



Growth Group Curriculum

Week 8 – February 27, 2022 – Luke 2:41-52

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

The only stories we have about the childhood of Jesus are found in the gospel of Matthew and Luke. In our story today, the twelve-year-old Jesus shows up in Jerusalem with his family for the Passover.

The 12th year was the final year of preparation for a boy before he entered the full religious life. Up until this time Joseph would have had a very important role in the life of Jesus. He would have taught him about being a carpenter as well as the religious rhythms of life. In today's understanding Jesus would have been preparing for his bar-mitzvah. At age 13 a young man would formally take on the yoke of the law and become literally a "son (bar) of the commandment (mitzvah)."

Luke wants to make it clear that the parents of Jesus were devoted. They showed up in Jerusalem for the feasts and festivals and yet they did not fully grasp who their son "truly" was. After leaving him behind and then finding him, they do not understand why he stayed behind in the temple.

We are told that the people were amazed at the teaching of Jesus and that his parents were astonished. The Greek word for astonished carries more force than the word for amazed. Even though Jesus had been around his parents for twelve years, they had obviously never seen anything like this before.

Jesus sat with the religious leaders and listened in on their conversations and asked questions. He modeled the level of wisdom that is rarely discovered in isolation, but is instead found in listening to others and asking pertinent questions.

As Jesus leaves the temple, Luke lets his readers know that Jesus continued to grow in stature and in wisdom. Wisdom is not just something that a person obtains all at once. Rather, it is a journey where we learn along the way. Jesus continued to gain wisdom at home and that wisdom prepared him to carry out the mission that God had set apart for him to do.

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Exploring the Text

Luke 2:41-52

⁴¹ Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. ⁴² When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. ⁴³ After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. ⁴⁴ Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." ⁴⁹ "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) Did you - or your children - ever wander off or get lost? What did you do? How did that feel? What was your conversation like after you were reunited?
- 2) In the gospel of Luke, we read about the birth of Jesus, his presentation in the temple, and then his temple experience when he was 12. Matthew 2, tells us about the visit of the magi and the dream that Joseph had, to both flee to Egypt and then to return to Israel. Those are the only stories we have of the childhood of Jesus. Why do you think there are so few stories in the gospels about the early years of Jesus?
- 3) Do you think Mary and Joseph understood what Jesus meant when he said that he needed to be in his "Father's house?"
- 4) How do you think the religious leaders would have responded when they heard a twelve-year-old boy saying that God was his Father?
- 5) Do you have a group of people, or a person, that you sit with when you are seeking wisdom for a certain situation?
- 6) James 1:5-6 says, "*If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.*" How do we ask God for wisdom in faith without having doubt? Do you think that is possible?
- 7) Verse 52 says that Jesus grew in wisdom. Does this mean that wisdom is something we acquire in stages? Do you think anyone is born wise, or is it something that you must pursue?
- 8) Share about one or two new insights you have had about wisdom during this sermon series. How have you been able to apply that to your life?

