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St. Patrick’s

## Anglican Church

# 4797 Curtis Blvd Port St John FL 32927

**First Sunday in Epiphany**

**January 17, 2021**

** In The Name of The Father and of The Son**

**and of The Holy Ghost. Amen.**

The passage selected for the Sermon this morning is taken from the Gospel:

“And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought me. Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business.” St. Luke 2:49

The Gospel for Epiphany 2 is about St. John the Baptist. We just finished 3 weeks of Advent preaching about St. John, so this week I decided to review the Gospel we skipped last week when we celebrated Epiphany on Sunday. That Gospel is the account of Mary and Joseph losing Jesus while they are traveling, and frantically searching for Him until they find Him teaching in the Temple.

This passage is a curious passage. It is the only reference in the Gospels to Jesus as a teen or young man. The purpose of this passage often troubled me. Why does St. Luke need to share this passage where the self-possessed Jesus scares His parents half to death and responds to his mother’s anxiety, fear and relief with what could easily be interpreted as a smart mouthed and impertinent answer.

The answer is not that Jesus is the model for all the unbearable children on television to day that know more than every adult and close every conversation with a humiliating and withering insult at the expense of the parents. St. Luke includes this incident to teach us about the nature of **our** own relationship to Jesus.

While it seems like Mary and Joseph are negligent and self absorbed parents, that is not the case. They were traveling by camel caravan, a necessity of the day to fend off robbers and highwaymen. These caravans were organized the same way our wagon trains were. Men at the front and rear. Women tending the important chares and keeping things moving. Children under the direction of one of the mothers, sequestered in a separate group, kept both safe and out of the way. Mary and Joseph would have expected to be united with Jesus only at the end of the days travel. It was then they discovered He had wandered off and sparked their panic

Mary and Joseph were on their own journey, going about their own business. They had gone to Temple, and then they returned to their normal lives, separated from the presence of Jesus, confident in their routine, their friends, and their customs. Of course, they lost Jesus and became frantic. They looked for him in every aspect of their comfortable lives and at every stop on their self-directed journey. They still couldn’t find Him.

Finally, they came back to the Temple. They came back to Church. They returned to the last place where they were with Jesus in person. Of course, they found Him there, engaged in teaching, revealing the purpose of the Scripture and even the true value of the everyday journey through the life His own family was pursuing.

“How is it that ye sought me?” Jesus doesn’t ask why they are frantic. He isn’t laying a guilt trip on His parents, or exercising His authority as the Lord to overrule His duty as a son. He isn’t even saying, “why didn’t you just look here first.”

"How is it that ye sought me?" What path did you take? What method did you use? How were you guided in the search? You couldn’t find me because you let me out of your sight when you left the temple. You couldn’t find me in the society and the customs of your culture. You were panicked because, trusting in your own intelligence and experience and your own will, you could not return to my presence, or to find comfort in my Person.

How is it that you found me? You came back to the place where you left me. You came to search for me in the place that I go to reveal and teach my Father’s business. You found me when you changed your path, re-ordered your life, retraced your steps, and turned to My will instead of your own.

St. Luke includes this event to teach us the very same thing. We have no hope of finding Jesus when we deposit him in a safe place when we leave Church to pursue our own path. When we rely on the institutions and culture and traditions of man, we lose Him utterly and completely. When we put our trust in other men to keep the Blessed Lord for us, then we should not expect Him to be conveniently where we expected to find Him. He won’t be found in the pursuit of our own daily business.

In Proverbs, Chapter 8:32-34, it is written of the Lord,

“Hearken unto me, O ye children, for blessed are those that keep **my** ways.

Hear instruction, be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, and watches at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain the favor of the Lord.”

When it seems like Jesus is lost in our lives, the way to start our search is to seek Him in that place where He does the business of His Father. We need to come back to Church and tend to our own business in the Temple, which is detailed by St. Paul in the Epistle for this morning,

"Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God."

***In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.***