

This morning, we're going to be continuing through Luke. We're going to be in Luke chapter 2 verses 41 to 52. This, I believe will—yeah—this will wrap up the second chapter of Luke, and this actually will be the conclusion of what's known as the "infancy section" of Luke. It's called the "infancy section" because it deals with the young life of Jesus, and it goes from his birth to—in this passage—we'll see a young boy. But after this, starting in chapter 3, we get to full adulthood. So, there's gonna be a time jump between chapter 2 and chapter 3. But for now, we're gonna be wrapping up the young life of Jesus, and so we're gonna be again at chapter 2 verses 41 to 52. If you have your Bibles with you, you can turn there; if you are following along on YouVersion, it will already be there. So, with that, before we read the text, let's go and have a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, as we read your text, as we read your word, I pray that you are glorified and exalted and just honored by the reading of the of your word that you gave us so that we can—so that we can know who you are, understand what you want from us, and understand more about your attributes and your person. And I ask you to help us—to cause us—to submit to your word, to be open to what you're saying in our lives, that we can just worship you for that, and follow in righteousness by following your Spirit. And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Beginning in verse 41, Luke writes:

<sup>41</sup> Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. <sup>43</sup> And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, <sup>44</sup> but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, <sup>45</sup> and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. <sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." <sup>49</sup> And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup> And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. <sup>51</sup> And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

<sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Now there are two sections to this passage that we're going to be looking at; each one tells us something regarding the wisdom of Jesus at this young age. We're going to see something about the wisdom of Jesus, but the first thing we see in verses 41 to 45 is that Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem for a purpose.

It wasn't just a random thing that he decided, "Hey, it'll be fun to stick around here." There was a reason why he stayed in Jerusalem while the rest of his family went back up to Nazareth. Now, it's evident that he didn't necessarily go to his—go to his mom and say, "Hey, mom, father, um stepfather, I'm gonna be

in Jerusalem while you all head back home.” No, he apparently he didn’t tell him that. Why? Because they presumed him with the group. But Jesus stayed behind.

Now, some interesting things are in this passage that point to the reason Jesus came and the purposes for why he was incarnated (was born and lived). Beginning first, we have verse 41. It says, “his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of Passover.” Now, traditionally Jews at the time would have made three pilgrimages to Jerusalem in association with three specific Jewish feasts. However, over time because of the distance people had to travel, they consolidated these down into just one: Passover. Well, Mary and Joseph and Jesus went down every year at Passover. And here we have one of the years—they’re going down at this time, Jesus is a young boy—but it’s interesting the fact that Luke mentions that they went down out of the tradition of going to Jerusalem, and he mentions that is at Passover. There’re a couple reasons here. One, this alludes to the fact that at the time they would have known of the typical three. What were those typical three feasts that they would have gone to Jerusalem for? First, Tabernacles; second, Passover; third, Pentecost. These are the three feasts that the Jews would have gone to Jerusalem for.

Now, these three feasts are significant in the life of Jesus. Here’s how. The Feast of Tabernacles. Most scholars agree that the Feast of Tabernacles is associated with the second coming of Christ. Many scholars (myself included) believe that the Feast of Tabernacles is when Jesus was born because it would have been at that time that there would have literally been no room at the inn. Why? Because they weren’t allowed to be in the inn, which we see earlier in Luke, there was no room. Why? Feast of Tabernacles. Now, whether or not that’s actually for sure there is some debate, but I do believe that the Feast of Tabernacles is associated with the first coming and the second coming of Jesus.

Now, Passover. That one’s a simple one. We know that Passover is associated with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Pentecost. Pentecost is when Jesus established his church by sending the Holy Spirit. And so, we have all three of these feasts directly connected to Jesus, and the Jews would go to Jerusalem for these three feasts, all of them pointing them to Messiah who we know is Jesus. Now, they did consolidate these into just one—Passover—and it was done because, like I said, a lot of them had to travel a long distance, and to make it easier on them, they just went at Passover, which is fine. Nothing wrong with that because we see here that there’s no judgment of them for only going at Passover. Instead, they’re being lauded for their faithfulness in going to Jerusalem at Passover.

