

COME MEET BOY JESUS

Luke 2:41-52

INTRODUCTION

For those of you 30 years and older, if you were going to record one incident of your first 30 years of life, what would it be? (One incident at the human level, not counting your new birth in Christ) A graduation? Marriage? An Olympic gold medal or other award?

Any guesses on what I would cite?☺?

→ Hint, 30 years ago on Aug 22nd, 1987 ☺

The one incident God chooses to record for us of the first 30 years of Jesus' life after the initial events surrounding His birth (circumcision, presentation, Magi visit, flight to Egypt)

We are finishing the first two chapters of Luke this morning. We have covered 120 verses leading up to the birth and first 40 days of the life of Christ. This morning we finish the last 12 verses which cover the next 30 years of His life.

The one incident is something that happened when He was 12 years old, a visit (again) to the Temple in Jerusalem, being left behind by His parents, and a brief reunion ...

READ Luke 2:41-52

About 1/3 of all four gospels deal with the last seven days in the life of our Lord. The twelve verses before us are the one passage opening a window on the thirty years in which Jesus lived in Nazareth.

Proposition: 5 Chapters:

- I. Piety
- II. Vacancy
- III. Sagacity (Wisdom)

IV. Necessity

V. Humanity

The first two chapters are telling the story, setting the stage
The last two chapters bring in the epoch truths, the doctrines,
the reason why God chose this one event out of three decades

So That: We will grow in our understanding of the boy Jesus – especially in His humanity.

I. The **Piety** of His Parents **2:41-42**

Point – Another reminder of their piety → sets the stage

- 8 days – circumcision
- 40 days – presentation
- now travel to Jerusalem

This is all in obedience to the law.

Proof – “⁴¹**And His parents used to go to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.**”

The Law required the head of the household be present at three of the feasts in Jerusalem. Mary is devout. She accompanies Joseph and brings Jesus.

“⁴²**And when He became twelve, they went up *there* according to the custom of the Feast;**”

This is the movement from Baby Jesus to Boy Jesus.

Bar Mitzvah at age 13 – 12th year was final year of preparation for a boy before he enters full participation in religious life and becomes a *bar mitzvah* or “son of commandment.”

“**the custom of the Feast**” → there were 7 feasts of Israel – **Lev 23**

- 1) Passover
- 2) Unleavened Bread
- 3) First Fruits

- 4) Weeks
- 5) Trumpets
- 6) Atonement
- 7) Booths

Now God had commanded Israel ... **Deut 16:16** – “Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths,”

“**they went up there**” → There are a group of 15 Psalms, **Psa 120-134**, that are collectively called **A Song of Ascents**. These were sung by those who were going “up to” Jerusalem and “ascending” to the Temple (1 Sam 1:3; Isa. 30:29) during these 3 Feasts.

Likely sung by **Joseph** and **Mary**, and now **Jesus** at the age of 12 as He is being prepared to become a “son of commandment” → Perhaps His first visit to the Temple

Application – Many sermons often turn this into a primary lesson for parents and children. I think this misses the main point. Certainly, there are lessons and applications to be gleaned, but these are mere subpoint applications, valuable, but not to be confused with the reason why God chose this one event to record out of 30 years of existence and life of the Messiah.

II. The **Vacancy** of His Presence **2:43-45**

Point – This is real life drama in Luke’s narrative ...

Illustration – I can recall two events in our family – one when Zac hid himself under a table in a store at Valencia Mall and Margie couldn’t find him. Another time when we couldn’t find Jadon on the beach at Ocean City, New Jersey. Both times the angst of the unknown was so difficult. Many of you parents can understand this.

Proof – “^{43a}**and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days,**” → 8 days – 1 day Feast of Passover immediately followed by 7 day Feast of Unleavened Bread

“^{43b}**the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. And His parents were unaware of it, ^{44a}but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day’s journey;**”

It is obviously wrong to think of disobedience or sinful mischief on the part of Jesus here. I also think it is wrong to assume neglect on the part of Joseph and Mary.

They are used to Jesus’ perfect obedience. They are with a large group of family, extended family, and neighbors from Nazareth and other villages near Nazareth.

The mothers would start out first with the younger children. Then the fathers with the older children, and teenagers.

→ at age 12, Jesus is right on the cusp

Mary thinks Jesus is with Joseph and Joseph thinks Jesus is with Mary. This is a reasonable supposition since Jesus always did what He was supposed to do (once He was taught).

“^{44b}**and they *began* looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, looking for Him.**”

You parents know how these conversations go – “I thought he was with you.” “No. I thought he was with you.”

