

SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

CHRISTMAS WEEK 3

The Son of Man is identified in the temple

Luke 2:39–52



DAY 1

Jesus grew as God's special child • Luke 2:40

READ

Luke 2:40

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 2:40

What's so special about saying, "The child grew" (Luke 2:40)? That's the point: in many ways, it was not special. Jesus was a human like you. Not only was He born as a human (2:7) and grow as a human (2:40), but as a human He was also tired (John 4:6), hungry (Matt 4:2), thirsty (John 19:28), and dependent on Scripture (Matt 4:4), God (Matt 27:43), prayer (Heb 5:7), and the Spirit (Matt 12:28). Like all other children, He had to learn. In fact, it was probably by studying Scripture that He realized, by the time He was 12 years old, that He was born to die for sin (Luke 24:27). But even though He was human, Jesus was a very special human. He was filled with wisdom, far than anyone else ever (11:31). Also, God's favor was on Him (2:40b). The Father deeply loved His Son and rejoiced in Him (3:22). When you see both Jesus' ordinary humanness and His extraordinary wisdom and grace, do you realize that He is qualified to be both your Savior (Heb 2:14–17) and your example to follow (12:2)?

ASK

1. Is Jesus still a baby in our story today?
No. He began growing up, just like other humans.
2. Since Jesus was God, did He know everything during His life on earth?
No. As a child, He grew in wisdom. He learned what it meant to be the Messiah as He studied Scripture.
3. Whose favor was upon Jesus?
God the Father's. He deeply loved His Son and rejoiced in Him.

DISCUSS

1. Jesus had to learn as a child, just like you. How does this encourage you to be faithful in your studies?
2. How was Jesus like all other children? How was He unlike all other children? Why did both of these aspects need to be true?

DAY 2

Jesus grew to understand God's special mission for Him, Part 1 •
Luke 2:41–47

READ

Luke 2:41–47

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 2:41–47

What do you suppose Jesus was thinking as He watched the Passover lamb die each year? As He grew from toddler to child, He must have come to understand that this lamb represented Him. He realized that He Himself was the Lamb of God who would die for the sins of the world (John 1:29). So when His parents left Jerusalem to return home, Jesus stayed behind to learn more (Luke 2:43). He was hungry for God's word and wanted to talk with Israel's foremost teachers (2:46). There in the temple He asked and answered questions, which was the normal way education was done (cf. Acts 17:2). But though He continued to learn as a human, the religious teachers realized that He also had unparalleled wisdom. All those who heard Him were astounded by His understanding (Luke 2:47). Jesus was wiser than His teachers because He knew and loved God's Word (Ps 119:99). For the rest of His life, Jesus would continually produce such wonder, for He is the most amazing human the world has ever known.

ASK

1. What did Jesus do with His family in Jerusalem?
He joined in the Passover sacrifice, realizing over time that He Himself would be the final Passover Lamb.
2. What was Jesus doing in the temple after His parents left?
He was asking and answering questions with the teachers of God's law. God's word would enable Him to live a perfect life even as a human.
3. What did the people think about Jesus' questions and answers?
They were astonished! He was so wise because He knew and loved God's word.

DISCUSS

1. Who is the most remarkable child you've ever met? How does this child compare with the child Jesus?
2. Do you desire to grow in wisdom? Do you study God's word carefully and ask your parents lots of questions about God's word?

DAY 3

Jesus grew to understand God's special mission for Him, Part 2 •
Luke 2:48–49

READ

Luke 2:48–49

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 2:48–49

Like any normal mother, Mary scolded Jesus for making her and Joseph worry so much (Luke 2:44–48). But Jesus hadn't done wrong. He wasn't trying to hide from His parents or resist their authority. So why had he stayed in Jerusalem? Because of His heavenly Father. Jesus' words to His mother gave Mary a glimpse of what Simeon meant when he said that a sword would pierce Mary's soul (2:35). Jesus was truly human, the son of

