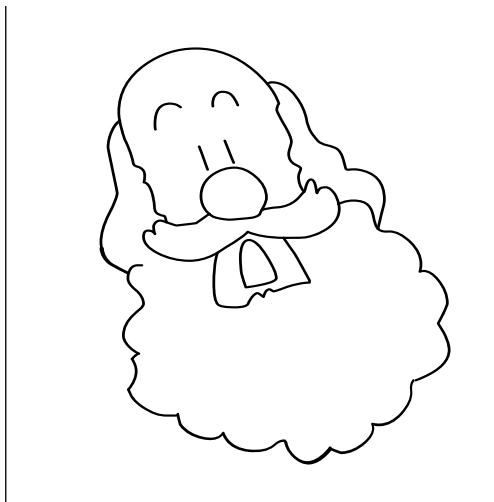


Lost in Jerusalem



Colour me!



Luke 2:41-52

Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for Passover. And when Jesus was twelve years old, they all went there as usual for the celebration. After Passover his parents left, but they did not know that Jesus had stayed on in the city. They thought he was travelling with some other people, and they went a whole day before they started looking for him. When they could not find him with their relatives and friends, they went back to Jerusalem and started looking for him there.

Three days later they found Jesus sitting in the temple, listening to the teachers and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was surprised at how much he knew and at the answers he gave.

When his parents found him, they were amazed. His mother said, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been very worried, and we have been searching for you!" Jesus answered, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I would be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he meant. Jesus went back to Nazareth with his parents and obeyed them. His mother kept on thinking about all that had happened. Jesus became wise, and he grew strong. God was pleased with him and so were the people.

Commentary

It is every parent's nightmare to have their child go missing. No wonder Mary was so upset and quite possibly angry when they eventually found Jesus in the temple. Three days and two sleepless nights are a lot to bear!

On another level, Mary and Joseph are being reminded that this child is not theirs to keep. He belongs to another more important Father and, one day, will be part of a much greater worldwide family. Mary only began to realize this as she returned home to Nazareth and thought back through all that had happened.

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Questions

- ▶ How was it possible that Mary and Joseph didn't miss Jesus for a whole day on the way home?
- ▶ Why were the teachers in the temple surprised by what Jesus said and did?
- ▶ What do you make of Jesus' reply to his mother? Was he being rude and unkind?
- ▶ What do you think Jesus and the teachers talked about?



Visual aid

Label a box 'Lost property' and talk about things that each of you have lost over the years. Were any of them ever found? If so, where? Now imagine what it must be like to lose a person.



Activity idea

Play a game of hide and seek, but with words only. For example, each person decides on something he or she is looking for and then asks the others in turn, "Have you seen...?" They answer, "Of course I haven't. This is a shop and you wouldn't find it here." The point is that whatever you have lost is actually in the obvious place – a shoe in a shoe shop and not in the supermarket; a hat in a clothes shop and not in a zoo; a dog in a kennel and not in a restaurant, and so on. Link this to the fact that Mary and Joseph looked in all the wrong places. Jesus, who is God's Son, would obviously be found in God's house.



Prayer idea

His parents found Jesus listening and also asking questions. Make a list of the questions you want to ask God in prayer. After a pause, pray these prayers out loud and then allow some space to listen.

Key verse

His mother kept on thinking about all that had happened (Luke 2:51).

Old Testament story link

1 Samuel 10:9-16: Saul has been chosen as the new king, but he has gone missing. When he is found, there is something different about him.



Colour me!

