

## The Day Jesus Was Lost

### Introduction:

- I. On July 29, 1969, astronaut Neil Armstrong climbed out of a space ship and down a ladder and put his feet on the surface of the moon. Later, in an address to the nation, President Richard Nixon said, *“The greatest event in human history occurred when man first put his foot on the moon.”* But may I suggest to you that the greatest event in human history, was not when Mr. Armstrong set foot on the moon, but rather it was when God set foot on the earth. When God stepped out of heaven through the portal of the human womb and was manifested in the flesh, that was the greatest and most significant event of human history. No other incident of human affairs can even come close to rivaling the time when the Son of God became the Son of man and the God of Genesis became the Babe of Bethlehem. Other than Calvary itself, that was indeed the greatest event of human history.
- II. One of the most fascinating things to contemplate is the fact that Jesus grew up as a normal man. I wish sometimes that we had more information about Jesus as a child but the truth is we don't. It is interesting to wonder how Jesus lived and spent His days as an adolescent, but the bible doesn't give us too much information about that. But there was at least one memorable day during those “growing up” days of Jesus. It was the day that Jesus was lost (**Lk. 2:41-52**).
- III. Imagine this scene in your mind's eye. This is the time of the Passover, one of the busiest times of the year in Jerusalem. Josephus tells us that the city's population would sometimes swell to over 2 million people. There would be vendors selling things. There would be old friends and family members getting reacquainted. It would be time of fun and food and festivities where the noise of children playing and the buzz of adult activity would sometimes get loud and vociferous. It was, after all, a celebration. But when the celebration was over, and as everybody left for home, Jesus was left behind. And so in Luke the second chapter we read of the day that Jesus was lost. But let me tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that this was not the last time Jesus was lost. The fact is Jesus has been lost, figurative speaking, many times since then. And sometimes Jesus is lost for some of the same reason that Joseph and Mary lost Him. So let's look at some reasons why Jesus was lost.

### Lesson:

- I. **Jesus Was Lost Because of Preoccupation.**

Joseph and Mary lost sight of Jesus because they allowed their minds to drift away from Him. They got all caught up with the affairs of the Passover to where they forgot about Jesus. Let me tell you that Jesus can be lost the same way today and He often is. People obey the gospel of Christ and develop a personal relationship with Him, but before you know it they lose Jesus because they become preoccupied with the things of this world. Their vision becomes blurry and their focus gets foggy because now the things of this world become the obsession of their mind and the object of their affection (**Matt. 13:7, 22**). There are two things that cause the man with the thorny heart to be unfruitful.

- **The care of this world.**

This has to do with being filled with anxiety and worry. There are too many Christians who spend too much time worrying. When we allow the cares of this world to cause us to worry to the point that we lose Christ, we are living like the atheist (**Matt. 6:31-32**). A Robin once asked a Sparrow, "why do all these humans rush around, full of anxiety?" "I don't know," the Sparrow said, "but it must be because they don't have a Heavenly Father that cares for them like we have." Look at verse 26 of this text. Don't you know that we are the crowning point of all of God's creation? If God takes care of the sparrow, we know that he will take care of us. Most of the fears we face every day are not based on facts anyway. They are generated by our feelings.

*Illus. A college student wrote the following letter to her parents: Dear Mom and Dad: "I am writing this letter on school paper because my stationary got burned in the fire. I got out of the hospital, and have moved in with my new boyfriend, Bill. He got me a job where he works-I'm a waitress at the Red Dog Saloon. Your new grandbaby is due next fall." The next page continued... "Mom, Dad, none of the above really happened. However, I'm failing History. Love, Your Daughter."*

A study conducted by the University of Michigan showed the following:

*60 percent of our fears are totally unwarranted; they never come to pass.  
20 percent of our fears are focused on our past, which is completely out of our control.  
10 percent of our fears are based on things so petty that they make no difference in our lives.  
Of the remaining 10 percent, only 4 to 5 percent could be considered justifiable.*

-- Dennis Wattley, *Seeds of Greatness*, (Revell, 1983).

There was a man who decided he was going to have a worry day. He said, "Wednesday is going to be the day I worry, and not any other." So every time something began to worry him, he wrote it down and put it in a bag marked Wednesday, and stopped worrying about it completely. What he discovered was that by the time Wednesday rolled around, the problem usually had taken care of itself. If he would have worried about it, it would have simply been a waste of time.

We need to stop worrying so much and put more trust in God. Someone said, "Every evening I turn my worries over to God. He's going to be up all night anyway."