Mary and Joseph, but He was called to be especially devoted to His heavenly Father, even more than to His earthly parents (2:49). Although Jesus perfectly obeyed His parents (2:51), He knew that God was His true Father. Because of His relationship to God and special mission, Jesus was closer to His spiritual family than to His earthly one (8:21). The distance between Jesus and Mary grew until crucifixion completely separated Son from mother (John 19:26–27). Mary was sad that there was a part of Jesus' life that she could not share. But her temporary loss was worth it, since Jesus would bring her and many others to the Father forever.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. Where did Jesus' parents find Him?
In the temple.
2. Did Jesus disobey His parents?
No. He wasn't trying to hide from them. He was left behind.
3. What did Jesus call God?
My Father. Jesus knew He was God's Son sent to save the world.
4. Why did Jesus say He stayed in the temple?
He said He had to be in His Father's house. He was devoted to doing the Father's will by being the Savior of the world.

DISCUSS 

1. Have you ever been left behind? How did that make you feel? What did you do?
2. Are there ever times when your love for God might get between you and your friends or family (Luke 12:35)? Who is your truest family (Gal 6:10)? Does this mean you can ignore your earthly family (Eph 6:1)?

DAY 4

Jesus grew to understand God's special mission for Him, Part 3 • Luke 2:49

READ 

Luke 2:49

EXPLAIN **The truth of Luke 2:49**

What does Jesus say the first time we hear him speak? Jesus' first words show us His own understanding of who He is. He is another witness added to the list we already have (angels, shepherds, parents, Simeon, and Anna). Luke gives us so many witnesses so that we can be sure about who Jesus is (Luke 1:1–4). So by the time Jesus was 12, He understood that God was His Father (2:49). God was known as the Father of all creation and especially of Israel, but no Jew claimed God as his personal Father. So when Jesus talked about His unique relationship with God (10:21–22), He was claiming divinity (John 19:7), because a son is equal in nature to his father (John 5:18). He was also testifying to His mission when He said He had to be in His Father's house (Luke 2:49). Jesus was completely committed to doing His Father's work. This 12 year-old knew He had been born as a human for a very special mission. Is this what you believe about Jesus?

ASK 

1. What did Jesus understand by the time He was twelve years old?
That God was His Father.
2. When Jesus said that God was His Father, what was He claiming?
Divinity. Jesus was claiming to be equal to God; He was claiming to be God.
3. Why is this story a rare glimpse into Jesus' childhood?
It's the only recorded event from Jesus' life as a child. It is Jesus' first recorded words.

DISCUSS 

1. How are you like your parents? How was Jesus like His heavenly Father?
2. By the time Jesus was 12, He had consciously determined to do the difficult job God had given Him. What are some things God calls you do to? Have you decided to live for Him?

DAY 5

Jesus grew into God's special man • Luke 2:51–52

READ

Luke 2:51–52

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 2:51–52

Since Jesus was the perfect Son of God, do you think He needed to obey His parents? Yes, He did (Luke 2:51). That's because He was needed to be a sinless human in order to be the Savior. As a human, He learned obedience (Heb 5:8). He never disobeyed, and by learning how to obey in small things as a child, He was prepared to obey God in bigger things as an adult. His childhood obedience prepared Him to obey when God sent Him to the cross (Matt 26:39; Phil 2:8). His obedience also perfectly fulfilled the law (Matt 3:15), since the 5th commandment requires children to honor their parents (Exod 20:12). Because Jesus always obeyed, He was sinless and able to be our Savior (1 Pet 3:18). At this point, Joseph and Mary still did not understand the full reality of their Son (Luke 2:50). Yet Mary continued to ponder all that had happened (2:51). What about you? As you read the testimony of 12 year-old Jesus, how do you respond? And as the Christmas season draws to an end, will you continue to ponder like Mary?

ASK

1. When Jesus went home, how did His behavior show that He was worthy to be Savior?
He obeyed His parents and continued to grow in favor with God and man.
2. Why did Jesus have to be a human?
To be our representative by living a perfect life on our behalf. To die as our substitute sacrifice. To show us how to live as a human example. To come again to rule as our representative king.
3. What did Mary do when she did not understand all this?
She kept thinking carefully about it.

DISCUSS

1. Do you ever think you know better than your parents? Jesus was more perfect than His parents were, but He still obeyed them. Shouldn't you?
2. What if Jesus had not obeyed? Could He have become your Savior? Are you thankful that He perfectly obeyed on your behalf?