

*“Seeking and Finding”*

Text: Luke 2:41-52

Miller’s Corollary states: “Objects are lost because people look where they are not instead of where they are.” Well that sums up the story of the young Jesus in the Temple doesn’t it? After everything was said and done, he was exactly where he was supposed to be and not where his parents, Mary and Joseph, were looking for him.

Jesus said: “Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.” (Matthew 7:7-8) This is true because of the work of Jesus on our behalf and we see it in his appearance in the Temple on this occasion.

“We found him!” This may also echo the sentiment of Joseph and Mary as they were searching for the young Jesus. Any of you who have had a child wander off or run away from home, share their sense of relief. The search was over for them on this occasion. As Jesus answered them regarding where he was, he gives the answer for all who seek salvation and where he can be found. As he is discovered in the Temple and answers his parents-

**SEEKING AND FINDING**

**I. Scripture reveals God’s promises to us**

**II. Jesus reveals where He can be found**

**I.**

**A.** St. Luke takes us from the presentation in the Temple to the young boy Jesus at age 12. This was the age that young boys began to take their place in the religious community of Israel. The verses preceding tell us that Jesus is no ordinary boy. Both

Simeon and Anna testify that he is the one that Israel had been anticipating, the Messiah.

Simeon promised, *“Behold this child is appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed,”* (Luke 2:34) Anna gave thanks to God and said that He was the one all sought for the redemption of Jerusalem. The many prophecies of the Christmas season point to Jesus. They speak of His coming into the world, the manner in which he will come and the reason for his coming.

The joyous message of the angels told it all on that first Christmas evening: *“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”* (Luke 2:11) God has kept His promise that He first made to Adam and Eve in paradise and continued on through the prophets. He has sent His Son into the world as your Savior!

**B.** Verse 40 says of Jesus: *“And the child grew and became strong; filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.”* Our gospel lesson for today points to that very fact. As a young boy, Jesus was already about that work. All Jewish men were required to attend Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles as part of their religious observances. As a pious Jew, Joseph would have been in attendance adding to the fact that this was what amounted to the Bar Mitzvah of Jesus.

As we follow through the gospels and the life of Jesus, we see that Jesus is very obedient to the law. Jesus himself said, *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”* (Matthew 5:17) Jesus perfectly fulfilled everything that His Father had commanded and He did it for you.

God’s desire from the very beginning has been the salvation of the world. It is common for people to think they can accomplish this on their own. Nothing could be further from the truth, as we know. This becomes very evident during this season. Children are taught in the customs of Christmas to be nice instead of naughty. There is a great emphasis in the cultural celebration of Christmas upon the good deeds of people to those who are not as fortunate as they.

While caring for others and living in an appropriate fashion is important for Christians, the key emphasis has always been and should always remain, Jesus Christ. The good news of Christmas is that God has kept His promise to His people of old in sending His Son into the world as its Savior.

People are constantly searching. They search for a meaning to their lives through possessions and status. They search for a spiritual relationship through the various religions of the world outside of the Christian faith because they appeal to their intellect or promise peace and security on earth. Some even search for Jesus through means other than the ones He has outlined in the pages of Scripture. As Jesus answered Joseph and Mary, He said, *“Why were you looking for me? Did you not know I must be in my Father’s house?”* The search is over for both them and us for we know where Jesus can always be found.

## II.

A. As parents we can identify with Mary and Joseph, having lost the young Jesus in the massive crowd. They wondered where he could have gone to or whom he was with for these several days. We all know that we shouldn’t worry, but often forget to trust in God’s providing and decide to fret instead.

This may well echo the sentiment of Joseph and Mary on this occasion. After searching for Jesus for several days, Mary asked, *“Son, why have you treated us so? Your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.”* There was a great fear on their part about the possibility of their lost son. Jesus assures them and us as well that His location or presence should never be in doubt. As God provided for His own Son, so He provides for us as well. His hand was very evident in the life of Jesus from birth to death, carrying out His purposes.

Last Sunday, the First Sunday after Christmas was also celebrated as the Commemoration of the Innocents. When Jesus was but a year or so old, the wiremen came to visit. When King Herod heard of the new born king, he had all male children, two years old and younger killed in the Bethlehem vicinity. He was searching for the competition. His way of dealing with this news

was to search for the child and kill him. The search is over for King Herod as well. The one he sought is our king and he lives forever.

**B.** Jesus told His parents where He was to be found. He was about His father's business. As we have closed this old year and begin the New Year, that is a good goal for us as well. Obviously we can't be about our Father's business as well as Jesus. He is the perfect, sinless, Son of God. The same grace of God that went with Him for His growth goes for us as well.

The text concludes: "*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*" As we seek to serve God, He provides the means for the word and sacraments for our growth. While the world make many offers and enticements to us, true growth and service comes as we seek Him where he may be found and find joy in the service He gives to us.

Next week a new era will begin for our congregation with the installation of Pastor Aaron Schell. This is true because of the gifts that God to His church and His servants. Guided by the Holy Spirit, all of us will seek God's purposes in our lives and in the life of this congregation. While we may search to certain degree, we know that the search is over. Our Savior has come to us. He promises to go with us and provide for our care both now and for eternity. In Jesus name. Amen.