

Seeing the Lord: "I will go before you to Galilee"

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Both before and after the Lord rose, He told His disciples "I will go before you to Galilee." All instances of the Lord appearing after Easter Sunday take place in Galilee. Why did the Lord tell His disciples to travel around 90 miles on foot to see Him when He could have appeared anywhere, any time?

In Scripture, where things happen matters. In general, Judea, the heart of the land, describes our deepest self, our desires and aspirations, our inner spirit, our unconscious motives. Galilee, by contrast, represents our natural self, our conscious mind, our decisions and actions, the place where the rubber meets the road. The Lord's resurrection happened in Judea because all significant changes in awareness start in our inner self. The disciples came to see that the Lord was not merely a great teacher but was God. So we have times of realizing that the Lord is alive and present in our lives when we thought He was dead. This happens, for instance, when we see the relevance of a teaching from the Word that we have never seen before. What was once annoying, or frustrating, or confusing blossoms into a beautiful idea that gives comfort.

But that moment of awareness is not enough. We have to go to Galilee. We have to bring that insight, that inner conviction into the external reality of our lives. The saying that the road to hell is paved with good intentions describes the gap between Jerusalem and Galilee.

The Lord, by His life on earth, changed His relationship with people. By making that frail humanity from Mary Divine, He created a direct pathway to connect to us in our natural states. "Before His assuming a human form, the Divine influx into the natural degree was conveyed indirectly through the angelic heavens, whereas after His assuming a human form it flowed directly from Him." (DLW 233) By His glorification the Lord has gone before us to Galilee. Wherever we are in our lives, He's already there waiting for us.

And because we can see and understand who our God is now, we are able to receive help and enlightenment we could not have otherwise (AC 2716). We are able to see the Lord Jesus Christ as compassionate when we fail, persistent when we make the same mistakes again and again, practically wise in helping us through our daily struggles.

One more way in which the Lord goes before us to Galilee is in His Word. We're told that "Those who receive enlightenment when they read the Word see the Lord. They do so because of the faith and love they have. They see Him solely in the Word and in no other writing whatever." (AC 9411). The Word, this natural book with stories and prophecies, reveals the Lord. By His life on earth He fulfilled every aspect of the Word and became an embodiment of it. So that now when we read it we can see Him in its pages. We can hear His authorial voice in its words. We can feel His spirit in the message.

Because the Lord rose, He is present with all our natural states. But it also works the other way around. When we choose to do what we know He wants in our natural states, especially serving others and reading the Word, we bring Him present in a new and powerful way. What is so wonderful is that He says He is going before us. He is already here, waiting to love us and reveal Himself to us, if we have hands to do and eyes to see.

Lessons: Matthew 26:31-35, 28:16-20; John 21; *True Christian Religion* 109