

4

LOST AND FOUND

Colossians 1:13-14

Give a precious item that you own to a local charity shop or ‘cash converters’ store. It doesn’t need to be something expensive – just something that has sentimental value to you or will be hard to replace. If you’re struggling to think of anything, just have a quick look around your bedroom or living room or, for the most effective method, ask a friend or your spouse to choose. They’ll know what will really mean something to you. If you’re still really struggling, as a soft option, you could just choose your favourite CD or DVD.

In the next one to two days, experience what it felt like for God to ‘let go’ of us, running the risk that we may never return. We enjoy having freewill, but any of you who are parents will know that, at times, you would rather cancel your offspring’s freewill for a day or two, to save them from themselves. However, the remarkable truth is that the story doesn’t end there. God buys us back.

Walk to the shop for the second time, mirroring God’s ‘rescue mission’, and as you do, ask God to reveal to you the scale of his love for his children who have not yet returned.

You won’t know whether your item will still be there, or whether it will have been snaffled up by a bargain hunter. Experience the tension. This is the tension that God must experience in giving us freewill. As you buy the item back you might experience a sense of injustice in having to pay for something that is actually yours, but that is what God did for us.

Hebrews 9:12

He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.

It is that word 'redemption' that we have been fleshing out here. In these days of multiple kidnappings, we are sadly all too aware of what a ransom is. It is quite literally given in exchange for someone's life. The money you paid in the above exercise was a ransom for your precious item. With the item safe in your possession, reflect on the fact that God's economy doesn't allow for simple cash conversion. The currency of this transaction is blood.

If the item has been snapped up by an avid Spice Girls fan, then you are going to experience something of the pain of a Father that let his son depart with half the inheritance. Let this longing to have what was once yours safely restored change your heart and prayers for those who you know are still 'in a faraway land'. If we even knew a fraction of his pain, I think it would change our praying lives forever.

NOTES

