

## 12-Year-Old Jesus

Luke 2:41-52 on January 5, 2025

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*Please read Luke 2:41-52 before going further in this transcript.*

The last time that we were in Luke together, we left off at Luke 2:39-40, “When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. 40 And the child [*Jesus*] grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.” Back when Jesus was 40 days old, in obedience to God’s Law, His parents took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. Not only did they consecrate their firstborn son, but they also performed the sacrifice for Mary’s purification according to the requirements of God’s Law.

In today’s text, Luke now fast-forwards to when Jesus is 12 years old. We’re not given any details about what happened during those 12 intervening years, other than what verses 39-40 tell us:

- Jesus grew up in the northern town of Nazareth.
- Jesus grew physically, and became strong.
- Jesus was filled with wisdom, and God’s grace was on him.

As best as we can tell, Jesus’ childhood was that of a normal Jewish boy growing up on the north end of the Promised Land.<sup>1</sup> And while it’s certainly *possible* that He had some rather curious childhood moments, due to His unique status as “God in the flesh,” none of those potential moments are recorded for us in God’s Word. If we needed to know about them, then God would have told us, but since He didn’t, then either they didn’t happen in the first place, or we simply don’t need to know.

Now, one story that we do need to know about, is recorded for us in today’s Scripture passage. We’re in a unique section of Luke’s Gospel today; we’re past the birth narratives of John the Baptist and Jesus, but we’re not quite up to their public ministries yet. And Luke, rather than jumping from newborn Jesus to 30-year-old adult Jesus, instead he records a brief account of something that happened in Jesus’ life when He was 12 years old. But WHY, why include this?<sup>2</sup> What is it that Luke wants us to see and learn from this account? Well, that’s what we’re going to look at today.

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<sup>1</sup> Even so, this hasn’t kept any number of people from postulating what may have happened, or even from making up fictional stories about Jesus’ childhood. To be clear, there is no good evidence to support any of the stories supposedly about Jesus’ childhood, including “...the Infancy story of Thomas 2 [which gives] an account of a five-year-old Jesus fashioning twelve sparrows from clay,” Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 261 footnote #7.

<sup>2</sup> After all, none of the other 3 Gospels did.

Luke 2:41-42 begins, “Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. 42 When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom.” The Festival of the Passover was an annual commemoration of the time back in Exodus, when God’s destroying angel passed over every home that put the blood of a lamb on their doorposts. This was an annual celebration of God’s deliverance from their enemies who’d held them captive in slavery in Egypt. We alluded to this briefly two Sundays ago, back in verse 23, when baby Jesus was consecrated to the Lord as the firstborn male in Joseph and Mary’s family. In verse 41, Luke highlights the spiritual maturity and devotion of Jesus’ parents, not only by emphasizing that Jesus’ parents went *every* year, but also by emphasizing that *both* parents went. You see, only the men were officially required to go, but Mary also went, every year, indicating that both of Jesus’ parents were deeply devoted followers of Yahweh.<sup>3</sup>

Now, it’s unclear whether Jesus had gone with them in previous years or not, but it’s certainly possible that this was His first time, which may explain why He stayed behind at the temple.<sup>4</sup> Be that as it may, as Jesus was coming of age, being in the temple that week held great significance for Him. You see, as a 12-year-old *boy*, Jesus was preparing to take His place in Jewish society the following year, as a 13-year-old *young man*.<sup>5 6 7</sup> With this cultural milestone in mind, it certainly seems likely that Jesus’ parents brought him along with them to Jerusalem in order to further His spiritual formation. As devoted followers of Yahweh, they would have been doing all that they could, to instruct and prepare their son, for the responsibilities of entering into early adulthood in Jewish society.<sup>8 9</sup>

So this trip likely began with good intentions, but then things went a little sideways... Luke 2:43-45 goes on, “After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. 44 Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. 45 When they did not find him, they went back to

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<sup>3</sup> “Men were required to attend, but women were not, so Mary’s going [every year] shows the depth of the family’s piety.” Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996, p. 100.

<sup>4</sup> “Some speculation exists whether this was Jesus’ first trip with the family.” Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 264.

<sup>5</sup> “At age 12, boys began preparing to take their places in the religious community the following year.” *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1706 footnote on Luke 2:42.

