

**January 4, 2015**  
**In My Father's House**

Luke 2: 49 – *Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?*

Every mother's nightmare.

That's what Mary went through in our Gospel lesson today. Her child was missing. It's one thing when you misplace something like your reading glasses, it is quite another heart-stopping moment when you can't find your child. Can you imagine what Mary and Joseph went through when he was not with them? The terror at the thought of losing a child is its own special kind of death sentence. Then when they came back to Jerusalem and found him in the temple with the teachers and the priests, what does he say? "Why were you looking for me?"

I can picture my parents' response to a statement like that. Anger. Tears. Yelling. My mother would be screaming, "What do you mean, 'Why were you looking for me?' We love you and you put us through the ringer!" My father would have had my arm in his gentle but unbreakable grasp dragging ever so gracelessly from the temple towards home.

Jesus' answer sounds a little flippant to the modern reader's ear, but he was entirely sincere in his question. He knew his relationship with God the Father was special from the beginning, and if he wasn't with his earthly parents, he must surely be with his heavenly Father. He couldn't understand why Mary and Joseph didn't know where he was. But, as a dutiful earthly son, Jesus followed their lead and left the temple.

# Roots

That has always been an odd account to me. I never really understood it until recently. But now, I think that Luke wants to show us that Jesus knew who he was and what he was to do from the very beginning.

Often times in our own lives we forget who Jesus was and what he did for us. I know that none of you would ever forget that he died for you, but we all forget to act like it sometimes. And, sometimes in the midst of the dark times in our lives, we wonder where Jesus is. His answer to us is the same as it was to Mary and Joseph. "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" Christ went to his Father's house for us to prepare room for each and every one of you.

But, even closer than that, Jesus dwells within his Father's other house too, your hearts. The Holy Spirit has opened your hearts by faith to receive Christ and his promises, and so now he lives and dwells within each one of you by his word and by his sacraments. When the euphoria from the recent holidays wears off, as it always does, and you find yourself wandering where Jesus is in your life, remember his answer to his mother when he was only 12 years old. "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know I must be in my Father's house?" He is here in church by word and sacrament and in your hearts by faith.

Pastor *Carl J. H.*