Illustration – **Martyn Lloyd-Jones** brings out the unfolding drama well – *“Isn’t this a perfect picture of the life of the majority today? Watch these people as they go down from Jerusalem to their home in Nazareth. There they were going with the other people in the caravan, and as they journeyed they talked. Nothing seemed to worry them. Maybe they were discussing together the services they had just been attending at Jerusalem, commenting perhaps on the addresses they had*

heard. No doubt also the political situation was mentioned and the whole question of the Roman domination was raised and freely discussed. Quite likely also the relative strength of the various groups and parties of priests — the Pharisees, Sadducees, etc. — was considered and debated. Probably also the women in particular had their discussions as to the various things they had seen in the shops and bazaars of the city, the various purchases they had made and the whole difficulty and problem of life and living. On they went, so concerned about this, that and the other, and not thinking at all about the one thing that was really of greatest importance; not thinking at all as to whether the boy Jesus was with them or not.”

Application– The Doctor continues – *“There, I say again, is a perfect picture of life and of the masses. On and on they go in life’s journey, concerned about anything and everything and everybody, except the one thing that matters most of all and the one Person who alone really counts”*

III. The Sagacity (Wisdom) of His Probing 2:46-48

Contrast!! → The fictitious account entitled “Infancy Gospel of Thomas” has a young Jesus bored without a playmate so He makes birds out of mud and brings them to life.

Point – This true story is where we begin to turn the corner, we continue the drama, but we begin to see the wonder of this boy.

Proof – ^{46a}**And it came about that after three days they found Him in the temple,”**

Jerusalem was not that big of a town at that time to take 3 days to search. Most likely that they traveled 1 day out, 1 day back and then 1 day looking in Jerusalem.

^{46b}**sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them, and asking them questions.** ⁴⁷**And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers.”**

It was a question and answer format. Jesus is **listening** first

→ He is there as a learner, His **answering** follows

“**amazed**” – strong word expressing intense amazement and awe → English word “**ecstasy**” comes from this Greek word.

“**understanding**” – literally means ‘a coming together’ like two rivers

His wisdom confounds the teachers and doctors.

In His humanity, Jesus’ thinking is not clouded for one second with darkness. He doesn’t have one scintilla of influence of original sin. He has loved the Lord His God with all His heart, soul, mind, and strength every nanosecond of His 12-year old life.

Note: 18 years later, some of these very same teachers will gnash their teeth at His wisdom and want to kill Him.

⁴⁸**And when they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, ‘Son (Child – teknon), why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You.’”**

→ Mixture of shock, relief and reproach, and anguish

“**anxiously looking for You**” – literally – “Your father and I have been suffering pain seeking You”

Same word is used in:

Zech 9:5 – “writhe in pain;”

Isa 53:4 – “sorrows”

Luke 16:24 – “agony”

→ beginning fulfillment of **2:35**

Now, you might be wondering how in the world could Joseph and Mary be astonished. How could they not understand. I mean, they just had Gabriel speak to them, they just experienced a miraculous virgin conception and then virgin birth ... I know it

just happened ... I just read it a minute and half ago when I began reading this book – just a couple pages back ... ☺

Illustration – My family and medicine in the “new normal” since my beloved went home in 2015. Jadon was sneezing, congested and had a headache. So, I went to our medicine bin to see if we had anything for him. He wisely asked, “Is it in date?” so I checked. The latest expiration date I could find was Jan 2017. Most everything else expired between 2011 and 2015.

What were you doing in 2006 (12 years ago)?
Anything much happen since then?

Application – Spurgeon – *“I never lost my Master’s company at a funeral; but such a thing is more than possible at a wedding. I never lost my Savior’s presence in the house of mourning, by the bedside of the sick and dying; but I have sometime felt suspension of fellowship with my Lord when the musical instruments have been sounding in my ear, and when joy and gladness ruled the hour. Our happy moments are our most perilous ones”*

IV. The Necessity of His Purpose 2:49

Point – First words of the **Incarnate God** in the entire Bible, the 1st words of **the Messiah**. [These are the only words of Jesus recorded over 30 year span of time]

If you have a Red-Letter Edition of the Bible, this is where the red ink begins.

Proof – “^{49a}**And He said to them, ‘Why is it that you were looking for Me?’”**

“**them**” and plural “**you**” – both **Mary** and **Joseph**

This is more an expression of surprise rather than reproof.
→ Jesus is not surprised they came back for Him.

→ He is surprised they didn't know where to find Him.

“^{49b}**Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?**”

→ 3 Observations:

Observation #1 – Divine Geography

Some of your translations or side notes may read, “I had to be about My Father's business” or “engaged in My Father's business”

From the original Greek - literally – “in the things of the Father of Me”

“**in My Father's house**” is not a bad translation. To begin with, the business of religion had a more geographical connotation for the nation of Israel than for the New Testament church.

Also, the immediate context and concern is not *whatness*, but *whereness*. Mary and Joseph are not in anguish over what Jesus is doing. But where Jesus is to be found.

Observation #2 – Divine Ancestry

A main point of the whole passage can be seen in the contrast between Mary – “your father” and Jesus – “My Father”

The way Jesus refers to God here is very, very, unique. This isn't just a normal thing that a normal 12-year old would say.

