

Jesus Grew

(Luke 2:41-52)

Pre-Session Warm Up

Last week we learned about Jesus' birth. Today we will learn a little bit about his childhood. [Teacher, show the children on a map where Jesus was born in Bethlehem and where He lived as a boy in Nazareth.]

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we want to grow up to be just like You. This morning as we learn about Your childhood, help us to want to be as kind and thoughtful as You were as a boy. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people. (Luke 2:52)

Lesson

The Bible doesn't tell us very much about Jesus' childhood, but today we will learn about something that happened when He was 12 years old.

Every year Jewish families would plan a trip to the Temple at Jerusalem, to celebrate the Passover. They gathered together to praise God for sending Moses to rescue them from Egypt and lead them to the Promised Land. It was a great time of thanksgiving.

Luke 2:41-42

Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. (42) When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual.

It was a long trip to Jerusalem, close to 80 miles. It probably took them several days to walk there from Nazareth. I'm sure as they were getting closer and closer to Jerusalem, they got more and more excited.

Jerusalem was a big city compared to Nazareth. It has many little streets that are lined with little shops and places to eat that wind around the city. And the celebration week is a busy time as many people gather there from long distances.

Jesus especially liked spending time at the Temple, taking part in the special services.

All too soon the celebration was over and it was time to start the long trip back home. Crowds of people were leaving the city, walking and talking about the wonderful time they had just enjoyed. Mary and Joseph and all their aunts and uncles and cousins were among the crowds of people leaving the city.

They had been traveling for a whole day when Mary and Joseph began to wonder where Jesus was.

Luke 2:43-44

After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him at first, (44) because they assumed he was among the other travelers. But when he didn't show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends.

When the caravan stopped for the night, they looked for Him among the people they were traveling with. He was nowhere to be found. They went around the camp asking everyone, "Have you seen Jesus?" No one had seen Him. Mary and Joseph became frantic with worry.

Have you ever hidden from your Mom or Dad? Would they worry if they couldn't find you? How do you think Jesus' mom and dad felt when they couldn't find Him? They must have wondered if He had gotten kidnapped or hurt.

Mary and Joseph would have to retrace their steps all the way back to Jerusalem, hoping to find him.

Luke 2:45

When they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there.

The next day when they arrived at the city, they combed the market places, asking everyone if they had seen the boy. Nobody had.

After three days of looking, do you know where they found Him? They found Him at the last place they had seen Him.

Luke 2:46-47

Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. (47) All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

They could see the Temple teachers, huddled together, deep in discussion. Mary and Joseph stopped in amazement. There was Jesus, sitting among the wise men of Jerusalem. He was talking to them and asking them questions, and they were asking Him questions! They were amazed at what He understood!

Mary and Joseph were glad to find Jesus safe, but Mary began to scold Him.

Luke 2:48

His parents didn't know what to think. "Son," his mother said to him, "why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere."

She had been worried sick about not being able to find Him. Would your parents scold you if they couldn't find you?

Jesus asked His parents why they came looking for Him...

Luke 2:49

"But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"

Mary and Joseph didn't understand that He was talking about His Heavenly Father, not Joseph.

Luke 2:50

But they didn't understand what he meant.

Jesus knew that God the Father had sent Him to earth to be the Savior of the human race, but the temple teachers and Joseph didn't understand that Jesus was the Son of God, the promised Messiah.

Luke 2:51

Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart.

Mary would never forget all the amazing things that happened that day; she kept all these memories in her heart.

Luke 2:52

*Jesus grew in **wisdom** and in **stature** and in **favor** with God and all the people.*

Jesus went home with Mary and Joseph and from that time on He grew in **wisdom** and in **stature** and in **favor** with God and all the people.

[Teacher, Jesus is a wonderful example for all young people to follow. He grew in a balanced way without neglecting any part of life, and His priority was to do the will of His Father (see [Mat 6:33](#)). He knew how to listen ([Luk 2:46](#)) and how to ask the right questions. He learned how to work, and He was obedient to His parents. *Wiersbe*.]