<sup>6</sup> And, “Children who turned 13 years old were often considered responsible adults under the law. That Jesus is already to demonstrate his wisdom at the age of 12 highlights his unique ability.” *NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, p. 2072 footnote on Luke 2:42.

<sup>7</sup> By the way, “The custom of Bar Mitzvah, common today for Jewish boys, began... after the time of Jesus.” Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 264.

<sup>8</sup> “The parents’ taking the twelve-year-old Jesus on the Passover journey is... a picture of faithful Jewish parents instructing their child in the faith on a very important holy day.” Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 264.

<sup>9</sup> “At the age of thirteen a Jewish boy became obligated to observe the law and in more recent years has begun to be called a “son of the covenant—Bar-Mitzvah.” Robert H. Stein, *Luke, vol. 24, The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 121.

Jerusalem to look for him.” All total, Jesus and His parents had probably been in Jerusalem for about 7-8 days. And if they were anything like us today, after a full week of festivities and worship services, they were more than ready to get back home. They were longing to sleep in their own beds, and get back to their normal routine again.<sup>10</sup> And just to give us a bit more perspective, it’s likely that Jesus’ family traveled as part of a larger caravan. In fact, verse 44 begins “Thinking he was in their company.” (This company probably refers to the caravan of travelers they were with.) So the reason they didn’t realize at first that Jesus was missing, is probably because they figured he was with one of the other families with whom they were traveling.

It’s also worth considering that caravans like this traveled about 20 miles per day. So backtracking a full day, meant adding another 40 more miles round trip, to an already long journey. Not to mention the fact that Joseph and Mary were forced to leave the relative safety of the caravan. (You see, these long stretches of country roads could be dangerous, because robbers saw them as convenient places for easy pickings.)<sup>11</sup> In addition to the potential danger, and the significant inconvenience of backtracking a full day’s journey, we can’t help but think that this whole incident must have caused Jesus’ parents more than a little embarrassment: “Excuse me, have you seen a 12-year-old boy wandering around by himself? Um... well, yes, we’re his parents and we, uh... lost track of him. How long has he been missing? Well. uh... a couple of days now... (*Can’t you just picture Joseph and Mary not making much eye contact, sort of admitting this under their breath?*)<sup>12</sup>

Luke 2:46-47 go on, “After *three* days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.” Now these three days likely consisted of:

Day 1 – traveling toward Nazareth before realizing He was missing.

Day 2 – traveling back to Jerusalem. (some 20 miles!)

Day 3 – spending the day looking for Jesus in Jerusalem.<sup>13</sup>

Now, if any of us lost track of our 12-year-old for 3 days, I suppose, that of all places, we’d be relieved to find them at church! Nonetheless, how nerve-racking this must have been for Joseph and Mary!

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<sup>10</sup> “After the Feast was over. That is, after seven days (cf. Leviticus 23:5–6).” Robert H. Stein, Luke, vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 121.

<sup>11</sup> “If the travelers went around Samaria, the journey was about an eighty-mile trip from Nazareth. The journey often included roads that were exploited by highway robbers, so the pilgrims often traveled in large caravans for protection. ...The journey would be a three- or four-day affair, as the caravan would make around twenty miles a day.” Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 264.

<sup>12</sup> This puts a whole new spin on the question: have you found Jesus yet? I also can’t help but wonder if Joseph perhaps even expressed his frustration at one point by saying something like: “When I find that boy, I’m gonna kill him!” (which you have to admit carries a certain irony).

<sup>13</sup> See discussion by Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, bottom of p. 266.

The “teachers” Jesus was sitting with would have been the authorized, highly trained and highly educated religious experts. Nonetheless, Jesus was the one who was amazing the onlookers.<sup>14</sup> This points us back to how Jesus had spent His previous 12 years in Luke 2:40, “And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.” This makes us wonder how much of Jesus’ understanding came from being fully God, and how much of it came from His own study and biblical upbringing. After all, even as verse 40 mentions Jesus being “filled with wisdom,” and “the grace of God being on Him,” verse 52 later tells us that “Jesus *grew* in wisdom,” which indicates a process over time. This is pretty intriguing, and it's certainly worth pondering. We see here, in this 12-year-old Jesus, a unique representation of His being, as one who is both fully God and fully human. Regardless of the precise mechanics of this, one thing is certain: Jesus knew His Bible! Given all that we’ve learned about the devoted faith of Jesus’ parents, we can be sure that they’d taught their son to read, and study, and memorize God’s Word.<sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> This is a great example and reminder for us as a church today, we need to be teaching and discipling the next generation of believers; this is pleasing to God, and it should always remain one of our top priorities.

