

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus' Childhood

Luke 2:39-52

Opening

- Gathering: In what ways do we grow when we are in our Father's house?
- Today's Focus: Jesus was obedient to His Heavenly Father even as a child.
- Key Verses: *Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?* Luke 2:49
Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. Luke 2:52

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Preparing for the Messiah (*Luke 1, Matthew 11*) = Don't read, Walk class through page 1

- How did Luke begin the story of Jesus' life? = The one who would prepare the way for the Messiah
Luke 1:5, 7, 13, 17, 24 (5-25) = Angelic announcement and miraculous conception of John
- What similar, but more important, story came next? = The promised Messiah, God's Son
Luke 1:26-27, 30-33 (26-38) = Angelic announcement and miraculous conception of Jesus
- What crisis resulted that Matthew recorded to show God's plan being fulfilled?
Matthew 1:18, 20-23 (18-25) = Angelic announcement to Joseph, God's Son born of a virgin
- What did the pregnant fiancée do that further showed who the child would be?
Luke 1:39-43, 56 (39-56) = Stayed 3 months with Elizabeth, who told of the Lord in Mary
- What final preparation did Luke record to prepare for Jesus' birth?
Luke 1:57, 62-63, 66, 80 (57-80) = Birth, naming and growth of John the Baptist

Jesus is Born (*Luke 2*)

- How did Luke show the promise fulfilled that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem?
Luke 2:1, 4, 6-7 (1-7) = Joseph & Mary went to Bethlehem for census, Jesus born in a stable
- Who first learned of this great event in God's plan?
Luke 2:8-12, 17 (8-20) = Common shepherds told by angels, spread word through streets
- How did Luke record the early days of Jesus' life to show His perfect obedience?
Luke 2:21-22 (21-24) = Jesus' circumcision, naming, redemption and Mary's purification
- What happened in the temple that further confirmed who Jesus was?
Luke 2:34-36a, 38 (25-38) = Simeon and Anna proclaimed who Jesus was

King of the Jews, Savior of the World (*Matthew 2*)

- How did Matthew begin his story of Jesus' life that show Jesus came for all people?
Matthew 2:1-2, 11 (1-12) = Magi saw star, gave gifts to God's great Prophet, Priest & King
- What story did this lead to that showed Jesus as the new Israel, head of the new covenant?
Matthew 2:13-15 (13-18) = Taken to Egypt to avoid Herod slaughter of Bethlehem boys
- What was Matthew's last story of Jesus before His ministry began at around age 30?
Matthew 2:19, 21, 23 (19-23) = Out of Egypt to Nazareth to be raised as a "Nazarene"

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Luke's Comments on Jesus' Early Childhood (*Luke 2:39-40*)

With a focus on Jesus' perfect obedience as a human, what did Luke say about the Magi and Egypt?

Luke 2:39 = Nothing, sent family back to Nazareth without any Egypt comment

Did Luke give us any more detail on Jesus' childhood? = He grew up like a normal kid, fully human

Luke 2:40 = He grew, became strong, filled with wisdom, had God's grace

Jesus' Childhood - Education (*Proverbs 1:8*)

As a Jewish boy, what would have begun in Jesus' life around age 3?

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 = Parental instruction with prayers and Scripture passages

What would Jesus have learned in synagogue school beginning at age 5 or 6?

2 Timothy 3:14-17 = Lessons from God's Word, memorizing, plus reading and writing...

Who was responsible for Jesus' education - His teachers? priests? school board?

Proverbs 1:8 = His parents

Jesus' Childhood - Faith Development (*Luke 2:41*)

How likely is it that Joseph and Mary would have brought Jesus up in the Jewish faith?

Matthew 1:19 = Joseph was considered a righteous man, faithful

Luke 1:30 = Mary found favor with God, faithful

Did Joseph and Mary remain faithful as Jesus grew in childhood? = 3+ day trip to Nazareth

Luke 2:41 = They were faithful Jews, went to temple every year for Passover

Are we told how regularly Jesus' family "went to synagogue"?

Luke 4:16 = His custom was to go every Sabbath

Jesus' Childhood - Ordinary or Not (*Matthew 13:54-56*)

Did Jesus perform or practice miracles as a child?

John 2:11 = No, His first miracle was changing wine to water at Cana wedding

Did His neighbors notice anything special in the boy Jesus? = Mentions 4 brothers plus sisters

Matthew 13:54-56 = No, they couldn't believe His powers and wisdom

The Completeness of Twelve (*Luke 2:42*)

Hebrew Meanings behind Numbers

3 = The spirit world (good or evil)

4 = The material world - earth, nature, creation

7 (3 + 4) = Totality, complete

6 (7 - 1) = Incomplete - 666 was ultimate evil

12 (3 x 4) = God's complete people (12 tribes, 12 apostles, etc.)

After 12 years, at 13 years old, a boy was considered to be completely a man

Bar Mitzvah - "Son of the Law"

Ceremony to celebrate passage into adulthood and personal responsibility to God

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Jesus at Twelve (Luke 2:42)

What was one of the commands a faithful 12 or 13 year old would begin to obey?

Deuteronomy 16:16 = Appear at the temple for 3 major festivals every year

What were these three major festivals?

