**I Must Be In My Father’s House**

**Luke 2:41-52**

1st Sunday after Epiphany

01.09.2022

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

I want to read a portion of our text again. *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days they found him.* I am just going to stop there.

Can you imagine this? Which parents of a twelve year old boy would travel “a day’s journey” before they began to search for him? OK, this is a large group of family and friends traveling in caravan, so you assume he is somewhere in the group. But to not know exactly who he was with for a whole day? Who would allow their son’s specific whereabouts to be unaccounted for an entire day?

Imagine having a son who never got into trouble, was never disobedient, always did what they were told immediately - a perfect child who had never needed to be disciplined. Would parents be a bit more relaxed and trusting of such a child? Of course! Mary's Child was such, in fact the only such child ever to walk in human flesh.

I guess we might well ask, is it really any wonder that they gave such freedom to Jesus? Of course not!

Mary & Joseph are astounded not to find Jesus where they expected Him to be. When He was nowhere among those traveling, they went back to Jerusalem, searching where they expected a child of 12 years to be - with friends, at McDonalds, the bowling alley, the game room, the parks and playgrounds...but He was not in those places.

Hence, it was another three days until they found Him. And our text records that they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. His parents were astonished. Mary said to Him, "Son, why do you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress."

Yes, they were worried about their Child. He was not where they expected Him to be. But had Jesus violated the 4th Commandment in doing what He had done?

"Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?"

Could you imagine it? Your child is missing for even a few hours, and their reply when you find them is, "Sorry Mom and Dad, I was at church."

No, they weren't using the big screen TV with their PlayStation and the church's internet to do interactive gaming. They weren't downstairs with a couple friends on the foosball table. They were sitting with the pastor having a theological conversation - for hours - asking questions and answering questions. And they had been doing it every day for the last 3 days.

I'm guessing you'll response would be exactly that is Mary and Joseph... And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.

You know what the problem is here? It's not that a child would do this! The greater problem is that most would not think of taking the time to do this.

They had come for the Passover. Done their thing for the Passover. And had gone home after the Passover was completed. They had not stayed any longer, nor done anything extra. Jesus however had remained behind to continue in discussion of God's Word with those ministering in God's house.

When Sunday morning is over, the service completed, that's about all the time anybody has for being in our heavenly Father's house. And at that, it better not go over an hour. The pastor better not get long-winded, in his encouraging us to holy life, calling us to repentance, and extolling to us the mighty works of our marvelous, Creator, Redeemer God. We better not have hymns with too many verses where we praise God, or thank Him for His marvelous deeds, hearing of His great works for us in the music and in the verses he makes us sing.

What are the expectations we have for ourselves and for our children? Maybe we better ask it this way, what expectation does God have for us, His children?

Dearly beloved of God, Jesus is the temple. Jesus IS His father's house. That day will come when He will return to Jerusalem again, to celebrate the Passover. Again, He will speak with, and answer the questions of the leaders of the Temple. On that day, the leaders will no longer find Him tolerable, but will bind Him and demand of Pilate that He be crucified. He will die with hands and feet nailed to the cross, His head wreathed with a thorny crown – and He will be buried.

On the third day, He will be found in the temple of His resurrected body by the women, His disciples, and for 40 days by many others. They will all be astonished, they will not immediately understand that this was why He came.

Dear friends, I pray that you would find great joy in the words of Christ to His parents, making them your own confession and proclamation, "I must be in my father's house."

To be forgiven for my priorities which do not always find their prominence in the things of God, "I must be in my father's house."

To be strengthened for this coming week, "I must be in my father's house."

That Christ might fill me with himself, and make me His Temple, "I must be in my father's house."

Scripture declares that hearts are to be filled with the joy of the Lord, and that we should speak with all boldness and confidence, “I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the Lord.” It is in the house of the Lord, in our Father's house, that we are built up in joy, peace, and hope until life everlasting. Yes, it is most true for you and for me, let us gladly declare together, "I must be in my father's house." In the name of Jesus. Amen.