

Lost!

This week I realised that I have lost something precious and quite valuable.

I can't remember where I last had it, and I don't know where I might have left it. Since I realised it's missing it has been always in my mind. It's there as a constant niggle.

I can't forget that it's gone. I need to give some time to look for it properly.

It's not even something that I really love, but I do need it.

When something - or someone precious - is missing, it's hard to concentrate on anything else. Like the story of a lost sheep - even with ninety-nine other perfectly good sheep the farmer goes looking for the lost sheep until he finds it. Then he carries it home on his shoulders. In the lovely book we have of the story, the last picture (by Nick Butterworth and Mick Inkpen) is of all the sheep wearing party hats, surrounded by balloons and enjoying all the party food!

This is a story with a meaning (a parable) that Jesus told. 'Don't you realise', he was saying, 'you're a bit like the lost sheep, and God is a bit like the farmer. You are so precious to God that he will search for you high and low until he finds you. Then he'll be so happy to find you!'

We know how very much we miss a loved one when they are not with us any more. They leave a massive gap in our hearts and they are always in our thoughts.

My lost item will soon be found, but that constant niggle in my head reminds me of the incredible love that God has for every one of us. He can't get us out of his mind!

However we feel about ourselves, and even when we feel most lost and most alone, every one of us is so precious to God that he will be looking high and low for us. Why? Because he wants us to know that he loves us and wants to be close to us. No exceptions.

What amazing love is that!

Revd Dr Susie Collingridge