

“Into the Darkness, Finding the Light” “The Gift of Getting Lost”

Continuing through Lent by way of Eric Elnes, “Gifts of the Dark Wood,” this week we are exploring the gift of getting lost. It is a rare person who intentionally leaves the known trail for the purpose of getting so disoriented the panic and fear can hardly be managed, but how many of us find ourselves there anyway? This week we look to discover the gift of being found only after having truly been lost.

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“The Gift of Getting Lost”**

Study Guide

Monday, 04/03/17 John 11: 1-16

Jesus, in order to return to Lazarus must also return to Judea. This is serious business and life threatening, yet Jesus makes the decision to go in order to reveal more of God’s Kingdom. We often find ourselves lost after making a hard decision where danger was evident. *In what ways are you “heading toward Judea” in your own life? Are there places where God’s work must be done, but they pose threat to you? Are they major threats? Minor threats?*

Tuesday, 04/03/17 John 11:16-37

I’ve often heard this story told as an all knowing Jesus guiding near sighted disciples through an obvious progression of events. Of course he is dead, I did that on purpose! Of course he will rise again, I did that on purpose! I noticed for the first time reading this story again, Jesus weeps. *What does it mean to you to consider Jesus vulnerable? Are you encouraged to know even Jesus faced truly hard moments in his ministry?*

Wednesday, 04/05/17 John 11:38-46

In a very difficult time, God’s glory was revealed. There are recurring themes of resurrection, renewal, dying to oneself in order to live, all through the gospels. *Why is it sometimes death is required to truly have life? What part of you or your life is preventing you from the Life of Jesus?*

Thursday, 04/06/17 1 Samuel 3

Read the story of Samuel’s call. The voice of God, finding Samuel, comes in the middle of the night and quiet. So quiet Samuel would have missed it were it not for Eli’s counsel. *How is it God is calling you? Are you listening?*

Friday, 04/07/17 Romans 8:26-39

I truly do not believe we get lost on purpose, nor do I believe it is God’s purpose for us to get lost. I do believe, however, if we love God and truly listen for the Spirit then when we do find ourselves lost there are beautiful discoveries to be made. *Will you listen for the call of God even in the midst of feeling lost?*

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

The Man Watching
By Rainer Maria Rilke

I can tell by the way the trees beat, after
so many dull days, on my worried windowpanes
that a storm is coming,
and I hear the far-off fields say things
I can't bear without a friend,
I can't love without a sister.

The storm, the shifter of shapes, drives on
across the woods and across time,
and the world looks as if it had no age:
the landscape, like a line in the psalm book,
is seriousness and weight and eternity.

What we choose to fight is so tiny!
What fights with us is so great.
If only we would let ourselves be dominated
as things do by some immense storm,
we would become strong too, and not need names.

When we win it's with small things,
and the triumph itself makes us small.
What is extraordinary and eternal
does not want to be bent by us.
I mean the Angel who appeared
to the wrestlers of the Old Testament:
when the wrestlers' sinews
grew long like metal strings,
he felt them under his fingers
like chords of deep music.

Whoever was beaten by this Angel
(who often simply declined the fight)
went away proud and strengthened
and great from that harsh hand,
that kneaded him as if to change his shape.
Winning does not tempt that man.
This is how he grows: by being defeated, decisively,
by constantly greater beings.

--Translated by Robert Bly