

**Sunday, January 3, 2021 – Second Sunday of Christmas**  
**“About the Father’s Business”**

Luke 2: 40-52

Rev. Derek S. Klemm, Mountain View Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV  
Adapted from CPR

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

No doubt we really do intend to be about our heavenly Father’s business. Certainly that was true of Joseph and Mary in our text. “Now [Jesus’] parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.” Mary and Joseph had some important business God had given them. They had business God had given to every Israelite: they were to go to Jerusalem on a regular basis to worship at the chief festivals, especially Passover. What’s more, though, this particular faithful Hebrew couple a duty familiar to Christian parents of raising God’s own Son in the faith, seeing to it that he was trained in all of God’s Law. This they did. Every year, they went up to the feast. Now this year, with their Son reaching the age Jewish custom called spiritual young adulthood, they took Jesus along. It was the right thing to do.

We, God’s people here, intend to be about our Father’s business too. This time of year, lots of people resolve, fully intend, to improve this or that—New Year’s resolutions to go on a diet, exercise, stop smoking, limit ourselves to one martini. Maybe we’ve made resolutions about spiritual business as well – to follow the example of Mary and Joseph by being more faithful in our Sunday morning worship, to gather here every week around Word and Sacrament. Maybe we’ve resolved to begin regular family devotions, to pray with our spouses and children. Maybe we’ve made a resolution to put to better use our talents in the teaching ministry, the music ministry, Sunday School or youth of our church—even perhaps the discipline of generosity in tithing and above and beyond giving in Forward in Freedom. As believers in Christ, we really do intend to do these things. That’s being faithful, being about the Father’s business.

So how are we doing? Maybe we think, assume, suppose we’re staying pretty well on task, being about our Father’s business—at least so far, just three days into the new year. Let’s look in again on Mary and Joseph, “And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day’s journey,

but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions... And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress."

Remember, Mary and Joseph had a tough job to do! God had given them the vocation of being not only parents but of raising the Savior, and woe to them if they should misplace him somewhere along the way! So surely they felt they were being about the Father's business when they looked here and there, as Mary herself said, under "great distress."

We've all been lost sometime. It's scary. At a busy airport, looking for the right concourse for your gate. Driving on the freeway in a strange city late at night and taking a wrong turn. First day at a new school and you can't find your homeroom. Worse, did you ever lose a small child? The little one let go of your hand for a few seconds, and he was gone as the crowds streamed out of T-Mobile after a Knights game and you're in a panic. You know your business—Priorities 1, 2, AND 3, **your only business!** —is to find your child!

Perhaps we suppose we're also being about the Father's business when we're stressing over things we know are critical. Emotional hurts. Sickness. Cancer and chemotherapy. Divorce. Death. Being careful to stay healthy. RIFs, temporary layoffs, furloughs, pay cuts and fear of businesses closing up. Crime and corruption in high places and low places. Our relationship with God: Does he really love us? Will our sins cut us off from him forever? What if I don't keep all those good resolutions? What if I let the heavenly Father down, fail at his business?

Jesus has a gentle rebuke for Mary's stressing: "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (v 49)—or as the King James Version puts it, "that I must be about my Father's business?"

Jesus' rebuke to Mary is a loving one, just as it is to us, because his meaning is to free us from every stress. "There's no need for you to be anxious," he's saying, "because I am about my Father's business. In fact, I'm taking care of all that business for you." At Christmas, Jesus came from heaven to

rescue us from the hurricanes of trial and trouble. He came to save souls roiled up by sin – in ourselves and in sin in the world around us that makes life harder than any of us want it to be.

Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple sitting among the teachers, listening carefully and asking questions that we can only assume were brilliantly insightful. “And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.” That was the Father’s business. God’s Son had been given the vocation of being the Father’s Anointed One, the Christ, the Savior of the world. Already at average age of our middle school Confirmation kids at 12, Jesus was tending to business, learning everything the Scriptures revealed about his mission.

And, of course, this was only the beginning. Jesus would perfectly understand everything the inspired prophets had written about him—that he would do battle with satan, perfectly keeping the Law his brother and sister humanity had failed to keep; that he would work miracles of love, healing and freeing those struck down by the effects of sin; that he would gather a following, but that soon enough he would be abandoned by them, rejected by his own people, condemned, and have the whole weight of mankind’s damnation pressed on him; that he would be forsaken even by his Father and killed. That was the Father’s business for him. Jesus knew all that about himself in those Scriptures he discussed in the temple. And Jesus would take care of all that business, every detail. For us.

It’s all been done. Our stresses, our sins, the hurts, the sicknesses, the worries of our world, our fears about how God sees us—Jesus has taken care of them all. He has seen to it, by finishing every task the Father gave him, that God will be with us through all of these—every day as we go about our business here and now, and for an age to come free of stressful anxieties.

Several years ago, endurance swimmer Diana Nyad became the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida without the aid of a shark cage. It was a feat over three decades in the making. Nyad battled through jellyfish stings, sunburn, and dehydration before staggering ashore in Florida, mission accomplished . . . at age 64! This had been her dream, the business to which she devoted her life. For us, Jesus devoted his life—from infancy to boyhood to cross to empty tomb—to being about the Father’s business. All done. For us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.