with another or feel a desire to have some of another person's qualities of goodness, we have a sense of finding our way home. It may feel as though we have known this person for a long time. We feel as though we've found a part of ourselves; to a certain extent, we have.

We can also discover our home when we hear another's story of seeking. We resonate so much with the story that our own seeking is greatly energized. The search seems more real. It seems possible. It's as if another person's story beckons to us to believe that our own home is real. It's like driving down a dark street and coming upon a sturdy house with lights shining behind the windows. We know that even though we have not yet arrived home, we can draw comfort and hope from the sense that someone else has found a place to belong.

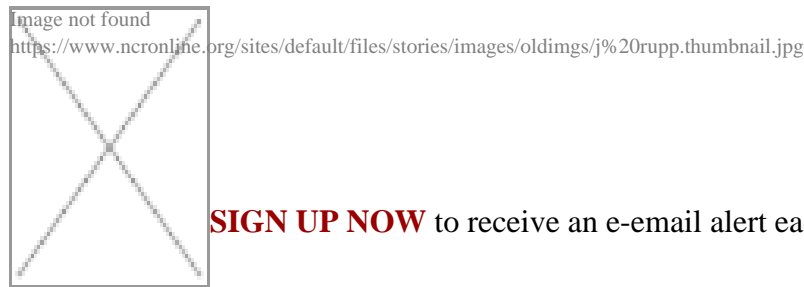
I know a woman who had felt vast emptiness and darkness on her inner journey. She had spoken with me about this hollowness many times. Nothing seemed to penetrate the barrier of meaninglessness she experienced. One day she happened to be in a book store and as she leaned over a stack of books she saw

one about darkness. The book seemed to seek her out. She felt compelled to buy it. As she read the author's story of struggling with darkness, this woman found a new sense of hope. She had finally found someone who named her experience for her. She knew she was not alone in her seeking. Another person's search for home gave her a glimpse of her own.

Sometimes all we have for long stretches of time are glimpses of home. We have just enough sense of our inner source to keep us yearning for more. We need to remember that God always takes the initiative of seeking, placing the desire in our hearts to be found. Let us keep ourselves available to be found. Let us not hide out in our fears or in our busyness or our ego-centeredness. Let us not be so absorbed in our pain or in our anxieties that we evade the searching love of the One who yearns to help us find our way home.

From *May I Have This Dance? An Invitation to Faithful Prayer Throughout the Year* by Joyce Rupp

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