So even though Jesus was fully God, He was also fully human, which included going through a fully human birth and child development process. Jesus matured and developed much like any other boy. My Study Bible explains it this way: “there is no indication that he had all knowledge and wisdom from birth.”<sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup> Indeed, how could He? His brain was a fully human brain, with limited capacity until it became a fully developed adult brain. That said, His degree of wisdom was certainly well ahead of the curve at this point in His life, and those who heard Him at the temple were amazed.

If this were a typical situation, then 12-year-old Jesus should have been learning from these teachers at the temple, but instead, His understanding

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<sup>14</sup> Consider Acts 4:13.

<sup>15</sup> The Bible that Jesus read and studied was the OT, all 39 books from Genesis through Malachi. 39 books which all pointed to Him.

<sup>16</sup> Jesus had no doubt grown in wisdom through His own personal study of the Old Testament, as well as through growing up in a godly home. In fact, His parents likely practiced and taught Him the Shema from Deuteronomy 6:4-9. This served as a daily reminder in their comings and goings of their love and commitment to Yahweh. “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” And they likely even had a “Mezuzah” on the doorpost of their home back in Nazareth, a small box containing the words of Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Mezuzah is literally translated “doorpost.”

<sup>17</sup> *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1706 footnote on Luke 2:52.

<sup>18</sup> Luke 2:47 says that “Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.” Even so, verse 52 indicates that Jesus was still growing in wisdom at this point in His life. And yet, at some point, either before He was 12, or sometime after, Jesus most certainly grew and developed in wisdom far beyond merely human ability. Later on Colossians 2:3 teaches us that, “in [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” See also Isaiah 11:2; Jeremiah 23:5; and 1 Corinthians 1:24 which calls Jesus “the wisdom of God.”

and His answers were amazing everyone who heard Him. He was sitting at their feet, engaged in a friendly dialogue of Q/A, with men who were 4-5 times His age.<sup>19</sup> And Jesus was doing much better than simply holding His own, making it clear that this young man was endowed with wisdom through the grace of God which was upon Him.<sup>20 21</sup> Luke is giving us just a small glimpse of what lies ahead in Jesus' life and ministry. This is merely a foretaste of what's to come. And it's also a reminder, that Jesus works in perfect harmony with the will of His Heavenly Father. Jesus' time has not yet come, so He waits another 18 years before He officially launches His public ministry; He waits for the coming of the Forerunner, John the Baptist, which we'll dive into next Sunday in Luke chapter 3.<sup>22 23</sup>

Well, let's get back to Jesus' parents frantic search for their son... Luke 2:48-49 goes on, "When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." 49 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" In verse 48 Mary says they've been "anxiously searching." The *ESV* says, "in great distress." The Greek here refers to "deep mental anguish and pain."<sup>24</sup> Now, certainly Jesus wasn't being intentionally disrespectful to His earthly parents, nor did He mean to cause them anxiety, but there's no doubt that His decision to stay back caused them a fair amount of grief.

Jesus seems to think that they would have realized He needed to be in His Heavenly Father's house. In other words, even as His parents wondered what their son was thinking, Jesus wondered what His parents were thinking, by not realizing what was going on here. And in this deeply emotional moment, Luke masterfully highlights the main point of this entire passage: who Jesus is and what He came to accomplish. At the age of 12, Jesus declares both His identity and His mission.

His identity is the one and only Son of the Heavenly Father. Back in Luke 1:31-32 the angel Gabriel declared, "You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the *son* of the Most High...." Luke 1:35 agrees, "... "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the

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<sup>19</sup> See discussion by Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 267.

<sup>20</sup> "The insight of his answers is what draws their attention. ... Jesus is... seen as endowed with wisdom." Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 268.

<sup>21</sup> In Luke 2:47 "understanding" = "synesis" (σύνεσις) "the faculty of comprehension, intelligence, acuteness, shrewdness." William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 970.

