

Monday **Week 29** **Jesus as a Youth**

Q 113. What kind of little child was Jesus?

A. As a child Jesus was wise and spiritually strong.

Luke 2:40

Jonathan Edwards was a great preacher in early American history. He preached a famous sermon called “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” While he preached, there were men so moved upon that they held on to the pillars of the building to keep from falling. That sermon began what is called The Great Awakening. Thousands of people became Christians during that time. An interesting fact about Jonathan Edwards is that he was saved at a young age. He was seven years old when he came to faith and gave his life to God. Another great Christian leader who was saved at a young age was a man named Count Zinzendorf. He was four when he gave his heart to Jesus. Children can come to Jesus. He said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14).

When Jesus was a little child, he was spiritually strong and wise. The Bible says that the grace of God was upon Jesus. He showed how a child can live in such a way that the Father in heaven is glorified. You don’t have to be old to have God’s wisdom. Jesus wants the little children to come to him.

Thinking Deeper

The Bible reveals the dual nature of Jesus – he was “wholly God and wholly man.” While Jesus was a small boy, he was developing as small boys do. Yet he had the grace of God upon him. Adam Clarke notes that in this instance, “grace” means that the favor of God was upon Jesus. Even though Jesus was young, he was living such a life that God approved. The incarnation meant that the Son of God came to earth and became a human being. As a human, Jesus went through the stages of growth. He had to learn to walk. He had to learn to talk. In all of these stages, Jesus showed a spiritual dimension. He used wisdom.

At the same time Jesus was growing and developing as a human, he was wholly God. The prophecy of Micah 5:2 that tells us Jesus’ “goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.” So Jesus existed from eternity. He was God come to earth in the flesh. He was God’s revelation on earth. In all stages of the life of Jesus, we see God revealing himself to man. Jesus as a child revealed God.

Q 114 When Jesus was 12, what was he doing in the temple in Jerusalem?

A. Jesus was doing his Father's business in the temple.

Luke 2:41-50

A preacher was traveling with his wife in their car. They were going a long distance and the car was loaded with luggage. They even had boxes piled between them on the front seat. After driving for a while they stopped for a break. When the preacher was ready to go, he got into the car and drove off. After driving for quite a while, he saw that a policeman was behind him with his lights flashing. The minister pulled off of the highway and waited as the officer came to his window. "Sir, where is your wife?" asked the policeman. "Why, right over there in her seat," answered the preacher. "You might have a look over there," responded the lawman. When the preacher looked, he saw her seat was empty. He was relieved when he heard the patrolman say, "She's in my car, right behind you." The rather embarrassed minister was reunited with his wife and they continued their journey.

When Jesus was twelve years old, Mary and Joseph left him in Jerusalem. They had been to a feast and assumed that Jesus was with other relatives as they journeyed home. After they traveled for a day, they realized that Jesus was not with them. When they returned, they found him talking to some teachers in the temple. He was talking with them about God's ways. Jesus was doing what the Father in heaven wanted him to do.

Thinking Deeper

Why is this incident in Jesus' life recorded? Although it is somewhat notable that a family member is for a time unaccounted for, that in itself does not necessarily rise to the level of being worthy of inclusion in the inspired record of Jesus' life. Also, it is not unusual for a young person to be asking questions. In this case, though, Jesus was asking questions that were very significant, and his conversation was such that it amazed the hearers. More significant, perhaps, is the answer Jesus gave Mary when she asked why he didn't join the travelers days before when they had left Jerusalem. "I must be about my Father's business." Jesus' answer indicates that he knew who he was. He knew he was the Son of God. His Father was in heaven, and he was on earth doing what his Father had sent him to do.

This incident in the early life of Jesus lays to rest the idea that Jesus didn't know his purpose in life or his own identity. Jesus knew who he was. He knew what he was doing. He knew it at the age of twelve.

Q 115 When Jesus spoke about doing his Father’s business, how did Mary respond?

A. Mary treasured these things in her heart.

Luke 2:50, 51

Two-year-old Julie was standing on a chair and diligently washing dishes in the sink. Her mother saw her and said. “Julie, you’re working too hard!” “No,” the little girl answered, “I’m working soft.” Years later Julie’s mother still treasured those cute words. Mothers often remember things their children say. Some mothers keep baby books and write down special sayings of their children. Perhaps your mother has written down things that you have said.

Mary treasured the words of Jesus. She knew that Jesus was special. His words were special. They were words to be remembered. Mary may not have had a baby book where she could write the things that Jesus said, but she did have a place to keep them. She kept them as treasures in her heart.