Jesus as a boy, grew up going to school and learning how to read. He memorized scriptures, just like you do. As the years went on, He grew in His knowledge of the Word of God and His understanding of what it meant for Him to be the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

And, it says that he grew *in favor with God and all the people*. As Jesus lived His life in a way that pleased God the Father, everyone around Him loved and respected Him for that.

This means that Jesus obeyed his parents and He was kind and thoughtful to His brothers and sisters and He was helpful around His house.

God wants us to live our lives just like Jesus. When we live our lives in a way that pleases God, everyone around us will love us all the more, too. Let's pray and ask God to help us to do that.

Closing Prayer

Father, as Jesus was growing up, the Bible tells us that He grew in wisdom and in favor with God the Father and with other people. Jesus is our example. We want to grow up to be wise so that You will be very proud of us. Make our hearts tender towards Your ways so that we will always choose to follow after You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Jesus In the Temple

Have each child glue a "Jesus in the Temple" coloring page (see below) onto a piece of construction paper and draw a "temple" around the graphic. Allow them to color the picture, then glue the title "Jesus Visits the Temple" to the top of the paper.

Game Center

J-E-S-U-S

Materials

- Five sheets of colored construction paper
- Card stock to make large flash cards

Preparation

- In large block letters, print "Jesus," one letter on a sheet of construction paper, filling as much of the paper as possible. Cut around each outline. Then cut each letter into 2 or 3 distinctive puzzle pieces.
- Print one characteristic or name of Jesus on each puzzle piece (*Loving, caring, forgiving, generous, peacemaker, healer, teacher, Lord, Savior, Christ, Messiah, Son of God, etc.*).
- Make a large flash card for each of these characteristics.

Procedure

1. Hide puzzle pieces around the room.
2. Students find puzzle pieces, assemble back in their places.
3. Hold up a flash card and ask who has that word on his or her puzzle piece.
4. Discuss the meaning of each characteristic.
5. Then have the children arrange the puzzle pieces to spell "Jesus" and find out who these words describe.
6. Use the "Jesus" puzzle pieces as the header for your bulletin board. Put a picture of Jesus in the middle, surrounded by all the flash cards.

Or, use the following review questions in a time of discussion or a game of your choice:

1. Where did Jesus go when he was twelve? (vr 41; To Jerusalem.)
2. Why did Mary and Joseph take Jesus to Jerusalem? (Vr. 41; To celebrate the Passover Feast.)
3. Why didn't Mary and Joseph realize that Jesus was missing right away? (Vr. 44; They thought He was going home with friends or relatives.)
4. When they couldn't find Him, what did Mary and Joseph do? (vr 44; They went back to Jerusalem to search for him.)
5. How long did it take to find Him (Vr. 46; 3 days.)
6. Where was Jesus for those three days, and what was He doing? (Vr. 46; He was in the Temple talking with the teachers.)
7. Why did Jesus have this amazing knowledge when He was only twelve years old? (vr 47; He was God the Son.)
8. What did Mary say to Jesus when they found him? (vr48; She scolded him.)
9. What did Jesus mean by "my Father's House?" (vr 49; God was Jesus' Father and the Temple was God's House.)
10. What did Jesus do after Mary and Joseph came for Him? (Vr. 51; He obeyed them and went home with them.)
11. What are the four ways that Jesus grew? (Vr. 52; Jesus grew in wisdom, in stature, in favor with God and in favor with people.)
12. What do the words from verse 52 mean?

- **Wisdom** – He grew in His knowledge of the Word of God and His understanding of what it meant for Him to be the Messiah, the Savior of the world.
- **Stature** – He grew taller and stronger as He got older.
- **Favor with God** – He lived His life in a way that was pleasing to God the Father.
- **Favor with Man** – Everyone loved Him for living a godly life.

Jesus Visits the Temple

Luke 3:41-52