Leviticus 23:4-8 = Feast of Unleavened Bread - 7 days to celebrate Passover

Leviticus 23:10, 15-16 = Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) - 50 days, end of harvest

Leviticus 23:34, 42-43 = Feast of Booths (Tabernacles) - Live in tents 1 week

Did Jesus' parents see to it that Jesus perfectly obeyed this command?

Luke 2:42 = Yes, at least beginning when He was 12

Jesus Is Missing (Luke 2:43-44)

What happened after Jesus' first visit to the temple as an adult?

Luke 2:43 = He stayed behind while His parents returned home

How could Mary and Joseph leave their oldest son behind and how long was it before they missed Him?

Luke 2:44 = They thought He was somewhere among the traveling party; one day

People traveled long distances in caravans to protect from attacks and provide help as needed

Parties would separate into groups - fast / slow walkers, women and children / men

Groups would meet at predetermined stopping point

A lot of traffic would have been on the road the day after the festival

Mary and Joseph assumed Jesus was with the other or with friends or relatives

Didn't realize He was missing until they regrouped that evening at the stopping point

Seek and Find Jesus (Luke 2:45-46)

What did Mary and Joseph do when they couldn't find Jesus among the travelers?

Luke 2:45 = Went back to Jerusalem to find Him – In morning, too dangerous to travel at night

How long did it take Mary and Joseph to find Jesus and where did they finally find Him?

Luke 2:46a = Three days (1 day travel, 1 return, 1 looking); in the temple courts

What is significant about this length of time, when Jesus' parents likely feared their son's death?

Acts 10:39-40 = Jesus was later dead for 3 days before He was resurrected

What promise do we have that this searching reminds us of?

Jeremiah 29:13 = *You will seek and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

Teaching the Teacher (Luke 2:46-47)

What was Jesus doing in the temple? = Listening and asking questions, learning

Luke 2:46 = Talking with the great Hebrew teachers who gathered for Passover

Did the teachers see Jesus as a typical "green behind the ears" boy with a lot to learn?

Luke 2:47 = No, they were amazed at His understanding and answers

Rabbis often taught by asking questions that pushed students to think and come to conclusions

How did Jesus change roles for the rest of His life?

John 3:2 = He was the teacher after His ministry began

How did His teaching as an adult compare to His learning as a child?

Luke 4:32 = Listeners were amazed at His teaching, it had authority

Did Jesus use the questioning approach in His teaching?

Luke 10:25-28 (20:20-26) = Yes, He often answered questions with questions

How wise of a teacher was Jesus considered to be?

Luke 11:31 = Even wiser and greater than Solomon (wisest man ever)

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Jesus Perfectly Obeys His Father (Luke 2:48-50)

After finally finding Jesus after 3 days, how did Jesus' frantic Jewish mother react?

Luke 2:48 = Scolded him for scaring them so much

How did Jesus respond to His mother? = Contrast Jesus' *My Father* with Mary's *your father*

Luke 2:49-50 = *I had to be in My Father's house*, they didn't understand

Were people later able to understand what Jesus meant by this?

John 8:19 = No, they didn't recognize Jesus or His Father

Jesus Perfectly Obeys His Other Two Parents (Luke 2:51)

What important note did Luke add to emphasize Jesus' life of perfect obedience?

Luke 2:51 = He went with His parents and obeyed them in Nazareth

Why was it important for Jesus to obey Mary and Joseph?

Exodus 20:12 = God's 4th commandment is to honor and obey parents

How obedient did Jesus remain?

Philippians 2:8 = Obedient even to death on a cross

Jesus From Thirteen to Thirty (Luke 2:52)

What are we told about Jesus after the temple story? = *Grew in wisdom & stature ... with God & men*

Luke 2:52 = He matured intellectually, physically, spiritually, socially

When is the last time we hear about Joseph?

Luke 2:48 = During the temple story

What might we understand from this about Jesus' life in adolescence and/or early adulthood?

Mark 6:3 = Joseph died, Jesus as oldest son took over carpentry business

At what point in Jesus' life do the gospel writers pick back up?

Luke 3:23a = When He was about thirty years old

How did Jesus "begin His ministry"? = To be discussed in detail next week

Luke 3:21-22 = He was baptized by John, Holy Spirit descended, God proclaimed Him

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. How regularly does my family go to God's house to worship Him with other Christians?
(Luke 2:41; 4:16; Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 1:21; 6:2; John 4:20-24; Acts 13:14, 42; 16:13; 18:4; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 16:1-2)
2. Do I regularly remember and celebrate the great things God has done for me?
(Luke 2:42; Leviticus 23; Deuteronomy 16:16-17; John 5:1; 10:22-23; 11:55-12:1)
3. How intently do I learn from God's teachers?
(Luke 2:46-47; 6:40; 11:1; Matthew 5:1-2; John 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; Galatians 6:6)
4. When have I taught God's truths to others?
(Exodus 12:25-27; Deuteronomy 4:5-14; 6:6-7; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2; Hebrews 5:11-14; James 3:1)
5. Would I be considered as being obedient to my parents and to others in authority?
(Luke 2:51; Exodus 20:12; Matthew 21:23-27; 22:17-21; 23:1-3; Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14)