

Seedling Group Questions for the week of December 30 – 1st Sunday of Christmas

The sermon for December 30 can be found at www.saidanotherway.org

Questions for opening up

What was your favorite thing to wear when you were young? Why? What is your favorite thing to wear now?

Were you ever separated or lost from your parents when you were younger? Have you ever lost or been separated from a child who was in your custody for whatever reason? What happened?

Read Colossians 3:12-17

What do you think it means to be “clothed” with the different qualities and attributes that Paul names (compassion, meekness, love, etc.)? What is the significance of using sartorial (clothing-related) imagery?

How does love “bind everything together in perfect harmony”? Can you give an example when love helped harmonize a situation or a conflict?

Singing—of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs—is the only concrete spiritual practice Paul gives for letting the word of Christ dwell richly in us. How significant to your faith life is the act of *singing* (not just listening to music) with other Christians? Why is this?

Read Luke 2:41-52

What is/was the significance of the Passover feast for Jews? (See Deuteronomy 16:1-6). What does this observance say about Jesus’ identity, community, and influences on his upbringing? What significant observations or festivals in your upbringing became fundamental to your identity?

Explain Mary and Joseph’s response to Jesus when they finally locate him. Does this surprise you? Why or why not?

After reading this story in its entirety, is it correct to say that Jesus was lost? Why or why not? What does that say about who Jesus is? Where have you been reliably able to find Jesus in your life?

Putting things together

Do you agree with Pastor Phillip’s assertion that in contemporary society the time and gifts of youth are favored over adulthood’s? Why or why not? What about within church culture and practice?

Pastor Phillip says, *“Like Mary and Joseph eventually do at some point, we are to release [Jesus] and let him offer himself for the life of the world in the way God has called him to do. We let him stand up in the manger, wave to the world, and then step out into its assorted beauty and ugliness.”* What are the ways we might over-personalize Jesus or view him mainly as a tool for our happiness? What does it mean to let Jesus be who is he called to be?

Making it personal

How has your relationship to Jesus changed over the years? How is it different now than when you were younger?

In what ways is Jesus a source of wisdom for you? Where else do you go when you seek wisdom?

Colossians 3:12-17

¹²As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Luke 2:41-52

⁴¹Now every year [Jesus'] parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴²And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴Assuming 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. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When 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." ⁴⁹He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

⁵²And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.