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Urgently, Diligently Seeking

By Teresa Hampton

My sister was grocery shopping one day. She stopped at the large display of breads and carefully squeezed each loaf. She found the freshest and placed it in the cart. She continued picking items on that aisle and then the next. She reached down to tend to her toddler and noticed something strange. The diamond was missing from her wedding ring!

She began to think of all the places she had been that morning. Where could it be? Panic set in and tears began to flow. A woman observed and came quickly. My sister explained what was wrong. The woman said, "Maybe it's here. Let's look." They scoured areas up and down aisles, until they came to the bread. It was a long shot, but together they took out loaf after loaf, until the rack was nearly empty. Suddenly, there was her diamond. Unbelievable! The search paid off.

Jesus talked about urgently and diligently seeking something precious that is lost. He told a parable, *What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing* (Luke 15:4-5). He continued, *there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.* Jesus understood the value of one soul, whether it had wandered away or had never been in the fold.

His teaching and example prompts us to ask a few questions. What do we do when a brother or sister strays? Do we immediately look for them? If not, let us begin. What about lost souls next door or in our community? How urgent and diligent is our search for them? If we're lagging, let's get busy. Souls are more precious than diamonds.

Today's Verse: *Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? (Lk 15:8).*

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