

Lost and Found

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So he told them this parable: “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

“Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”



I wonder if you have watched the news coverage over the last few days and, if so, if there is anything you may have noticed during it? Maybe for you, it was the crowds gathered around Balmoral, Windsor, Buckingham Palace or lining the streets as the Queen's coffin slowly drove past. Maybe you noticed the mountains of flowers and tributes people have left just to say that they care and are sorry she is gone.

The thing that has struck me has been the personal cost to the royal family. Whatever you might think of the monarchy itself, this is a family who has just lost their mother / grandmother / great grandmother and they are grieving for someone they loved and shared their lives with.

When our new King spoke on Friday, I noticed his red face and watery eyes and thought he had probably been crying before the cameras were switched on. And I was heartbroken by the sight of the Queen's children standing vigil at the four corners of the Queen's coffin in St Giles Cathedral on Monday evening. They stood with their heads bowed, as thousands of people filed past. They are not allowed to mourn privately, but have to do it in the full glare of the media spotlight.

I wonder if any of you might know even a little bit of how that feels? To be holding a private sadness or grief, but to feel as though the world is watching you? If you do, then you will know it's a very difficult thing indeed. Let's pray for the Royal Family this week.



Prayer:

Today we pray for the royal family as they experience an aching sense of loss while still carrying on with their public duties. Please would you help and strengthen them. We pray for anyone we know dealing with grief right now and we ask that you would bring comfort to them and to us. Help us always to remember that when we feel lost, you always come looking for us because you love us.