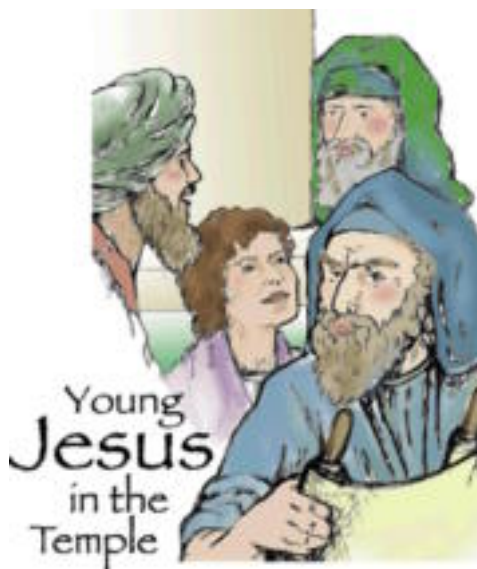


LESSON 7



THE BOYHOOD AND YOUTH OF JESUS

Scripture Text: Luke 2:40-52

Luke, as a companion of Paul, had opportunity to come in contact with many of the people who had a prominent part in the Lord's ministry. As a competent historian and a true man of God, he wrote, under God's guidance, the only account of the early years of the life of Christ. Twelve years have gone by since the time of our last lesson. In this lesson we look at the one view written of Jesus as a child, a boy of twelve. Jesus came to do, above all other, the will of His Father God. This fact governed all His life. We find in today's lesson that the lesser must give way to the greater. We see Christ at the beginning of His divine authority and mission, that of being about His Father's business.

MEMORY VERSE: *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.* *John 20:21*

Jesus a Normal Human Child

Luke 2:40 The best homes in every generation are those that cherish Christian ideals and put responsibility on growing children. In this home **the child grew . . . strong in spirit . . . wisdom . . . grace of God . . . upon him.** Physically, mentally, spiritually, He developed as any child should, no doubt in the highest degree. God's grace rested on Him. God could have sent the Savior as a mature man, but He chose to allow Him to grow as all other humans do, to pass through the different stages of development, and thus to reveal to future generations the capabilities of human nature at its best. Jesus was a great example in handling the trials and problems of growing up through, what we call, the uncertain years of youth. Pictures of Jesus that present Him as physically weak find no confirmation in the Word of God. He grew physically and also was full of wisdom. He grew mentally like every other normal child. And the grace of God was upon Him as it rests upon all children, but its application to His life depended upon Mary and Joseph. Today many a parent who neglects salvation and lives a careless or wicked life keeps the grace of God from operating to the child's benefit.

The Boy in the Temple

Luke 2:41-47 **To Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover**—our Lord was brought up in a home where parents set their children a good example by faithfully attending to their duties of worship. They went regularly every year. **Twelve years old**—when a Hebrew boy was twelve years old he became responsible to the Law. **As they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind . . . Joseph and his mother knew not of it.** We must make certain that Jesus is with us before we start out anywhere. **They, supposing him to have been in the company.** Here is a mistake so common to us today; we suppose that Christ is with us, in our lives, without checking carefully to be sure. **Went a day's journey . . . sought him among their kinfolk and acquaintance. Found him not.** Jesus cannot be found among your worldly friends and relations. **Turned back**—a wise decision. **After three days**—they had lost Jesus in one day, but it required three days to find Him. It always takes more time to find Christ after we have left Him than the short time it takes to lose Him. **Found him in the temple**—after looking everywhere else they found

Him in the natural place to look for Christ. **Astonished at his understanding and answers.** Here He was putting to use the spirit, wisdom, and the grace of God spoken of in verse 40.

Father's Business

Luke 2:48-50 Amazed—at the unusual situation of Jesus questioning and answering the great religious minds of that day. It is important for us to realize that there is greatness in today's children and that the great issues of tomorrow will be dealt with by those who today are immature. Mary and Joseph had not sought Jesus in the temple first because, like everyone else, they thought Him just a normal boy interested in the excitement of a big city. He was a normal boy, but He was also the most extraordinary person that was ever born on the earth. They had taught Him to put God and worship first, yet, with the thoughts that so often warp the judgment of parents, they did not expect Him to do so. **How is it . . .** Jesus, from His viewpoint of carrying forward Heaven's purposes, saw their seeking as of minor importance. He set values in their proper places.

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? He was concerned with the things of His Heavenly Father and His business. These words must have brought back to Mary the words spoken to her by the angel twelve years before. Joseph knew that he was not Jesus' father. His business was that of a carpenter, and the young Jesus helped him make plows and yokes and learned responsibility. He knew that this was not the business Jesus was speaking of. Jesus had a sense of mission, a knowledge of the purpose for which He was here. Children need to be taught this today. His actions were always with a purpose, as seeing the goal clearly ahead. That goal He stated as **my Father's business.** What He had just done furthered that business. Here was Jesus at the very beginning of His spiritual work saying that He intended to put God first and keep Him there. Nothing would come before the Father and His business. Something great was happening here. The child was outgrowing His parents. May it ever be true with our children. **They understood not the saying.** It was greater than human wisdom.

Jesus Was Obedient

Luke 2:51-52 Went down with them . . . was subject unto them—in keeping with the whole plan of His stooping to become human, He obeyed His parents as every human child should. Mary had many precious memories to keep **in her heart.**

Youth is invariably a period of turmoil and struggle. The young man must wrestle with his passions, think through his problems, and see what he wants to make out of his life, rise above his frustrations, and resolve his inner conflicts. **Jesus increased in wisdom**—in knowledge and the capacity to use that knowledge to great advantage. He increased in **stature.** Again we see the strong Jesus, setting at naught the weak figure whom artists have often mistakenly created. He increased **in favour with God and man.** He became a servant of both—a servant of God and a servant of men under God. God loved Him for His perfect obedience; men loved Him for His faithfulness and His willingness to be helpful. Mary and Joseph gave every generation an example of parenthood at its best. Their home was a fit place for training the Lord Jesus Who became the Savior of the world. He is the Source of Life—everlasting Life.

JUST A THOUGHT

**When it can be said of anyone that he has the favor of
God and men, that person has attained the
ultimate in distinction.**