Now, here we have Jesus at a young age (verse 42): “And when he was twelve years old.” Now, mentioning that is also significant. Now, we can look at it and go, “Okay, he was a 12-year-old. No big deal.” Well, some people nowadays might look at it and go, “Well, he’s not 13, so the bar mitzvah wouldn’t have come into effect.” Well, at the time that this was taking place there was no bar mitzvah yet; that came later on. But 12 years old was the time when a Jewish boy—even at this stage, in the first century—at this stage, at 12 years old is when a young Jewish boy would have begun his formal training in the Torah (or we call it the Old Testament). Jesus at this time had not yet started that formal training. That is significant for what’s going on here.

So, we have this young, untrained, unskilled (by the world standards), uneducated boy going to the Temple (well, that's going to come up in in a little bit). But see, Jesus at this time (at 12) the Pharisees, Sadducees, the Pick-a-sees would have looked at him and said, "You're just a kid. He's not wise. What does a kid know anyway? I mean, they have no experience to go on. They don't, they haven't, they haven't finished school"—in this case, he hasn't really even formally started his theological school, so—"what does he know?" Oh boy, what does he know!

Well, it's also significant that Luke mentions Passover. Not just because we know it's with the death and resurrection of Jesus, but because we have—three times—the aspect of Passover in relation to Jesus' mission referenced in just the gospel of Luke. First, in verses 34 to 35, Simeon says this—if you remember from last week's sermon, we talked about this, and if you missed it, you can go back online and watch it—Simeon said to Mary, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that the thoughts from many hearts will be—may be revealed." This is Simeon revealing to Mary and to Joseph and to anyone else who's listening that Jesus has a purpose, and his purpose will be controversial—many will not like his purpose—and it will be heartbreaking to Mary. It's a reference to the death of Jesus which occurred at Passover. That's the first reference to Passover without actually mentioning specifically Passover. The third one we'll see in verse 46. I'm not going to say what it is, yet, because we'll get there; the third one, actually, we'll get to when we get to the end of Luke—occurs in the culmination in Luke 22 to 24—the death and resurrection of Jesus. And so, Passover is significant in mentioning here.

But what happens? Verses 43 to 45, it says, "And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, . . . Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem." Now, notice here it's not "Jesus was *left* in Jerusalem . . . *forgotten* in Jerusalem . . . *got lost* in Jerusalem." Jesus made the willful choice to stay behind. However, "but supposing him to be in the group they went about a day's journey," verse 44, "but when they began to search for him among relatives and acquaintances . . . they didn't find him," verse 45, "[so] they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him." The family headed back to Nazareth. They thought Jesus was with them. He wasn't. And, well, they did what any parent would do: panicked.

Now, most scholars nowadays and preachers, when they and teachers, when they read this passage immediately have *Home Alone* vibes. We've all seen that movie (or most of us, I believe have seen that movie). Classic Christmas movie nowadays. I won't rehash the story. Pretty much it's what happens here: parents go away, child's left behind, I wish we'd all been ready . . . I digress (song related to the movie *Left Behind*, "I Wish We'd All Been Ready," dcTalk covered it, but anyway). We have a boy (young boy) not with his family while his family's off on a trip.

Now, I don't know about you. Olivia and I have experienced this more than once, and we wish we had experienced it zero times, but it doesn't happen that way. You're going through the store (Walmart, H-E-B, whatever), your young child is there with you. You turn around, "Where are they? Where'd they go?" And immediately you go to panic mode: "Where's my child?" That's happened with us with all three of them. Often the child is right around the corner, but we can't see the child and we panic. We're frantic. We've got to find—everything else stops, nothing else matters—we have to find the child! That's how Mary and Joseph were feeling at the time: "We have to find Jesus! Where is he?" They had no idea.

