

Lenten Midweek Service (Week Two) 2023

LUKE 2:41–52

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety."

He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

In this passage today we read about Jesus staying (or being left) behind in Jerusalem. Jesus' parents find him after three days in a temple where they find Jesus in deep conversation with the teachers and other adults. As a side note; the word wisdom is translated here from sophias. Sophias is the feminine aspect of God. We are explicitly told here that Jesus increases his feminine God aspects - and divine and human favor because of it. It seems like quite frequently we are taking a pause to go back to individual words in our verses to dig deeper into what the translation *actually is* or could have been. I wonder what we may discover if we used this same re-translate logic in our relationships. Romantic, neighborly, church life, family - even acquaintances and strangers we meet along the way.

In our devotional this week, we find a story about a parent and their child and the struggle to find passion for the same things. This parent is not interested in learning the Minecraft life (and who could blame them?), and doesn't believe their child will be as passionate about learning Hebrew. How many of us have kids, friends, family members who enjoy things we simply do not? My entire family runs - 5ks, 10ks, marathons, you name it and someone in my family has finished one. My grandpa couldn't give it up after hip surgery and still walks more miles faster than I could run. I don't get it - it's not my thing, I don't find it enjoyable. However; I've always had KC and Micah available to participate and try it out too. They enjoy runs on the Springwater corridor with Gabriel, they loved the bubble run, and think doing a mud run would be a lot of fun. I volunteer every year for Hood to Coast for my mom's team - which started out as my grandparent's team. And I've driven miles at terrible morning hours to volunteer for races more times than I can count. It's a labor of love. Much like when it's mom's night to pick a movie and

it's "another one that's only songs and dancing". Do any of the boys in my house appreciate a good musical? Nope. Do they sit on the couch and watch it with me anyway? Usually. And they're generally quiet and invested enough that they remember the movie the next time we watch it. They do it because they love me and they know those movies make me happy. Relationships are about giving as much as you take. Much of that is enjoying the other person's enjoyment even if that means sitting through a movie you don't love, or driving 40 miles at 6 in the morning.

Where our heart is is shown in our empathy, nurturing and love for others. Our heart holds passions that maybe no one else understands and part of loving each other is sharing and listening to those passions with each other. Today we heard Jesus being passionate about God's word and the ways these teachers in the temple translate it.

If Jesus had not paid any attention to this passion; how different would Christianity look? Would there *be* a Christianity if Jesus had not found others who shared his same passion for the word of God and what could be if it was just taken back to basics and translated from a place of love?

What if this Lenten season we all intentionally took an interest in something our loved ones are passionate about - and shared something in return? How much closer might we feel? Maybe we find new relationships by sharing our passions and building community. Maybe we spark an interest in someone they had not known about before. Maybe we are individually re-ignited in our passion, and spend more time ourselves on what we love.

As we leave this space today; I'm going to ask you to take a moment to consider your own passions. Can you name some that only you love? Can you name something your entire family is passionate about? Can you name something you have friends specifically for because of a passion? If not; I encourage you to find something new this season to be passionate about. Maybe it's painting, or reading, or fishing, or walking. Maybe it's cooking, or running, or woodworking. And share those passions with those you love, and everyone you meet!

Amen.