

A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

† THE BOOK OF LUKE

WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

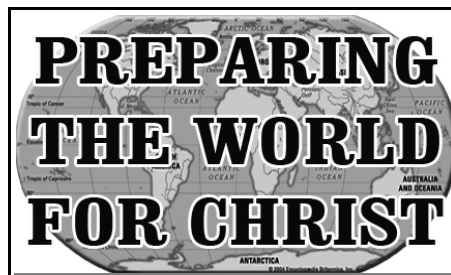
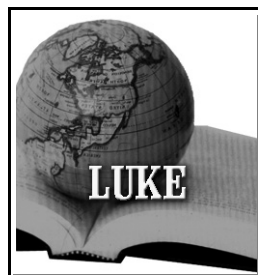
An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely

Lesson #9

COMMENTARY ON: 2:41-52

JESUS AT TWELVE YEARS OF AGE

The Gospel narratives leaps forward from Jesus being two years old (Matt 2:16), until He was twelve years of age. At that time, Joseph and Mary went to the Passover Feast, as was their custom, taking Jesus with them. When they returned, Jesus remained in Jerusalem without them knowing it. After three days, and searching for Him among their kinfolk, they returned to the city, finding Him in the Temple, dialoging with the experts in the Law. His mother chided Him for remaining there, and He guilelessly asked her if she was aware that He had to be about His "Father's business." He then returned with them, being subject to them, while Mary "kept all these sayings in her heart." A summary statement is then made concerning the rest of His life, until He began His ministry at thirty years of age. He grew, advancing in "wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" – critical and intended areas of growth and advancement. In this account we have the godly standard for twelve year-olds.

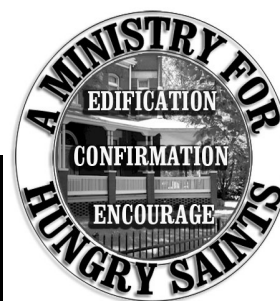


Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ



The Book of Luke 1/9/2015

Lesson Number 9



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

PERSUADED OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS WE BELIEVE, LUKE MAKES US MORE FIRM BY BUTTRESSING OUR FAITH, AND CONFIRMING WE HAVE NOT EMBRACED FABLES.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

JESUS AT TWELVE YEARS OF AGE

.. Luke 2:40 And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him." ⁴¹ Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. ⁴³ And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. ⁴⁴ But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. ⁴⁵ And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him. ⁴⁶ And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. ⁴⁸ And when they saw Him, they were amazed: and His mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. ⁴⁹ And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business? ⁵⁰ And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them. ⁵¹ And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Luke 2:40-52

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

The Gospel narrative leaps forward from Jesus being two years old (Matt 2:16), until He was twelve years of age. Matthew relates an event that took place when Jesus was two years of age. After the wise men found Jesus, they were "warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own

country another way" (Mat 2:12). An angel then appeared to Joseph in a dream, and told him to flee to Egypt, "for Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him" (Matt 2:13).

After some time, because they did not return to Herod as he had told them to do, "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was

exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men" (Matt 2:16). Thus we see that Joseph and Mary had lingered in Bethlehem for around two years, and that it took the wise men about that length of time to

CONTENTS

- ▶ INTRODUCTION
- ▶ THE CHILD GREW (2:40)
- ▶ THEY WENT EVERY YEAR (2:41)
- ▶ HE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD (2:42)
- ▶ THE CHILD JESUS TARRIED BEHIND (2:43)
- ▶ THEY FOUND HIM NOT, AND TURNED BACK AGAIN TO JERUSALEM (2:44-45)
- ▶ THEY FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE (2:46-47)
- ▶ THEY WERE AMAZED (2:48)
- ▶ HOW IS IT THAT YE SOUGHT ME (2:49)
- ▶ THEY UNDERSTOOD NOT THE SAYING (2:50)
- ▶ HE WENT DOWN WITH THEM AND WAS SUBJECT TO THEM (2:51)
- ▶ HE INCREASED IN WISDOM, STATURE, AND FAVOR (2:52)

find Jesus. Yet, as is characteristic of the Holy Spirit, He provides a minimum of information about things incidental to the salvation Jesus came to effect. **Herod was not a significant factor in the birth and growth Jesus, but was incidental.** Therefore, no time is spent developing that two-year period.

Over the years I have become more acutely aware of how much time can be wasted on incidents. This can take place in living, and in preaching and teaching as well. **It is good to seek to be a good steward of time.**

At the time, Joseph and Mary went to the Passover Feast, as was their custom, taking Jesus with them. When they returned, Jesus remained in Jerusalem without them knowing it. After some time, and after searching for Him among their kinfolk, they returned to the city, finding Him in the Temple dialoging with the experts in the Law.

His mother chided Him for remaining there, and He guilelessly asked her if she was aware that He had to be about His *"Father's business."* He then returned with them, being subject to them, while Mary *"kept all these*

sayings in her heart." A summary statement is then made concerning the rest of His life, until He began His ministry at thirty years of age. He grew, advancing in *"wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man"* – critical and intended areas of growth and advancement. In this account we have the godly standard for twelve year-olds.

