

Midweek Lent 2 2017 Searching in the Dark

There is an old story of kid who was crawling around on the lawn under a street lamp.

Dad comes along and says ***“Son, what are you doing here on your hands and knees. You should be home.”***

“Sorry Dad, I lost my house key”

Dad asks the typical Dad question, ***“Well, where did last see it?”***

The little boy answers ***“Well I dropped it over there in the driveway.”***

Dad shakes his head and asks ***“So, why are you looking in the street?”***

And the son answers, ***“Because the light is better over here!”***

Searching in the dark can be difficult!

When I think about Searching for God, I think about the story of Jesus’ parents losing him and finding him in the temple. Listen now as I read the story from The Message.

Every year Jesus’ parents traveled to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up as they always did for the Feast. When it was over and they left for home, the child Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents didn’t know it. Thinking he was somewhere in the company of pilgrims, they journeyed for a whole day and then began looking for him among relatives and neighbors. When they didn’t find him, they went back to Jerusalem looking for him.

The next day they found him in the Temple seated among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions.

The teachers were all quite taken with him, impressed with the sharpness of his answers. But his parents were not impressed; they were upset and hurt.

His mother said, “Young man, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been half out of our minds looking for you.”

He said, “Why were you looking for me? Didn’t you know that I had to be here, dealing with the things of my Father?” But they had no idea what he was talking about.

We can only imagine what anxiety and fear went into that search. Did the boy Jesus go on ahead to Galilee or was he still in Jerusalem and if in Jerusalem, where in Jerusalem. I am sure his parents and many others scoured the city, high and low.

Where could he be?

Aren’t we searching hard enough?

Are we looking in the right places?

It is the same when we feel we have lost touch with God and are struggling, fighting with all of our might to find God. It is as if God has hidden from or abandoned us. I have had times like that and I am guessing many of you have too.

So what does it mean to search or seek for God?

At Christmas we get cards that show the 3 kings with the words, Wise men (sic) still seek him.

How do we do that? And where do we seek for God. Furthermore, why is it that some people find God everywhere and others see God nowhere?

Of course I have been thinking about this in preparation for today. I've been thinking about statistics that report the high percentage of people in the US who self-identify as spiritual but not religious.

I wonder what that means for them and what kind of support they find when crisis interrupts an easy life.

When people reject religion, as a pastor, I wonder how much they know about the religion they have rejected.

Or whether they have actually, in a disciplined way, practiced the religion they have walked away from.

Some people turn to nature and beauty to find God.

I know I am deeply moved when I walk in the mountains or look at the Grand Canyon. When I think about the miracle of life I wonder how anyone could not believe in God.

But nature cannot forgive my sins or help me grieve the loss of a loved one.

So where have you sought God?

In your busy life? In your success? In your bank book? In your charity? In your good works?

Unfortunately, that's like searching in the dark.

We believe that God is everywhere but there is only one place that we will certainly find God in all his Glory. ...

At home ...on the cross. The cross.

It is Jesus' death on the cross that reveals the light of Christ.

And it is the **light of Christ that reveals God's grace, forgiveness, peace, love, comfort, assurance and salvation.**

And where do we experience the light of Christ?

The light of Christ shines brightest in the gifts of word and sacrament. God offers promises of life in his holy word, the Bible. In the waters of our baptisms God has claimed us as family. And God feeds us in the bread and wine of the holy meal.

So are you searching for God? Good! That's as it should be.

A life of faith is a life searching for God in all things.

But remember, searching in the light is better than searching in the dark and more importantly, when we are lost, it is God who seeks us. This is the good news of the gospel.