

The Life of Christ— Jesus and Authority

Introduction:

The next stage in our study of the life of Christ takes us to Jerusalem. Joseph and Mary went yearly to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. At the age of 12, a Jewish boy was expected to follow the laws of God written by Moses in regard to the keeping of the days of fasting and attendance at public events, such as the Passover. At this same age, a young Jewish boy was also to begin the training for the occupation in which he would one day take part. Jesus, at 12 years old, went with His parents to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover. Many Biblical scholars believe that Jesus was taken aside by God and informed by Him of His purpose here on this Earth. Whether or not Jesus was told at this time of His upcoming death is unclear, but Jesus became involved in conversations with the religious leaders of His day. He became so enthralled with these discussions, that He did not realize that the party that He had traveled with, including His parents, had departed to go home. After the first day of travel, Mary and Joseph began seeking Jesus and could not find Him where they thought that He was. They returned to Jerusalem and sought for Jesus for 3 days, finally finding Him in the Temple. He was with the doctors, listening to their wisdom and asking them questions. His parents reprimanded Him and told Him that they had been seeking him, sorrowing. “Sorrowing” means that they were *in anguish and tormented* during their search. Jesus asked them why they looked for Him, because He had been about His Father’s business (Luke 2:49). Jesus, though He was God, subjected Himself to His earthly parents (Luke 2:51). It was probably as a result of this willingness to subject Himself to His parents that Jesus, “...increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” (Luke 2:52) Jesus not only grew up in stature, He also grew up in His relationship with God and with man.

I. Joseph and Mary taught by example

Jesus’ earthly parents fulfilled all the commandments “according to the law of the Lord” (Luke 2:39). What a wonderful view of the diligence of Joseph and Mary to keep God’s law! Luke 2:41 tells us again that Jesus’ parents continued to follow God’s laws. These committed people realized that, though Jesus was just a child, it was crucial that this Child witness first-hand His parents obeying the authority in their lives. Would to God that those of us who are parents would realize that the job of parenting children is crucial—the most important job ever given to man (Psalms 127:3).

II. Jesus sought out wise men

Jesus realized that, if He was going to be wise, He would have to get around wise men (Proverbs 13:20). Jesus did not go to wise men seeking to give them His wisdom. Even though He was God, He realized that He could learn from these men. We know He thought He could learn because He asked them questions and then sat and listened to their answers (Luke 2:46). We *cannot* gain wisdom by expressing our own opinions, but we *can* get wisdom by asking wise people for their advice and then listening and heeding their wisdom. Jesus had

much wisdom. He did not get it because He was God—He attained wisdom by following wise men.

III. Jesus was subject to His parents

Jesus was God, yet He allowed Himself to be in subjection to these 2 earthly people. “Subjection” means that Jesus *submitted to another one’s control*. In other words, He obeyed the parents that God had given Him. We ought to follow Jesus’ lead in this area! God put Joseph and Mary in a position of authority over Jesus and He made Himself subject to them. It is extremely important that we realize who our authorities are and become subject to them. If a child never learns to obey the authority of Dad and Mom, then it will be extremely difficult for him to follow the authority of God. ***Ephesians 6:1 and Colossians 3:20 are the starting point for children in their service to God.*** We, as parents and Sunday School teachers, need to realize the importance of our job in the lives of the children. If we do not teach them to obey, then when they need to follow God, they will not know how because they were never taught.

Conclusion:

Jesus was God, yet He was a man. Jesus entered Earth as a helpless child. He subjected Himself to the authority of His parents and, by His example, we can see that we, too, should subject ourselves to our parents so that we can learn to be subject to all the authority in our lives. One day God, our Supreme Authority, will tell us to do something for Him. If we are not conditioned to obey authority, we will not obey Him.

Questions

- 1. Why were Jesus and His parents going to Jerusalem?**
- 2. When Mary and Joseph found Jesus, where was He and what was He doing?**
- 3. Why is it so important that we learn to obey?**
- 4. What kind of men did Jesus try to be around?**
- 5. How old was Jesus in this story?**