

=LIFE OF CHRIST=

Lesson 3

The Childhood of Jesus

INTRODUCTION: Our current lessons deal with the life of Jesus Christ. We have discussed His preexistence; now we come to discuss His childhood. Very little in the Bible is said about His childhood; however, from the occasional glimpses that we get and from the obvious fact that He was trained in the strict Judaistic customs, we do know enough of His childhood for such a study to be to our benefit. This lesson will be especially appropriate to the children in our classes.

- I. HE KNEW AND WAS TAUGHT THE WORD OF GOD. When a Jewish boy was three years old, he was given the tassel, the garment directed by the law. See Numbers 15:38-41 and Deuteronomy 22:12. At the age of five, he began to learn portions of the law under his mother's direction. These were passages written on scrolls such as the Shema, or creed, of Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalms 114; 118; and 126. At the age of ten, the boy was to commence the study of the Mishnah, which was a compilation of traditional interpretations of the law. When he became thirteen years of age, he wore for the first time the phylacteries which the Jew always put on at the recital of the daily prayer. At eighteen, he was to be instructed in the Gemara, a vast collection of interpretations. Hence, we know that as a lad, Jesus learned the Word of God. This should be an example to our children.
- II. HE WAS FAITHFUL TO GOD'S HOUSE. See Luke 2:41 and 4:16. Ah, how important this is! Teach the children to be faithful, to place the attendance of God's House above every other loyalty.
- III. HE WAS A NORMAL BOY AS HE GREW UP. Read Luke 2:40, 52. "Increased" in Luke 2:52 means "kept advancing." In other words, these two verses simply tell us that He was normal in His physical, mental, and spiritual progress.
- IV. HE WAS A HARD-WORKING BOY. This we know because He worked in His father's carpentry shop. (Teacher, stress to the children the importance of their being taught to work and being willing to work.) Parents need to teach their children the importance of hard work.
- V. HE WAS PHYSICALLY STRONG. Luke 2:40 seems to teach that He was physically strong. Here again we have the importance of each person's taking care of his body in childhood.
- VI. HE WAS COURTEOUS. In Luke 2:40, notice the words, "grace of God." This could be worded, "God's type of grace." In other words, He was a gracious boy. This means that He used proper manners. He was ethical and courteous. He was taught to be gracious and kind. These are character traits that ought to be stressed again and again and again. How vital it is that our boys and girls be taught good manners, good etiquette, etc.
- VII. HE WAS OBEDIENT. In Luke 2:51, notice the words, "was subject unto them." Here was the Son of God, Who knew that He was the Son of God; yet He was subject to His earthly parents. Obedience to parents is one of the most important things a child can ever learn. This obedience is actually obedience to God, because the father and mother act in God's stead as they rear their children. When the child becomes older, he will transfer this obedience to God. If Jesus, the Son of God, was subject to His earthly parents, how much more should we as sinners be subject to ours.
- VIII. HE WAS MINDFUL OF WHO HIS FATHER WAS. Read carefully Luke 2:48, 49. Mary had used the wrong words when she made the statement to Him, "...behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." He was very quick to say in so many words that Joseph was not His father, but that God was His Father. Here we have Jesus Himself attesting to the virgin birth. We also have the fact that He was rebuking Mary for implying that Joseph was His father.
- IX. AS A LAD HE DID SPIRITUAL THINGS. Notice again Luke 2:48, 49. He was about His Father's business. Even at the age of twelve, He was already serving His Father. We have the idea in far too many

of our churches that service for God comes when one gets older. This is not true. Even a twelve-year-old should be about God's business. This should be stressed over and over again to our children.