

Totally dependable even as a child

Our goal is to uncover **Who Jesus Is**: His character, his thoughts or viewpoints, his interactions and relationships with others. There is no study on earth more valuable than this.

Luke 2:41 - 52 Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual [but at age 12 this was the first time Jesus could partake in the major activities, something all young boys looked forward to]. After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him at first, because they assumed he was among the other travelers. But when he didn't show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends.

For this “mistake” to have happened, 3 things must have been true.

1. His parents' assumption here tells us volumes about the boy Jesus. They felt no need to do a role call in the morning. Jesus could always be counted on to be where he is supposed to be. Jesus was also not a clinging vine. He was always with his cousins, friends, uncles, aunties, grandparents - anyone who wanted to talk or needed a helping hand (Jesus was definitely a “people person”).
2. It was no surprise that Jesus didn't check in with his parents that morning, because the parents learned that they could give him a long rope and he never once disappointed them. (This shows both his integrity and a remarkable sense of awareness and thoughtfulness in this 12 year old boy).
3. His parents knew the above two things but missed what was the deepest desire in his heart ...

⁴⁵ When they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there. ⁴⁶ Three days later they finally discovered him ...

Jesus made an assumption about his parents as well. He assumed that they would know how important the temple visit was to him. They should realize that he would spend every possible minute in this hallowed place. The onus was on the parents to tell him when their time in Jerusalem was up. He was ready to go back to Nazareth with them but they would need to notify him as to when they would go. When they didn't come and notify him, he assumed they were not ready yet to leave. But they hadn't read his overwhelming interest to be in his Father's house.

Could we live everyday with Jesus and not know what interests Him? Unfortunately, yes.

... in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. ⁴⁷ All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

This is a growing young man, he has been doing deep thinking for years, ever stretching his horizon of understanding. I am sure his questions were genuine while also penetrating. He was in learning mode, not teaching mode. He got everyone's wheels turning as they were faced with how little they knew.

⁴⁸ His parents didn't know what to think. "Son," his mother said to him, "why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere." ⁴⁹ "But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"

Can you see the innocent hurt in Jesus' response? The innocent, never want to harm, never want to do wrong, Jesus was genuinely surprised that his parents wouldn't automatically know where to find him. You should know I wouldn't be in the market place, or window-shopping the town. I didn't come to Jerusalem to find a new gang of friends to run around with. Surely you know my heart well enough to figure out where I would be?! But they didn't.

We see an example here where Jesus was miss-read, or un-read, or misunderstood. There must have been countless other times this occurred throughout his life (we see some with the disciples). Jesus no doubt battled loneliness.

⁵⁰ But they didn't understand what he meant.

They had certainly not forgotten his miraculous beginning, but it was something that was maybe never talked about and unknown by the general public, and therefore seemed remote in the parent's consciousness. But Jesus expected they should be conscious of his heritage and the implications of it. It is something that was so real, so every day, with the growing Jesus.

⁵¹ Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart. ⁵² Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.

Voluntary submission is a show of strength, and beauty, not a sign of weakness or ineptitude. Joseph, Daniel, and other such people are simply illustrations of the Jesus principle. Godliness is attractive. Godliness is visible. Godliness makes life better for all! Unfortunately, few or no one attains such things these days or we could see it for ourselves!

Character Traits seen in this story:

- He proved himself to be 100% trustworthy, even as a boy. He could always be counted on to be where he was supposed to be, doing what he was supposed to be doing.
- A people person, he was always spending time with people.
- Jesus was living (thinking, knowing, experiencing) as a human being, not as God, otherwise He would have been wrong to upset his parents. (He didn't use his omniscience while living on earth).
- He had a powerful yearning for the things of God.
- Jesus was a thinker, a question-asker, an astute learner. The wisdom, insight, clarity and penetration displayed later on in his teaching was a product of lengthy personal reflection.