**Sermon Christmas 1C – Luke 2:41-52 – 26 December 2021**

**Video link:** [**https://youtu.be/KKWUl0nIG5k**](https://youtu.be/KKWUl0nIG5k)

Where Is Jesus? That is what Mary and Joseph were frantically asking. They had been travelling back to Nazareth with their caravan of friends and relatives for a whole day. They had just finished their week-long celebrations of the Passover festival in Jerusalem as they did every year. Perhaps they thought Jesus was with some of the other children in the group and now after stopping for the night they could not find him. Where was Jesus? He must have been left behind in Jerusalem, lost in a city full of tens of thousands of pilgrims.

Have you ever lost one of your children? Maybe it was in a busy shopping centre. Your child let go of your hand and wandered off and suddenly you lost sight of your child. For what seemed like ages, but maybe wasn’t even a minute, you could not find your precious child. How did that feel? Mary and Joseph overwhelmed with similar feelings suddenly head back a full day’s journey to Jerusalem to look for Jesus.

But they haven’t merely lost their boy they have lost the promised messiah. *“Oops sorry God we messed up.”*

Of course, we too sometimes lose Jesus don’t we? We don’t do it intentionally. We just get swept up in the busyness of life. We get swept up in our activities, our work, our play and family time and in the process, we lose Jesus.

It starts simply enough. Maybe we miss a devotion here and there. Or we don’t pray as regularly as we used to, because quite frankly, there just isn’t the time. Maybe we wake up on Sunday morning and it is the only day we have to just lie in. Or we say to ourselves that spending time with our kids is more important than spending time with our brothers and sisters in Christ. So we miss church, occasionally at first, but then more often. Then one day we wake up and we realise that we have lost Jesus.

Have you lost Jesus?

Well Mary and Joseph lost Jesus and it took them three days to find him. Three days! Can you imagine what that must have been like - the desperation, the fear, the blaming, the anger, the grief? It wasn’t until the third day that they finally decided to look in the temple. And when they find him Mary is relieved, overjoyed and mad. She is mad at her son. She is mad at him because not only is he OK but he is having a great time talking about God to the teachers of the Law. He’s been having a good time while they have been in hell*. "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been very worried, and we have been searching for you!"* says Mary.

But Jesus is surprised. It makes you wonder what is going through his mind. Doesn’t his mum remember the angel Gabriel? Don’t his parents remember the shepherds, Anna, Simeon, the wise men?. After 12 years have they already forgotten who he really is? Don’t they realise that he is God’s one and only Son and it is only natural for him to spend as much time as he can in his father’s house? Why is it that someone can know about Jesus for years even decades and yet not really know him at all? Jesus is surprised that his own parents didn’t really know him, *"Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I would be in my Father's house?"*

Have you lost Jesus? Well you can find him in his Father’s house. Of course, when Jesus was 12 his Father’s house was in the temple in Jerusalem. But after Jesus’ death and resurrection that changed forever. His Father’s house is now wherever the temple of the Holy God can be found and that is wherever two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus. The Father’s house is where ever people gather around the Word of God. The Father’s house is wherever the body and blood of Christ are served. For most of us that is in buildings that we have dedicated to worshipping God. Not because they are special, but because that is where we regularly gather around God’s Word and receive the body and blood of Christ.

We are blessed because we don’t even have to go to large buildings to find Jesus. We can gather together with our families and read the Word, discuss the Word, pray the Word. We can gather together with friends. Where- ever two or three are gathered in his name, there is Jesus and there is the Father’s house.

Sometimes we can’t gather together with other people. For many people now is such a time. Yet even now we don’t have to look far to find Jesus. Even on our own, we can find Jesus in God’s Word, through which the Word made flesh speaks to us. The good thing about reading and meditating on God’s Word is that as you spend time contemplating what Jesus is saying to you, you get to know him better and better. That is what Mary the mother of Jesus did. The shepherds visit the newborn Jesus and tell Mary and Joseph about the angelic visit and what does Mary do? She treasured all these things in her heart. After three days they find Jesus in the temple and he is surprised that they didn’t know he would be in his Father’s house and Mary, treasures these things. In other words, she kept thinking about them.

Perhaps during the current pandemic, if we find ourselves isolated, this can be an opportunity to meditate on God’s Word, to treasure up in our hearts the wonderful promises God has made to us through his Son.

In all of this talk of finding Jesus, there is one very important piece of very good news. We may at times lose Jesus, but Jesus has never lost us. Jesus has never lost you. You were in God’s mind even before you were conceived and God had plans to find you, send his Son to suffer and die for you, adopt you as one of his dearly beloved children, forgive you and save you from sin, death and Satan and give you eternal life with Jesus. There may be times when we stray from God, times when we lose Jesus, but Jesus never ever loses us. Jesus always knows where you are, and Jesus is always waiting with open arms ready to embrace you with his love and grace.

**Amen**

Pastor Rolf Lungwitz