



ST. STEPHEN'S  
ANGLICAN CHURCH  
11856 MAYS CHAPEL RD., TIMONIUM, MD 21093

**First Sunday in Epiphany  
January 13, 2019**

**✠ 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

Over the last weeks we have observed several times that we must have faith as little children. As hard as it may be to understand that saying, it would be even harder to comprehend if it were amended that we must come as pre-teens. If you haven’t raised a child, pre-teen is that time when even the best behaved kids are full of themselves, are tend to independence that borders on sassiness and outright insubordination.

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 relationship to Jesus.

Mary and Joseph are on their own journey. They have gone to Temple, and then they returned to their normal lives, separated from the presence of Jesus, confident in their own routine, their friends, their customs. Of course, they lose Jesus and become frantic. They seek for him in every aspect of their comfortable lives and at every stop on their self-directed journey. They can’t find Him.

Finally, they come back to the Temple, they come back to Church. They are returning to the last place where they were with Jesus in person. Of course, they find Him there, engaged in teaching, revealing the purpose of the Scripture and even the true value of the every day journey through the life His own family pursues.

“How is it that ye sought me.” Jesus doesn’t say why are you 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. We rely on the institutions and culture and traditions of man and 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.”

If it seems like Jesus is lost in your life, the way to start your search is to seek Him in that place where He does the business of His Father. And our business in the Temple, 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.***