Thinking Deeper

Mary had a wealth of things to treasure in her heart. She could remember when the angel spoke to her. That was a treasure. She could remember when she met with her cousin Elizabeth. She could remember when Jesus was born. She could remember the shepherds and their report of the angel. She could remember how Joseph was warned by the angel, how they fled to Egypt and then later returned to their own land. She could remember the visit by the magi, and the gifts they brought. Now she had a new treasure to add to her heart collection. She kept his words, astonishing words, as a treasure in her heart.

Mary’s example is one worth emulating. We all have things to treasure in our hearts. When you heard the Word of God – that is a great treasure. When in a mysterious way the Holy Spirit spoke to you through God’s Word, and you came to Jesus, that is a wonderful treasure. When the Word of God continues to speak to you, that is a daily treasure. “More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Ps. 19:10). Keep those things in your heart.

Thursday **Week 29** **Jesus as a Youth**
Bible Reading: Luke 2:52

Q 116 How did Jesus relate to Mary and Joseph when he was entering his teen years?
A. Jesus was obedient to Mary and Joseph.

Two boys were working with their mother in their garden. They were talking about how it might be easier to run away from home than to keep working.

“Where would you go?” asked the mother. “We could go somewhere and camp out.”

“How would you eat?” she asked. “We would buy things at the store.”

“How would you get your money?” she asked. “We could plant a garden and sell vegetables.” She looked at her boys and smiled. “Don’t you think it would be easier to stay here and work in this garden.” They admitted that she was right.

Jesus was obedient to his parents even though he knew he was the Son of the Father in heaven. He showed how that for young people it is important to be obedient.

Are you obedient to your parents? Do you honor them? If so, then you can expect special help in your life from God.

Thinking Deeper

A college student was ready to graduate and receive his degree. He had a job lined up in his area of study. However, he asked his father what to do. Should he take the job and begin making money? His father gave him some different counsel. “I think you should go back to college and get a Master’s degree,” he advised. “But I don’t want to go back to school again,” said the son. However, after thinking it over, he obeyed his father’s direction. He enrolled in college for the next semester. Interestingly, it was during that year of graduate education that the student became involved in a youth ministry. Because he listened to the advice of his father, he found direction for his life.

Jesus was obedient to his earthly parents. Even though he was the Son of God, he submitted himself to his earthly authorities. If that was right for Jesus, how much more so it is important for Christian young people to be submissive to the authorities God places in their lives. Being submissive to parents is one way God teaches lessons to his youthful children. God gives direction through authorities. He also gives protection through their wise counsel. Also, being subject to authority is one way to find favor with both God and men.

By being submissive to God-ordained authority on earth, a teen can be in a place to expect blessings from heaven.

Review the Week's Questions

Q 113. What kind of little child was Jesus?

A. As a child Jesus was wise and spiritually strong.

Q 114 When Jesus was 12, what was he doing in the temple in Jerusalem?

A. Jesus was doing his Father's business in the temple.

Q 115 When Jesus spoke about doing his father's business, how did Mary respond?

A. Mary pondered these things in her heart.

Q 116 How did Jesus relate to Mary and Joseph when he was entering his teen years?

A. Jesus was obedient to Mary and Joseph.

Two little boys were playing together. One of them had an idea that he thought might be fun. They would do something that they had never done before. But before they did it, the other boys asked, "Would this really be a good idea?" Then he said, "I don't think this would be wise." His friend listened to him. They likely saved themselves from some kind of trouble. Where did this boy learn wisdom? He learned it from his father, who taught him from the Bible.

The Bible says that when Jesus was just a little boy, he was wise. He didn't do foolish things. He acted in such a way that others could see he made good decisions. His wisdom came from his Father in heaven. If you want to be wise, listen to the Word of God. "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6).

Thinking Deeper

There are some fables handed down from ancient literature about some childhood miracles that Jesus supposedly performed. One has Jesus making clay birds, and when he is finished, giving them life and sending them off flying. Another has him striking his neighbors with blindness when they show themselves to be complainers. One actually has him cursing a boy for some infraction, and the boy dies.

These fables have really nothing to do with the Jesus of the Bible. The description we have of Jesus as a child and entering his teen years reveal that Jesus was wise, obedient, and one who was respected and liked. There is no evidence that Jesus ever did anything that was the least bit questionable. He grew up as a model young man in a home where his earthly parents valued him and valued his words.

There is another reason that such fables can be rejected. The Bible states that Jesus' first miracle was at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. The claims that there were childhood miracles that Jesus performed are clear contradictions to the Scripture. When it comes to the truth about Jesus, stay with the facts. The facts are in the Bible.