

STORY

Twelve-year-old Jesus in the Temple - Luke 2:40-52

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, send Your Spirit among us to show to us, Your Son Jesus as a young man, eager to do Your will, to hear Your Word, and to obey not only You but also His earthly parents. Let them see Jesus' love for them as He carried out also this part of Your plan to save sinners. May His love for us draw us to Him in repentance and faith, trusting in Him for salvation and inspiring us to live according to Your will. In His name we pray, Amen

VOCABULARY

Feast of the Passover - God commanded this week-long annual feast. As part of the events of Israel's exodus from Egypt, the Passover pictures how a lamb (Christ) would save believers from eternal death. (cf. Ex 23:14-17, Dt. 16, v16)

"was subject" - Jesus placed himself under the authority of His earthly parents in obedience to the 4th commandment to keep also this commandment for us.

OUTER AIM

The boy Jesus came to do His heavenly Father's business.

INNER AIM

Jesus willingly treasured God's Word perfectly for us.

BACKGROUND

(Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 2, pp. 54-62)

This is the only event from Jesus' childhood recorded for us in the Canonical Scriptures. The Holy Spirit purposely shows us that even as a young child Jesus knew He was here to carry out God's plan that He would be the Savior of the world. In this account Jesus followed His Father's plans in a number of ways: a) Jesus kept the third commandment through His desire to study the Word of God and also as He kept the Old Testament Feast of the Passover even as a young boy. b) Jesus kept the 4th commandment as He respectfully answered His mother, Mary, and also "was subject" or perfectly obedient to His parents. In this and other ways Jesus grew in favor with God as our perfect substitute.

Below are notes on each verse of the account:

Luke 2:41

- ▶ According to the Law of Moses, every adult Jewish man was obligated to attend three annual feasts in Jerusalem: The Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

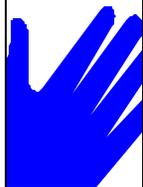
- ▶ Often the entire Jewish family would make the journey, as was the case in this episode.

v. 42

- ▶ Customarily, male children began their formal education in the Scriptures at the age of five years.
- ▶ From five to ten years of age, their religious education focused only on the Scriptures.
- ▶ Then from the ages of ten to fifteen, instruction began to include the "traditions of the elders" or commentary notes on the Bible.
- ▶ At twelve years the boy was considered responsible for his religious instruction in a way similar to our modern custom of Confirmation.

v. 43

- ▶ The feast of the Passover lasted for an entire week before families would return to their homes.



- ▶ In one of those incidents that sometimes happens at some point in many families, the parents assumed that when they were leaving, their entire family was with them.
 - ▶ But Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem without his parents immediately realizing it.
- v. 44
- ▶ Traveling on foot with all the other people returning from the feast, Mary and Joseph began looking for Jesus near the end of the day.
 - ▶ They searched the likely places among relatives and friends.
- v. 45
- ▶ It took them another day to return to Jerusalem as they continued their unsuccessful search for Jesus.
- v. 46
- ▶ Three days included two days of traveling and another day searching in Jerusalem.
 - ▶ The temple (including sanctuary and mall) was a large group of buildings including an area customarily used for education and discussions with the priests and other religious teachers.
 - ▶ There, as a diligent student of the Word, Jesus listened to the teachers and asked them questions to learn more and more.
- v. 47
- ▶ Jesus greatly astounded the people who were listening in on the discussions.
 - ▶ His insight or understanding and answers to questions put to Him astounded them.
- v. 48
- ▶ When Joseph and Mary found the boy Jesus, they were overwhelmed by the situation.
 - ▶ Mary rebuked Jesus for causing both His father and mother such painful anxiety from having to search for Him for so long.
- v. 49
- ▶ But Jesus hadn't done anything they shouldn't have expected Him to do.
 - ▶ He hadn't disobeyed them (for that would have been a sin and disqualified Him as our Savior).
 - ▶ Jesus reminded them that it was necessary that He be doing the things His (heavenly) Father had asked Him to do.
- v. 50
- ▶ But His earthly parents didn't understand what He meant by those words.
- v. 51
- ▶ Nevertheless, Jesus obediently returned with His parents to Nazareth and was subject to them, as a perfect child would be to His parents.
 - ▶ But Mary remembered the event and, along with the other unusual events of Jesus life, as she saw Jesus' life and mission unfold.
- v. 52
- ▶ Jesus grew up physically but also intellectually, gaining knowledge and learning how to correctly apply it.
 - ▶ As Jesus did all things perfectly while growing up (hard for us sinners to imagine), both God and those people around Jesus were favorably impressed with Him.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, even as a little child, Jesus did Your will and worked for our salvation. Help us to live thankful lives, eager to hear Your word, and to obey not only You but those whom you have placed over us for our care. And when we fall, bring us back to You in repentance and faith, trusting in Your forgiveness and the Salvation that Jesus, Your Son through His perfect obedience, gained for us. We pray, trusting in Jesus, Amen.

PRESENTATION

You might begin by asking the students what kind of child they think Jesus was. Direct their thoughts to His attitude to God and church and also His obedience to parents. Help the students to realize that Jesus grew up as a child like us but unlike us was perfectly without sin throughout. Even as a child, Jesus knew that his mission in life was to save the world from their sins.

Explore the concept of “tempted in all points like as we are,” yet without sin (Heb. 2:17-18 and 4:15).

Or possibly use the festivals of the New Testament Church: 1) which are the main festivals (three), 2) whether God commands them or not and 3) why do we celebrate them and also Sunday?

Jesus went to church as a young man.

Briefly review previous story as time allows. Make links to the new story when possible.

Tell the story: Teachers, be encouraged to tell the story in your own words while remaining faithful to the scriptural account. When scripture records the story in more than one place, you may want to harmonize the accounts (including extra details found in each account.) Let the students know where they can find the additional details in the Bible.

Discuss the story: While reviewing the major events of the story, discuss the possible applications to the students' lives. Ask questions that make them think about the story and show that they understand the story.

APPLICATIONS

The teacher may have to choose among a number of possible applications from this story:

1. Jesus teaches children how important God's Word is for their life as well. For God's Word tells them about Jesus their Savior. This leads to other applications: a.) We will want to hear and learn from God's Word regularly, whether at home, or church, or in church school. b.) We will want to live God's Word in our lives by believing it, repenting of our sins and looking to Jesus for forgiveness, and following God's will for our lives.
2. When we have the opportunity or privilege to hear God's Word, we will want to listen carefully to learn from God. We don't want to become guilty of despising God's Word by fooling around, not paying attention, disrupting other people who are listening, by daydreaming, or dozing. Luke 11:28
3. It is good to remember that our salvation was earned not only by Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection back to life, but also by His perfect life of obedience. This story shows Jesus keeping the 1st, 3rd, and 4th commandments of God. Because Jesus grew up just as we, yet without sin, we know that His death also pays for the sins of our childhood and youth, because Jesus perfectly kept the Law also in this time of His life.
4. W.D.J.D.? What did Jesus do? Jesus spent His entire earthly life doing His Father's will which was saving us from our sin. His perfect life gives us many examples to help us see how we can express our thankfulness to Him by doing God's will in our lives.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Luke 11:28 - (Jesus said) "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Psalms 119:105 - Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

Middle any of the above and...

Psalms 84:10 - For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Hebrews 7:26 - For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

Upper any of the above and...

Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

John 5:24 - "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

HYMN CHOICES

"O God, Thou Faithful God," (TLH 395 1-3)

"One Thing's Needful; Lord, This Treasure" (TLH 366 1 & others)

"Abide, O Dearest Jesus" (TLH 53 1-2,4)