

Sunday 24 May 2020, 11am

Christ Church New Southgate & Friern Barnet
christchurchnsfb.org

Reading: Luke 15.8-10 - The Lost Coin

⁸“Or suppose a woman who has ten silver coins loses one of them - what does she do? She lights a lamp, sweeps her house, and looks carefully everywhere until she finds it. ⁹When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together, and says to them, ‘I am so happy I found the coin I lost. Let us celebrate!’ ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, the angels of God rejoice over one sinner who repents.”

Engaging with the story

Let’s see if we can tell the story again using our hands.

Can you make the shape of a W?

There was a woman

Can you wiggle your ten fingers?

With 10 coins

Can you make the shape of a headband?

She kept them on her head sewn into her headband

Can you open your fingers out wide?

One day she realised she had lost one coin

Can you pull the light cord?

She put the light on

Can you make a brush with your hand?

She brushed and cleaned her house for a very long time.

Until she found her lost coin.

Then she had a great party with all her neighbours for she had found her coin.

God is always happy when we are lost that we find him.

Can you clap?

- What did you find puzzling about that story?
- Why do you think Jesus told the story?
- What you think it says about God and us?

Sermon: Park life - lost and found in God (by Rev.Moriarty)

A couple of weeks ago, we lost our boys scooters in the park. We realised too late that they were gone and nowhere to be found. We rang everyone we could, we posted in every social media platform that we knew of. Nothing. There was no sign of our lost scooters.

In a last ditch attempt at finding the scooters – we took to paper, pen, a poly pocket and a couple of drawing pins and we took our home-made sign to the big log by the bridge in Arnos Park where the scooters were last seen, pinned it up and waited. We weren’t very hopeful.

Where is your nearest park? Ours is Arnos Park, and over lockdown it has been reclaimed by our local community. It’s a large park with a playground (now shut of course) and several large fields, small coppice and plenty of huge trees.

Over the past few weeks we have noted an increased ownership of the park, tiny fairy houses have appeared in a large chestnut tree, poetry is attached to a tree, children have chalked rainbows onto paths and lost and found signs have appeared.

All of our energy and entertainment outside of the TV is now here and we are forging new ways of relating to each other in our community because we are all focused on one park.

Jesus tells the parable of the woman who lost a coin with 2 other parables the lost son and the lost sheep. In each small story something or someone is lost and they are looked for.

The lost are looked for, hoped for and not given up on. Looking for something or someone that is lost is hard work, there is no magic button to press, it takes dedication.

In the Mirror newspaper this week there was a story called ‘Woman saves patio with miracle Poundland £2 spray’. The headline was that the spray transformed from the patio path from dark and mouldy to clean and bright and beautiful – all because of a miracle product.

However on reading the full story, there is a tale of a woman who decides to tackle something that has long been bothering her – her grubby patio. She does spray it with the Poundland spray, but then she scrubs it with a brush. Then she takes 2 other products to it, she scrubs it again, brushes, washes and cleans. The spray didn’t save the path, the woman did.

Have you come across Mrs Hinch? Mrs Hinch is an internet sensation – a cleaning whizz who is never faced down by a grubby sink.

So, imagine a story where a Mrs Hinch of the biblical world loses a coin. She realises one of her coins is missing, maybe late at night, exhausted from the day she sits and is fiddly with her headband where the rest of her coins are sewn into it and realises oh – 7,8,9 ... I've lost it.

She is committed to finding it and absolutely determined. It might not be worth much to the outside world but it's her coin and she is gonna find it! She uses valuable oil and wick to light her lamp, so she can see properly, she takes her broom and she cleans from top to bottom, for that is the only way her coin will be found.

Here is a picture of God – the God who cleans like a determined woman with a bottle of spray bleach in her hand. She ties her hair back, she looks, cleans, and does not give up.

Each of us are valuable to God. God notices when just one of us feels lost, just one of us falls away from seeking him, and he sets about seeking us. God does not give up until he finds us.

Here is a picture of the Spirit – who brings light to the dark corners of our lives, who helps us to be orderly and clean so that we can find real treasure, so that we can be reunited with God, found in God.

Here is a picture of Jesus – present in our homes, present in the daily reality of life but seeking the lost in the most costly manner and so restoring us to our relationship with God.

Where are you today in this parable? Is there part of your life where you feel lost? Do you have dark corners that require a broom? Do you know that God is dedicated to caring for you and is always looking for us, hoping that we will be found in him?

We never did find the scooters in Arnos Park. But I did get a text from a beautiful woman called Sophie. She had cycled past our sign several times on the log by the bridge. She offered us her kids scooters as they had outgrown them. We gave her wine and chocolates, and she gave us bigger, better scooters that our boys love.

God is overwhelmed with joy when we are found. Like the woman throwing a found coin party, there is a similar celebration in heaven with every angel

dancing at just one person discovering faith for the first time or the 100th time.

For the God we worship is the God who made us, knows us, loves us, and delights in us. He gives us freedom to be lost, to explore the world but longs for us to do so at his side.

Soon after we found a car key by that same log. We put up another sign, saying we'd found it. A week after an old man on a bike was reunited with his car key.

As we walk our parks, we share space with our community in a way that we have not done before. We encounter each other and find joy in unexpected places and with unexpected people, joy that increases – from small to big scooters, from a bike to a car.

May we pay attention to what is lost in our lives, and in the life of our community and seek to bring joy with all that is found. May we celebrate with joy with our neighbours when what was lost is found.

May we share God's joy, and the chorus line of heaven when all that is lost is found. God delights in seeking us, he does not give up and never will. May we be equally devoted to caring for others that we all may find joy in God as we are found in him. Amen.