They searched and searched and searched; nowhere to be found. They went back to Jerusalem (they were gone about a day's journey, so they were pretty far away). Jesus wasn't just around the corner in the aisle looking at a toy or something. They had no idea where he was. They were panicked, as any good parent would be. If a parent loses a child or can't find the child and the parent goes, "Yeah, whatever," I have to question whether that parent is actually loving their child or not. A parent who loves their child is going to panic when they don't know where that child is. Because, why? What do we think? We think the worst: "Is the child hurt? Is the child kidnapped? Is the child gone? What's happened? We gotta find it. We gotta—we have to protect our child!" And so, Mary and Joseph were frantic.

But then verses 46 to 52. Remember, Jesus chose to stay behind. Jesus willingly decided, "I'm staying in Jerusalem," and he did it for a purpose. It wasn't just a, "Ooh, this is a pretty toy, I'm gonna go check it out." No, Jesus had a reason for staying behind. In verses 46 to 52, Jesus explained his mission, revealing his wisdom (46 to 52).

The first thing we see in verse 46 (now, this is very significant): "After three days they found him." Three days. That's very significant. Remember, I said that there was a second reason for mentioning Passover, and it was in verse 46? Here it is. Jesus will be gone—literally dead—for three days. But after three days, he will be found—literally resurrected on the third day. That is why Luke says, "they found him after three days."

Now, that was not something Luke added because it didn't happen that way. It did happen on the third day, but Luke decided to mention it because Luke knew—and God made sure that Luke wrote this down as an allusion to what's coming later on in the resurrection of Jesus Christ—Jesus was found, resurrected, on the third day. And where was he? In the temple. In the temple. He wasn't lost. He was in the place of the teaching of the word of God, in the place where the ark had been placed, in the place that was known as the house of God. In short, he was with God. But, he was found on the third day. This alludes to what's coming in chapters 22 to 24.

But it says, continuing on, "they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions." Now, it says also, "And all who heard him were amazed,"—befuddled, you could say—"at his understanding and his answers." Asking and answering was a common way for teaching. Jesus was there with the teachers of Israel—the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, I'm not sure exactly which group, doesn't say, but the teachers of Israel—the wise men of the people, the people who knew the Word of God, who spent their lives studying the Torah (the Old Testament), who spent time in it, learning it, studying it, memorizing it, and teaching it to others, and here's this young 12 year old with zero training, zero qualifications by the world's standards, asking questions and giving answers that marveled the wisest of the wise.

How's this kid know so much? Well, we know the answer. The answer is simple: he's God. How does God know his Word? Well, he wrote it. Jesus knows all of this [*holding up Bible*] front and back. It's his Word. But it's more than just knowing it; Jesus knew what it meant.

It says, "all who heard him were amazed at his understanding." Now, the idea of Jesus teaching people who are supposed to be wise and baffling them, surprising them, putting their wisdom to shame was,

not uncommon. He'll do that later on, we'll see, and we know that from other gospels there are other teachers of Israel that Jesus taught (although Jesus had little-to-no formal training), and some of them became his followers: Nicodemus (a Pharisee), Joseph of Arimathea (we don't have a lot about him, we don't have any direct conversations like we do with Jesus and Nicodemus, but we know he was a follower of Jesus, we know thus that he learned and was taught by Jesus, he was a Pharisee.

But there's another one that we often overlook when we talk about Pharisees that Jesus taught. We know about these two: Nicodemus and Joseph because of the Gospels. But in the book of Acts, Paul (or his Jewish name, Saul), a Pharisee who, after his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, went out into the wilderness for three years studying and learning. Who was teaching him? Jesus. Jesus was teaching the teachers of Israel. His wisdom made all of their intelligence, all of their wisdom, seem like rubbish. That is who Jesus is. That is how wise Jesus is. And they were astonished at his answers, at his questions at 12 years old.

Yet today, there are many—even people who call, who say, "I'm a Christian," who go to church all the time—that aren't trusting in the wisdom of Jesus. They're trusting in the wisdom of themselves or of mankind. Jesus (by how they live) they don't seem to think has all the answers, doesn't really know as much, doesn't really understand.

