

LIVING LOST IS UNFORTUNATE REALITY

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I have finally self-diagnosed a major source of frustration in my life; I suffer from directional dyslexia. North feels like South and East appears remarkably like West. If a left turn is correct, everything within me wants to crank right. My inner compass is skewed. And speaking of compasses, I've used a dozen of them and not one of them worked properly -- or so my inner voice declares. Yes, “Lost” is more than a television series, it's the theme of my life.

At my father's recent funeral, I shared that some traits are obviously passed down while others appeared to skip right over me. I relate to his disdain for all things spicy and the expanding solar panel on my head is remarkably similar to his cranial décor. An observant sister kindly pointed out that even my rather large butt is a reminder of his -- bummer.

The one time his uncanny sense of direction got turned around was while headed in my biological direction. I like to think it declared, “Nope, give this one chiseled good looks instead.”

If you blind-folded my father, put him in a helicopter and set him down 50 miles in the forest, he would glance at the sky, examine a tree, hike up his pants and head straight home. My story would unfold slightly different. I'd gaze at the sky, run into a tree, pee my pants and head straight for Nunavut. Not a pretty picture.

Though individually diverse, together my father and I provide a fairly accurate portrayal of Christianity. Woven into the fabric of this faith are two unmistakable themes: lost and found.

Humans have always had an amazing ability to become spiritually lost. Though created to enjoy relationship with none other than God himself, we gravitate toward meaningless meanderings. Adam and Eve chose independent living over God-obedience and ended up tilling dirt instead of tending the Garden of Eden, as was God's original intent. The people of Israel, though delivered from slavery, rejected God's direction and a quick trip to the Land of Promise became a 40 year test of endurance -- can't you just hear the kids questioning, “Are we there yet?” Jonah ran from God and became fish food. Judas chose funds over faithfulness and hung himself.

The saddest part of living lost is the squandering of time. Life on Earth is short and some arrive at the finish line possessing little of eternal value. Carelessly, they have invested their days in search of elusive happiness, little realizing the lightning-like speed with which sand in the hour-glass of life slips away.

Thank goodness there is a second element to basic Christian theology summarized in the word, “found”. That's why Jesus put in a personal appearance on Earth. To those languishing in lostness, he announces, “...the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” To wanderers of every generation He grins and says, “Follow me”.

That's good news to this one who can not only get lost in the Super-Store parking lot, but also in the normal routine of life. Faith in Jesus sets me in the direction of Heaven while following Him allows me to arrive at the gates brimming with a life well invested and eternally grateful that "the lost has been found."