

• *The story of Jesus moves forward twelve years*

1. A trustworthy and capable boy

Luke's story takes another step forward, this time over a gap of twelve years. Joseph is still alive. Jesus' mother, Mary, is twelve years older. Jesus has brothers and sisters. Every year the family went to the festival of the Passover. It is perhaps about the year AD 9 when a memorable incident takes place. Jesus is twelve years old.

1. **It is obvious that Jesus as a twelve-year old boy Jesus was trustworthy and capable.** In one particular year, perhaps about AD 8 or 9, Joseph and Mary make their annual journey to Jerusalem for Passover time ^{□1}. They leave Jesus to look after Himself. Then when the festival is over they begin to travel home. They do not make any special efforts to look for Jesus, and so Jesus gets left behind without their realising it ^{□2}. It may seem rather strange that Joseph and Mary should not at first make any effort to look for Jesus. There can only be one reason for it. They are very used to the fact that Jesus is utterly trustworthy and is quite capable of looking after Himself. He had a good relationship with relatives and friends, so it was quite possible that He was travelling with them. Joseph and Mary have no anxiety whatsoever about the fact that they have not seen their twelve-year old son.

This can only mean that in days gone by Jesus has happily mixed with other members of the family and has been quite capable of looking after Himself. The parents are so used to Jesus' doing this that they make no arrangements for Jesus to travel back with them and for a day they do not even worry about His absence. They are quite sure He has made His own is obvious that He was utterly trustworthy. One could leave Him to take care of matters and He would be totally responsible in what He did. In the thinking of His parents, Jesus needed no special care. He had proved many times that He was capable of caring for Himself.

2. An Independent person who thought for himself

2. **Jesus as a young boy was evidently a very independent person.** He was a young man who 'did His own thing' and often made His own arrangement for His life, even when He was twelve years old. In those days when Jesus had been at the Passover festival, He was doing a lot of thinking for Himself. He was only a boy but He knew much about the faith of Israel and He had thought much about Himself. He knew that God was His Father in a very special way. Anyone who wishes to go far with God will have to learn to think and act for himself or herself.

3. Zealous for God

• *Learning about the things of God from the scriptures*

3. **Jesus as a young boy was zealous to discover everything He could about God and His will.** Although Jesus was the Son of God, He was also a genuine man. He did not know everything all in one instant. He had to learn and grow. So He took every opportunity to learn more of the things of God. Jesus' parents eventually discover that Jesus is missing ^{□1} and they return to look for Him ^{□2}. After three days they find Him. He is quite happy and untroubled. He has been staying overnight near to the temple. He is spending every moment He can listening to anyone who might be able to help Him understand the Scriptures. He asks them questions, discussing every aspect of the things of God ^{□3}. Everyone who hears Him is amazed at His

^{□1} 2:41-42

^{□2} 2:43

^{□1} 2:44

^{□2} 2:45

^{□3} 2:46

wisdom ^{☞4}. He was taking it upon Himself to learn as much as He could from those who might know the Old Testament Scriptures. We have to learn to grow in the things of God. Even the Son of God, Jesus Himself, had to grow. Even He did not know everything all in one instant. He was an authentic human being, and men and women do not learn everything in one flash

☞4 2:47

4. Submissive to authority

4. Despite His very great position in the kingdom of God Jesus was willing to submit to authority. His parents return. They feel that Jesus has treated them badly ^{☞1}. Actually the problem is not with Jesus. The problem is with them.

☞1 2:48

• *Jesus moves into a new stage of maturity*

Mary and Joseph were told years ago that Jesus was unique. They must expect Him to be active in the things of God. He is now twelve years old and in Jewish culture a twelve-year-old boy has passed into a new stage of maturity and can be expected to show greater responsibility. They should have taken it for granted that Jesus would be wanting to move forward in His understanding of the things of God and would take advantage of a Passover festival. Twenty-five years later He would be crucified at a Passover festival, and He would Himself be the Passover Lamb of God! They should have known that He would be at the temple ^{☞1}.

☞1 2:49

Jesus submits to them. He knows more than His parents. They did not quite understand Him ^{☞1}. He has greater spiritual wisdom, yet He submits to them. Although He is the Son of God He does not ask them to obey Him; He obeys them. Mary just keeps thoughtfully considering what has happened ^{☞2}.

☞1 2:50

☞2 2:51

5. Grew into readiness for God's purposes

5. Jesus grew into readiness for the purpose of God. Because the Son of God was a real human being, He developed steadily until He was ready for the greatest purpose of God in His life.

- (i) He grew mentally. '*Jesus increased in wisdom*'.
- (ii) He grew physically. '*Jesus increased... in stature*'.
- (iii) He grew spiritually. '*Jesus increased... in favour with God*'.
- (iv) He grew socially. '*Jesus increased... in favour with . . . man*'.

There was a steady all-round development in Jesus' life. God was getting Him ready.

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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