<sup>22</sup> See by Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996, bottom of p. 101.

<sup>23</sup> Once again Jesus sets a good example for us today: We need to wait on God's perfect timing, not running ahead and not lagging behind, but praying "not my will, but Yours be done." Consider Jesus' words and attitude in Luke 22:42.

<sup>24</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996, p. 100.

holy one to be born will be called the *son of God*.” Bible commentator Robert Stein says it this way: “Jesus possessed a unique relationship with God and confirms the angelic message that Jesus is *God’s Son*.”<sup>25</sup> In Luke 2:49, Jesus now declares His own self-awareness that He is in a unique relationship with His Heavenly Father, and He fully intends to embrace both His identity as such, and the mission that goes along with it.<sup>26</sup>

So this was a painful, but necessary reminder for these earthly parents, that they would have an increasingly limited role in Jesus’ future mission. And although Jesus certainly didn’t enjoy causing this pain, the reality of His life’s trajectory required that He declare the elephant in the room: God’s sovereign plan supersedes all of life’s other concerns and priorities. Bible commentator Darrell Bock puts it well: “[Jesus’ relationship with His Heavenly Father] has priority over all other relationships so it will require certain painful obligations... Jesus knows what he is about, and that he must do the task his Father has given him. The necessity of his carrying out the task, shows his resolve, and his recognition that God is sovereign. In this sense, Jesus is an example to those who follow him. They too must be faithful to the call of their Father.”<sup>27</sup>

In other words, for any of us today who consider ourselves deeply devoted followers, the driving factor in our own personal identity and mission in this life, *must be* that we are children of the Heavenly Father, first and foremost. Any earthly family connections must take second place, and must submit to God’s sovereign will, no matter how painful that may be.<sup>28 29 30</sup> Bock adds that [Jesus’ attitude and behavior in the temple, is a picture of how every deeply devoted follower] “should prioritize our lives before God. Sometimes we have to make choices that others do not understand, for God has called us to set priorities that differ from people who go through life without any reference to him. Granted that Jesus was a unique person with unique

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<sup>25</sup> Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 122.

<sup>26</sup> “The main theological emphasis of this passage is Christological. Long before Jesus began his public ministry, Luke revealed that he was aware of his unique relationship to God. Already at the age of twelve he knew that he was God’s Son and that he possessed a unique calling. He demonstrated a higher allegiance to his divine sonship than to Mary and Joseph.” Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 124.

<sup>27</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 259.

<sup>28</sup> Later on, in Luke 14:26, Jesus teaches His followers, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.” There’s a degree of personal pain, and lessening family priority, that comes with deep devotion to God’s Kingdom and our commitment to His mission as our top priority.

<sup>29</sup> “Jesus makes it clear that those who know God have, in a sense, two families – the biological one in which God has placed them and the spiritual one they have because they know him.” Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996, p. 101.

<sup>30</sup> “Jesus was unique not only in his divinity but also in his humanity, namely, in his ability to focus on and carry out God’s will in his life.” Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996, p. 103.

gifts, yet the way he lived his life, and pursued God faithfully, reflects how we should seek God's face..."<sup>31</sup>

In verse 49 Jesus declares that this is the way it "had to be," "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"<sup>32 33</sup> Being in the temple was a must for Him; it had to be this way. Not only did this keep Him in step with God's plan, but it also demonstrated His obedience.<sup>34 35</sup> So even though we may initially be wondering about Jesus' obedience to Joseph and Mary, the obedience that truly matters here, is Jesus' obedience to His Heavenly Father.<sup>36</sup> That, and that alone, was the will to which Jesus submitted His entire life.<sup>37</sup>

In spite of how clear all of this was to Jesus, Luke 2:50 says, "But they [*Jesus' parents*] did not understand what he was saying to them." Much like back in the Christmas story, in Luke 2:19, when Mary "treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart," verse 51 shows that she's continuing to ponder these things: "Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart."<sup>38 39 40 41</sup> So let's join Mary once again, and let's continue to treasure all of this for ourselves as well. Let's agree to keep mulling over all that we've been learning about Jesus up to this point, and all that we'll continue to learn in the chapters ahead.

