

JESUS' BOYHOOD DAYS

BIBLE TEXT: Luke 2:40-52; Mark 6:1-6; John 7:14-16

LESSON 15 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day" (John 9:4).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Luke 2:40-52

^{2:40} And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

⁴¹ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

⁴³ And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*.

⁴⁴ But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

⁴⁵ And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

⁴⁶ And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

⁴⁷ And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

⁴⁸ And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

⁴⁹ And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

⁵⁰ And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

⁵¹ And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother

NOTES:

Little is said in Scripture about the boyhood of Jesus, but one statement *is* clearly made: "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." God was the real Father of Jesus. and He realized by the time He was twelve years old that He had come to earth to do the will of God; nevertheless, He was obedient to His earthly parents and set a good example of how He expects children to obey their parents.

Obedience to Parents

The first commandment that God gave with which. He gave a promise was: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12). In Old Testament times the law went so far as to say that if a child hit his father or mother or cursed them, he should be put to death. So you see God thought it was very important for children to obey their parents.

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, often spoke to children: "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (Proverbs 1:8); "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings" (Proverbs 4:20); "Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many" (Proverbs 4:10); "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11); "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother" (Proverbs 15:20).

When Paul was writing to the Ephesians, he repeated the commandment, "Children, obey your parents," and added "in the Lord: for this *is* right." Sometimes children are told by ungodly parents to do things contrary to the teachings of Jesus. The Lord does not expect His true children to do that. Children have sometimes been whipped for refusing to steal or tell lies when their parents told them to, but Jesus sees that and will reward them for being true to what is right.

Sometimes children will take little things from their parents and think it is all right because it is in the family and should belong to them, too. But God gave us a verse of Scripture for that also: "Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer" (Proverbs 28:24). Surely, no children of God want to be companions of destroyers.

"The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it" (Proverbs 30:17).

Adam Clarke, the commentator, recounts that as a small boy he disobeyed his mother, and she read the above verse to him; but in a sulky mood he walked out of the house and sat upon a rail fence in the field. He was not there very long, however, until he noticed a flock of crows overhead. And when he remembered what his mother had read out of the Bible, great fear came upon him, and he ran back to the house and sought his mother's forgiveness.

kept all these sayings in her heart.
⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Mark 6:1-6 (KJV)

^{6:1} And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

² And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

⁴ But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

⁵ And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

⁶ And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

John 7:14-16

^{7:14} Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

¹⁵ And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

¹⁶ Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

A Good Beginning

We know that Joseph was a carpenter, and undoubtedly Jesus helped him with his work during His childhood. It is good for children to be kept busy; it keeps them from getting into trouble, and they learn things that will help them when they grow up. Maybe you don't think learning to be a carpenter was much help to Jesus. When He was going to be a minister, but while He was working with His hands He could feel just how other men felt when they had to work. One time when Jesus was teaching His disciples He told them, "Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister [the person who waits on you]: and Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mark 10:43, 44).

Small Beginnings

Many great men had small beginnings, and they were not ashamed to work. David was the greatest king of Israel — in the eyes of both men and God. He was a very brave leader who won many battles, and he was good to his people, so they loved him. More than that, God said, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will" (Acts 13:22).

When David was a boy he spent long days and nights out on the hillsides watching the sheep. He was the youngest son, and none of his brothers wanted to do that work, so he had to be out there all alone. But he wasn't afraid, because God was with him. One night a bear came out to get one of his sheep, and another time a lion came, but David killed them with his hands because God helped him. During all those lonely days and nights God could talk to David and prepare him for the work that was to be his. So when Israel needed a champion, little David already knew that God was with him and would help him kill the giant. Even after Samuel anointed David to be king, he went back and took care of the sheep until God's time for him to rule the land.

When Samuel was a little boy he worked in the Temple. There were many little jobs that a boy could do, and he wanted to please God even if he had to be away from his father and mother. He lived closer to God than Eli the priest, so God talked to him instead of Eli; but nevertheless, the boy Samuel continued to minister unto Eli and obeyed him until God saw that he was prepared for the work of a prophet.

Abraham Lincoln was one of our greatest presidents, but in his boyhood he lived in the country and worked at splitting rails. He had a good mother, and we are sure he obeyed her because he loved her very much; and after he became a great man he said, "All I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother."

A Christian home is a wonderful place, a place where the Word of God is honored and studied, and God's commandments obeyed. Where there is love there is obedience. We want to please those we love. David wrote in Psalm 133:1: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Sometimes children are disobedient before they think, and then they are sorry. But Jesus will forgive them if they tell Him they are sorry and ask their parents to forgive them, too. They understand when children are trying to do the right thing. Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, and He was once a child and had to learn obedience, too (Hebrews 5: 8). Jesus loved the children, and while He was on earth did all He could

to make them happy. He said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14). He is saying the same today.

In the Temple

Every year the parents of Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a religious feast, as did all the Jews. The Bible does not say that Jesus always went along, but when He was twelve years old something unusual happened, and the Scripture tells us about it. After Mary and Joseph had started home they found that Jesus was not among their group of people, and they had to go back to Jerusalem to find Him. They were very much surprised when they found Him in the Temple talking with the wise men who had studied the Scriptures all their lives in order to learn the will of God. But Jesus was the Son of God and knew more than the doctors. They were amazed at His understanding and His replies. He asked them questions, too, and probably they could not even answer them.

Jesus, though He was the Son of God, said that He could not do anything of Himself—He needed God to help Him (John 5:19). The doctrines He preached were not what He had learned out of books or been taught by others; so when the Jews marvelled that He knew so much, even though He had not gone to school, He answered, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:16). Always, until He died on the Cross, He obeyed the Father.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Where was Jesus' boyhood spent?
- 2 How old was Jesus when He was found in the Temple?
- 3 What did Jesus mean when He said to His parents, "I must be about my Father's business"?
- 4 Did Jesus have sisters and brothers?
- 5 Was Jesus obedient unto His parents?
- 6 What blessing is pronounced upon us if we obey our parents?