We often can start questioning God when things are not going right: "How can God allow this or that to happen"? One of the common objections to God is atrocities in this world. How can God allow these things to happen? Really, what they're doing is they're questioning the wisdom of Jesus and saying, "Jesus has to conform to our wisdom, to my wisdom, to my understanding, to me." And Jesus has made it clear (even at 12 years old), he is the wisest, the smartest of all. If anybody is going to submit to anyone else, we must submit to the wisdom of Jesus and trust in him because his wisdom—regardless of how much we know, how much we've experienced—Jesus is wiser and smarter than we ever will be. He may not give us all the answers, he may not tell us everything that we want to know, but there's a reason why, and what we should do is trust in the wisdom of Christ.

So, what happens? Verse 48: "And when his parents saw him, they were astonished,"—you could say shocked, surprised—"And his mother said to him, . . . 'why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.'" Now, some people have interpreted that to mean, "See, Jesus made a mistake." Well, he didn't. This is not Mary saying, "You sinned." This is Mary saying, "We were scared." This is a normal human, parental, emotional reaction. Jesus did nothing wrong here; Mary was just panicked.

If we've ever lost our child in the store, we find them, how many times do we tell them, "Don't ever do that to me again," and then they do it again (I'm sure they do)? Now, did they, when they go around the corner to see something they like, did they really do anything wrong? No, they just scared us. But it wasn't a sin. Jesus committed no sin here. Mary, just simply exasperated, scared, burst out, "How could you do this to us! We were panicked! We were scared! Where were you this whole time?" And Jesus' answer is as follows (verse 49): "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must," and that's the key word there, "must be in my Father's house?" And there's a whole lot here that we can look at. I'll just summarize some of it this way: this answer is Jesus telling Mary and everybody else his mission.

Now, he doesn't do it with, you know, precise detail of outlining everything that's going to happen; it's a broad statement. But what's he say? "Why were you looking for me?" Almost with the idea of, "you should have known I was going to be here; you should have known that if I'm going to be any place, I'm going to be here with God." But he says, "Did you not know that I must be [I have to be, it's required]?" What this indicates is Jesus is saying, "Being here in the house of God, doing the purpose of God, is my priority." Jesus' priority was serving the Father, and is basically telling his parents, "Keep in mind, I have a higher purpose, that purpose is to be with God doing his purposes; I must be here." This shows that God the Son is in submission to God the Father.

We too must be in submission to the triune God: the Father, Son, Holy Spirit. If we're not in submission to God in every aspect of our life, then we are in rebellion against God. We must submit.

But he continues. He says, "I must be in my Father's house." He doesn't say "*the* Father's house"; "*my*," possessive, "*my* Father's house." That's a very important statement there. What Jesus is telling Mary and everybody else that's listening is this: "God is my father." That Jesus, at 12 years old, knew about that special relationship that God the Son has with God the Father that no one else has. Why? Because Jesus—even at 12 years old—was fully God: had both a human and divine nature, and we'll see that later on toward the end of chapter three. Jesus has a human and a divine nature, and the two communicated with each other. But at the time, but in his life here, the divine nature was padded—how do I best describe it? —it wasn't expressed to its fullness, I'll put it that way. But here, we have 12-year-old Jesus recognizing and indicating his divinity, that God, Yahweh, is his father.

But he says also he must be in the "house." Now, in the Greek, the word "house" is implied (it's not literally there, but is implied in the language). But what he's saying in this is that "I must be about doing that purpose for which my father has sent me," and that purpose is what Passover is about: the death and the resurrection of Jesus about, roughly about, two decades later.

Now, today this statement, this answer, may be puzzling to many in the 21st century but we're not in—we're not alone in that (verse 50): "And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them." Mary and the—I was gonna say the Pharisees—and the teachers (the men in the temple) went, "Huh? What? What, whatever. Let's go home." Basically. They didn't understand (verse 50); they didn't comprehend it. However, later on, many of them will. When they see Jesus hanging on that cross, they will understand it.