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<sup>31</sup> "...Time spent before him 'in the temple' or at his feet 'in the Word' or using our hands 'in ministry' may not be understood by people with a different set of priorities. Sometimes our choices will be difficult, as we are perhaps not where others would like us to be. Tensions between secular commitments to our job and making time available for ministry may lead some to misunderstand why we do what we do. This comes with the territory of a walk with God." Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1996, p. 102.

<sup>32</sup> Luke will use this phrase "I had to" strategically throughout his Gospel to emphasize key elements of Jesus' mission. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 269.

<sup>33</sup> Luke 2:49 is just the first in a series that we'll encounter, as we make our way through his Gospel. Including a particular emphasis that Jesus "has to" suffer and die. Greek word *dei* (δεῖ) = "it is necessary" is also used by Luke in 4:43; 9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 22:37; 24:7; 24:26; 24:44. Danker cited by Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 259 footnote #19.

<sup>34</sup> "The "me" and the "I" in the next phrase are emphatic. I had to be. There is a strong sense of divine causality present here in this verb (*dei*)." Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 123.

<sup>35</sup> So by no means is today's passage suggesting that Jesus was out running wild during His pre-teen years, or that He simply had a few questions about the Bible, and He carelessly forgot to let His parents know where He was.

<sup>36</sup> Philippians 2:8 shows Jesus' ultimate obedience, "obedient to death – even death on a cross."

<sup>37</sup> Jesus says it this way in John 6:38, "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me."

<sup>38</sup> Luke 2:41-52 "continues the note of wonder... There is also a note of perplexity and pain in this text. People will struggle to understand Jesus' task and person. What is clear is that Jesus does not struggle to know either God or his own mission." Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 262.

<sup>39</sup> "All will have to wrestle with Jesus' identity and decide exactly who Jesus is." Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 275.

<sup>40</sup> "[Mary] took note of the events about Jesus and did not take unkindly to his retort, but rather reflected on it. ...In fact, the pondering that Mary does may well be a call to the reader to do the same, in that she pictures what the faithful should do when they encounter truths about Jesus." Citing Schneider in part, Darrell L. Bock, *Luke, Vol. 1, 1:1-9:50*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 1994, p. 273.

<sup>41</sup> The beginning of verse 51 reassures us that Jesus did indeed honor His earthly father and mother, even if He'd just scared them terribly. And we also see here that, even in light of Jesus' self-understanding of His unique relationship with His Heavenly Father, He still submits to His earthly parents, and He shows them the appropriate honor they're due.

Luke 2:52 concludes, “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”<sup>42</sup> There is it, “*Jesus grew*,” the *ESV* translates it “increased.” Either way, the point being that, in His humanity, Jesus developed over time. And not just physically, “in stature,” but also “in wisdom, and in favor with God and man.” When Jesus came to our world in the flesh, He did so in a way that worked within the limitations of His physical mind and body. He subjected Himself to do the difficult work of growing over time, and of developing in His relationship with God and other people.<sup>43 44</sup>

I must admit that how Jesus “grew in favor with God” still baffles me, but growing in “favor with man” once again causes us to consider Jesus’ fully human experience. Jesus navigated the approval and rejection of the people around Him. He probably didn’t attend middle school per se, but he did have to navigate His peers throughout His life, dealing with all of the various pressures and expectations, and so on. Jesus experienced friends as well as enemies, words of encouragement as well as words of abuse. He lived and functioned in the real world, right in the midst of its beauty, as well as its ugliness.

The fact is, there are any number of precise details about Jesus’ life that we’ll never figure out. There are questions about His humanity that we’ll never get fully answered, except perhaps in heaven one day.<sup>45</sup> Even so, let’s agree that the things we’re considering today should cause us to marvel once again at who Jesus is, at the reality of Emmanuel - “God with us,” the reality of God coming in the flesh!

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<sup>42</sup> In a similar way, 1 Samuel 2:26 says, “And the boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the LORD and with people.”

<sup>43</sup> Luke reveals not only Jesus’ unique relationship to the Heavenly Father, but also His many years of study and preparation for His coming public ministry.

<sup>44</sup> Hebrews 2:17 says, “For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.” Hebrews 4:15 adds, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.”

<sup>45</sup> Philippians 2:7 begs the question here of just what it means that Jesus “emptied himself” (*ESV*) or “made himself nothing” (*NIV*) when He was made in human likeness.