Listen to me: worry and anxiety causes more sadness and pain than any real illness (**Prov. 12:25**). Now the point I am making is simply this: when we are full of worry and anxiety, we have lost Jesus. He is no longer on our minds and in our hearts. Someone has said, "*The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the end of faith, is the beginning of anxiety.*" I believe that's right. Don't let the care of this world choke away your faith and cause you to lose focus on Christ.

- **The deceitfulness of riches.**

One of the biggest deterrents from Christ and obedience to Him is worldliness and riches. We live in a materialistic society that has been blinded by the riches of this world. And even those of us who are Christians sometimes allow our minds to become distracted and preoccupied so that we lose sight of Jesus.

***Illus. In a large American city, a man was walking late at night. He wandered into a construction site and fell into a large hole and was injured. He filed a lawsuit against the construction company. The attorney for the construction company argued that the site was well marked - there were plenty of signs saying "keep out", and "danger - construction site".***

***The man argued that the signs were insufficient because he was too drunk to read them.***

The problem is that too many of us are intoxicated with the things of the world. We're too busy with worldly things to pay attention to spiritual things. Pay attention to me: God has given us warning signs throughout His Word (**1 Jn. 2:15-17; Jas. 4:4; 2 Tim. 4:10; Col. 3:1-2**). Why is it important not to fall in love with the world? Because it takes our minds off Christ and before you know it we have lost Jesus and we are no longer bearing the proper kind of fruit and that ladies and gentlemen, will affect the salvation of our souls.

*Illus. The stingy millionaire called a family conference. "I'm placing a box of money in the attic," he said. "When I die, I intend to grab it on my way up to heaven. See to it that no one touches it until it's my time to go." The family respected his wishes. After his death his wife looked in the attic. The box was still there. "The fool!" she said. "I told him he should have put it in the basement."*

## **II. Jesus Was Lost Because Of The Ordinary.**

Do you see it in verse 41 and 42, Every year... According to the custom. Going to the Passover feast was certainly a special occasion for Joseph and Mary, but it wasn't anything new. It was sometime they had done for the past 12 years, year after year and it became an ordinary event in their lives. Joseph and Mary lost Jesus in the routine and the ordinary. It is like parents taking their child to an amusement park. The first time they are alert and focused and never let the child out of their sight. But after they have made 7 or 8 trips to the same park, doing just about the same things every year, they start to let down their guard. This is what happened to Joseph and Mary. After 12 years of going to the same place and doing the same thing, they got a little lax and let down their guard. They lost Jesus in the ordinary. Now, many have lost Jesus in the same place; they have lost Jesus in the ordinary. You see, sometimes that which you do regularly can become ordinary to you no matter how sacred it may be.

I'm convinced that sometimes we lose Jesus right here in the church house. Listen to me: some people come to church to sleep. Some people come to church to play with babies. Some people come to church to church to pass notes. Some people come to church and are bored to death. How do I know this? Because I see it all from the pulpit. I used to think it was my fault. Maybe if I was a better preacher, I could keep people more alert and focused, but then I realized it's not my job to keep you awake, that's your job. It's not my job to keep you focused, that's your job. It's not my job to keep you interested. That's your job. Someone says, "but preacher you preach too long, that why I sometimes fall asleep." No, that's not really it. I've seen people asleep before I've even gotten out of my wind-up. Before the pitch is even on the way, some are out like a light. Let me tell you something: If you sleep, play with babies, or whisper with others during worship services, it's not because the sermon was too long or too many songs were sung or prayers prayed; it is because of one thing—you have allowed worshipping God to become ordinary. Let me tell you this: singing praises to God is never ordinary. Praying is never ordinary. Remembering the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus is never ordinary. And if any of these things have become ordinary to you, it is because you have lost sight of Jesus. Do you not know that Jesus is right here, right now? We are in the presence of

God right now and that should always be an exciting and awe-inspiring experience.

### **III. Jesus Was Lost Because Of An Inaccurate Assumption.**

Why did Mary and Joseph leave Jesus behind? It was because they simply assumed that He was with them (**ver. 44**). An assumption is “*something strongly believed, but not proven.*” People have brought upon themselves much grief and sorrow because of assumptions based upon fictitious evidence. But while this is something true in the physical realm, it is just as so, and more tragic in the spiritual realm. Many will lose their souls because of inaccurate assumptions. Joseph and Mary lost Jesus because of an assumption, and today many have lost sight of Christ for the same reason. Let’s look at it.