And so, in verse 51, "he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them," he obeyed them, "and his mother treasured up all these things in her heart." She contemplated. She meditated on it, on Jesus' answer. She thought about it. How much she understood? Well, we know that when he gave the answer, she had no idea what he was saying. Why? Didn't understand. But she thought about it. She took the words of God (Jesus' answer) and meditated on the Word of God. If we want to understand what God is telling us, we ought to not just open it and read it, we ought to meditate on it. We ought to think about it. We ought to spend time contemplating what's written in here. *[holds up Bible]*

"And Jesus increased in wisdom," verse 52, "in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man." This is, again like before, referring to the human nature of Jesus. Jesus grew up, got wiser, so forth. But



the idea here is this: Jesus didn't do anything wrong. He was blameless. He is blameless and perfect because he obeyed and increased in wisdom, stature, and favor.

Well, what is this passage ultimately telling us? It's pointing to the wisdom of this young boy named Jesus. This young boy that many would dismiss as just another child. Son of a carpenter, what does he know? Oh, he knows more than we can ever imagine.

He understands everything. He knows how this world operates and how it should operate. He made this world. He is the creator. Nothing was made that he did not make, and all that was made was made through Christ. He is creator. He understands how it works.

He understands heartache and pain. He experienced it in his life. I don't know about you, but having nails driven through my hands (or wrists) and feet—that's gonna hurt.

But he also understands what it's like to be hated. His own people rejected him. His friends (and some scholars speculate even his half-brothers, his half-siblings) rejected him. Ultimately, we know James later on came to faith, but his friends and family abandoned him.

His closest friends, his disciples—we know of the famous three (Peter, James, and John)—denied Jesus multiple times. James was nowhere to be found at the time of Calvary. John was the only one who went all the way to the cross. They were gone. One of his own—one of his own disciples—didn't just disappear, but outright turned him in. Judas was one of the inner circle of the twelve, and he turned in the Messiah for the price of a slave. Jesus understands rejection and the pain that it brings.

But Jesus also understands glory. He understands goodness. He understands hope because he is hope, because he is goodness. He understands that because that's who he is, and that's what he brings. Jesus understands that we are guilty sinners, and that we have earned the wages of death. He understands that because he looked out among people and he wept for they were like sheep without a shepherd. And Jesus made it quite clear that we are all sinners and guilty. He knows that, although he himself never sinned. Jesus saw Adam and Eve sin because Jesus is eternal. He understands sin.

But he also understands the only cure for sin is himself and his blood that he shed on that cross. The Old Testament makes it clear: the only way sins can be forgiven is by the shedding of blood, and the blood of you and I is not good enough, and Jesus knew that. Even at 12 years old, he understood these types of things. And so Jesus humbled himself and—later on we'll see in Luke 22 to 24—he shed his blood, paying for sin that he didn't commit, but that you and I are guilty of. But on the third day—as it says here—he was found when he came out of that grave.

We have reason to trust in the wisdom of Jesus because Jesus is the source of wisdom. Wisdom, true wisdom, comes from God, not from man.

We can learn a lot in this world. We have grown so much in our intelligence (and there's nothing wrong with that, God has given us the ability to learn), but he did not give it to us so we can use our intelligence to run away from him, which is what happens a lot of times. He gave us the intelligence so, as Isaac Newton and many other scientists have said, so we can understand the creation of God and thus also better understand God himself. He gave us the ability to have knowledge and wisdom so that we can have a closer relationship with him. And what do we do? We take that which God has given us

and use it to say, “Goodbye,” and then many say, “You don’t even exist, God, because my wisdom, my intelligence has told me so.”

Scripture makes it clear: there is divine wisdom and then there’s a fool. It is a fool who says in his heart there is no God, and it is a fool who rebels against God.

Do we have a church full of fools or full of individuals seeking and submitting to the wisdom of this Jesus? Whose wisdom are you trusting in your life?

Let’s pray.