Whenever Jesus speaks of God as His Father, He uses the definite article. He never uses the definite article before Father when He is speaking of God as the Father of anybody but Himself.

John 20:17 – “Jesus said to her, ‘Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, “I ascend to My Father and your Father.”’”

→ Literally – “I ascend to the Father of Me and Father of you”

The point of His Divine Geography and Divine Ancestry is Jesus has the personality of God (motives and will of God).

John 4:34 – “Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.’”

John 9:4 – “We must work the works of Him who sent Me.”

His omniscience and omnipotence are restrained.

They are His potentially. He is God and He is man.

Observation #3 – Divine Necessity

“**I had to be**” – **dei** – this must occur, must take place

→ 18 times in Luke, 22 times in Acts

4:43 – “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.”

13:33 – “I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next *day*; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.”

24:26 – “Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?”

- go back to Moses and the Prophets
- it had to happen this way

Application – A main teaching of the passage is that Jesus recognizes his unique Sonship to God. He understands that His mission will require a devotion to the purpose God has given Him so great, it takes precedence over all, even His closest family ties.

He must fulfill His purpose. He must follow His calling...
... even if it brings anguish and misunderstanding.

In this way, Luke sets the stage for the adult ministry of the Son of God.

Point – I don't know about you, but there is something especially challenging about thinking of a 12-year old boy as God incarnate. A 30-year old man ... OK ... or even a baby, in the manger and all, I got it, but a 12-year old?? I don't know, there's just something about 12-year old boys that make this challenging ☺

Remember → **1 Person; 2 Natures**

The **Deity** of His Person and the **Humanity** of His Person

Proof – “⁵⁰**And they did not understand the statement which He had made to them.**”

→ Like us ... **Mary** and **Joseph** are a work in process ☺

This has to be the all-time favorite children's Bible story. Here is a child who is right and His parents are wrong, and the child is God.

“^{51a}**And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He continued in subjection to them;**”

“**them**” is the last reference to Joseph in the life of Jesus. He surely passed away sometime in the next 18 years.

“**continued in subjection**” is continual sinless obedience to the 5th Commandment, despite the fact He clearly understands His unique relationship to God, His unique purpose, and His mother and father are lacking understanding.

Think about all the expectations in Proverbs given from Solomon to his son, all the expectations to with good decision making, companionship, stewardship, spiritual growth, etc.

→ Jesus exemplifies every single one of them perfectly without blemish in His **humanity**.

Now we parents are happy → Children, obey!

But before we parents get too giddy and gloating, let's expand the application → Jesus is submitting to the imperfect authority above Him that does not fully understand Him.

Application— Christian man, Christian woman, how are you doing in your heart submission to the imperfect authority that does not really understand you? Maybe the government? Maybe a supervisor?

Application – Turn to: **1 Pet 2:21-23** → Jesus is our example. He is our example not in His Deity, but in His Humanity.

“^{51b}**and His mother treasured all *these* things in her heart.**”

2:19 – “Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.” **συντηρέω** – sun + τηρέω

2:51 – **διατηρέω** – δια + τηρέω

Prov 21:23 – “guards”

Prov 22:12 – “preserves”

→ Continual and careful **treasuring** (grammar-imperfect tense)

Beautiful juxtaposition with v. 50 – **Mary may not have fully understood**, but she adds these to her treasure chest 😊

“^{52a}**And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature,**”

The word “increasing” - this is a different Greek word than what is translated as ‘growing’ in **v. 40**. This is not a passive development but a strenuous activity.

Two illustrations from ancient usage → 1) pioneers cutting down trees in the pathway of an advancing army; 2)

lengthening out like a blacksmith forges and lengthens out a strip of metal by hammering

→ the idea is strenuous activity, not passive development

v. 40 → **Baby Jesus grew into Boy Jesus** through passive development, now that He is a Son of the Commandment.

v. 52 → **Boy Jesus** grows into **Man Jesus** through strenuous activity, hacking away, hammering away

Also: Baby to boy – strength first, then wisdom – v. 40
Boy to man – wisdom first, then stature – v. 52

“^{52b}**and in favor with God and men.**”

Growing Savior: intellectually, physically, spiritually, socially
→ He is moving from **perfect innocence** to **perfect holiness**.

Abiding in grace, He advances, He increases.
He hacks away. He hammers away.

Application – How do we balance “**in favor with men**” and the growing hostility and murder in later ministry?

Wisdom and holiness is charming in a 12-year old. It is pleasing when it is not threatening the powerbase of the wicked.

This helps us understand – “good reputation with those outside the church” and “all those who desire to live godly will be persecuted”

Application – **Prov 3:3-4** – “Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man.”

And so, we end Luke’s infancy narrative. Luke ends it where it began, in the Temple (1:9).

From babyhood to boyhood and finally to manhood.

In this way, Luke sets the stage for the adult ministry of the Son of God. And to this we’ll turn in chapter 3, about 18 years later.

CONCLUSION