#### **1. Some have assumed that the silence of the scriptures authorize.**

It is amazing how many people assume that if God hasn’t specifically said, “thou shall not,” man can do it religiously. People ask regularly, “where did God say we can’t use a musical instruments?” “Where did God say we can’t have a gymnasium?” “Where did God say we can’t raise money by having bake sales or car washes, etc.?” You see, many assume that if God hasn’t specifically prohibited a particular action, then it is okay to do. This is an assumption that will lead many people to destruction and is in fact the very opposite way of thinking about scripture then one should. The question should not be, “where did God say we can’t?” The question should be “where did God say we can?” Why is that the proper question? It is because the bible demands that we have positive authority for what we do (**Col. 3:17; 2 Jn. 2**).

#### **2. Some have assumed that God doesn’t care how we worship Him.**

That’s an assumption based on facts not in evidence. The truth is how we worship God is altogether important (**Jn. 4:24; Gen. 4:1-4; Lev. 10:1-2**). I know of a man who left the church because he loved to play the horn. I can’t remember the exact instrument, but he loved it so much that he convinced himself that God doesn’t care about what kind of music we make. So he went to the Christian church were he could play his instrument. Pay attention to me: the moment he left the church that Christ build to be a part of a man-made church he lost Jesus. To this day I am sure that he assumes that Jesus is somewhere with him just like Joseph and Mary supposed that Jesus was with them, but he is just as wrong as they were. Jesus is no

where to be found. This man left Jesus behind when he began to assume instead going with a “thus saith the Lord.”

#### **IV. Jesus Was Lost Because Joseph & Mary Looked In The Wrong Place.**

Jesus could have been found sooner if only His parents would have looked in the right place for him. Unfortunately they looked in the wrong place (**ver. 44**). Let me tell you where you won't find Jesus.

##### **1. You won't find Jesus in a denominational church.**

It may be that this is the first place where people will look, but as long as you look for Jesus in institutions that were built by man, Jesus will continue to be lost to you. Oh I know what you can find in denominational churches. You can find charismatic preachers that have the ability to emotionally move people. You might find the likes of **John Hagee, T.D Jakes or Kenneth Copeland** or other popular preachers, but you won't find Jesus there. You might find in denominational churches so-called faith healers who are really “fake” healers such as **Benny Hinn, Oral Roberts, or Kenneth Hagin**, but you won't find Jesus because you are looking in the wrong place. You might find in denominational churches popular women preachers like **Cindy Jacobs, Joyce Meyers or Marilyn Hickey**, or are guilty of usurping the authority of men, but you won't find Jesus because He is not there. You're looking in the wrong place. Pay attention to me now: Jesus did not build any denomination, He has not sanctioned any denomination, He is not the foundation of any denomination and in truth He has nothing to do with any denomination. You might find some earthly friends in denominational churches; you might find some traditional teachings and beliefs in denominational churches and you might find some wonderful, sincere and honest folk in denominational churches, but you won't find Jesus because He's not there, you are looking in the wrong place.

##### **2. You won't find Jesus in churches of Christ doing unauthorized things.**

Let me tell you what you might find. You will find gymnasiums and fellowship halls where you can recreate and be fed, but you won't find Jesus. You will find educational facilities that will teach children their 123s and ABCs and you will find “day-care centers” that will baby-sit your children all day long, but you won't find Jesus. Let me tell you what you will find in liberal churches: you will find plays and programs funded by the Lord's money by which you can be entertained, but you won't find Jesus because He's not there. How do I know. Because John said, *“Whosoever transgresses and abideth not in the doctrine of*

*Christ has not God...*” Now then, the doctrine of Christ consist of the teaching of the New Testament. Show me in the New Testament where the church used God’s money to fund day-care centers or to build kitchens or to finance softball or basketball teams or do any of the things that I just mentioned. Give us book, chapter and verse and then we will acknowledge that it is a part of the doctrine of Christ. But since you can’t do it, it must be a transgression of God’s law and thus, you won’t find Jesus there.

Where was Jesus found? Well read **vers. 44-45**. Jesus was found in the temple. Today Jesus can be found in the same place, that is the temple of God. But today that temple is not a physical structure, it is the church (**1 Cor. 3:16-17**).

### **Conclusion:**

Let me close by asking you this simple question: Have you lost Jesus? Because Joseph and Mary lost Jesus, they went for a time without him (**ver. 44**). Let me tell you right now a day without Jesus is a wasted day. A life without Jesus is a wasted life. Someone says, “I have had a good life. I have worked hard, I have a beautiful wife and special children and grandchildren, etc. Yes, but let me ask you, did you take Jesus with you on the journey? If you, in the life that you are now living, left Jesus behind, I encourage to stop what you are doing, go find Jesus and take Him along in your journey of life.