This is an important report concerning the life of young Jesus, confirming the extent of His godly demeanor, and verifying that no sin or ungodly trait was found in Him throughout the years of His youth, and that of a young man – until He was thirty years of age. **Jesus did not sin as a two-year-old, twelve-year old, young man, or mature man. Satan had nothing in Him throughout His entire life.**

The relevance of this is seen in the fact that He had emptied Himself of the prerogatives of Deity in order enter the world as Man. **In other words, He overcame the flesh, the world, and the devil using the same resources that are available to us.** That was part of humbling Himself.

As difficult as it may be to receive, in the living of life itself, those who are in Christ Jesus have access to all of the resources that Jesus accessed. Any difference is by measure. Jesus' work was larger than ours, and so He had a greater measure of the Spirit, etc. **However, just as He was fully adequate for what He was assigned to do, so believers are fully adequate for what they have been assigned to do.** It is in this sense that *"all things are yours"* (1 Cor 3:21), and we can also *"do all things through Christ which strengtheneth"* us (Phil 4:13).

Throughout history, few people have grasped this truth. Countless believers have limped haltingly through life just as though no provisions have been given to us. Things like:

- ⇒ *"The gift of the Holy Spirit"* (Acts 2:38).
- ⇒ *"The exceeding greatness of the power to us-ward who believe"* (Eph 1:19).
- ⇒ *"All things that pertain to life and godliness"* (2 Pet 1:3).
- ⇒ *"All spiritual blessings"* (Eph 1:4).
- ⇒ *"The Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"* (2 Tim 1:7)
- ⇒ *"The riches of His grace"* (Eph 1:7).
- ⇒ *"All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"* (Col 2:3).
- ⇒ *"The whole armor of God"* (Eph 6:10-18).
- ⇒ Effective *"weapons of our warfare"* (2 Cor 10:1-4).
- ⇒ Access to *"the throne of grace"* to *"obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need"* (Heb 4:15-16).

All of these, and more, can be accessed by faith. They are what Jesus used to live a thoroughly spotless life, and they are fully adequate for us to live godly and profitable lives.

Things to Remember

Let us keep these things in mind when we read of the life of Jesus. **He**

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lived out the truth that God always gives the individual what is necessary for him to fulfill what is required of him. Christ's commission was the greatest and most extensive of all – not to be compared with what others are charged with doing.

His work covered several domains: the earth, mankind, and the powers of darkness, and heaven. He was made adequate for this work with the same resources given to men in smaller measures that matched their work. **The**

commandments and commissions of God are not suggestions, and they are not to be viewed as goals for life. These are things that God intends for us to do, and He in faithfulness has supplied everything that is required to enable us to do them.

THE CHILD GREW

“ Luke 2:40 **And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.**”



This text announces a most remarkable thing. If the Child had grown in the heavenly chambers, it would be easy enough to see. **However, He grew up in the world – a world dominated by Satan and the powers of darkness.** The world itself had been corrupted, and contained allurements that, until that time, no one had been able to totally avoid. On top of that, there were religious corruptions, hypocritical leaders, and a departure from the Lord. Spiritually, the people were sitting in darkness (Matt 4:16). The world was not a comkely environment.

10 Jesus did not enter this “evil world” (Gal 1:4) as a man, perceptive of the situation, and thoroughly equipped to overcome it. He entered it as “a Babe,” with all of the vulnerabilities that accompany that status. He had to advance in years, coming to the point where He was fully conscious of His mission. Do not think for a moment that Satan and his hosts did not attempt to capitalize on that situation! That is what Herod’s attempt to slay the young child was all about. On the surface, it appeared as though it was nothing more than Herod feeling as though his kingship was being threatened. However, it was much more than that! **It was Satan working through Herod, who was one of his own slaves.** The devil was trying to thwart the bruising of his own head, which God Himself had told him was on the Divine agenda.

How can a small child be expected to grow into manhood without all of this corrupting Him? – without falling prey to the devices of the wicked one? AND, in addition to all of this, the devil and his army of darkness was **aggressive** in their attempts to eliminate, or at least corrupt, the Holy One.

Joseph and Mary will care for the child – but their care will not be

enough. In the young Jesus the Psalm was fulfilled: “*For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways*” (Psa 91:11). If the Lord protected little Moses, we may be sure He will protect young and growing Jesus. **He will use means, to be sure, but it is He that is doing the protecting.**

THE CHILD GREW

“And the Child grew . . .”

These precise words were said of Isaac (Gen 21:8), and of Moses (Ex 2:10), of Samson (Judges 13:24), and of John the Baptist (Lk 1:80). **All of them were special children, sent to do a special work, and therefore provided special protection that was not granted to some other children** (Ex 1:22; Jer 31:15; Matt 2:16-18).

In spite of the vulnerability of childhood, and the limited strength of parents, “*the child grew.*” Other versions read, “*continued to grow,*” ^{NASB} “*became tall*” ^{BBE} “*grew up,*” ^{CEB} “*grew to maturity,*” ^{NJB} “*grew up healthy,*” ^{NLT} “*began to grow up,*” ^{LIVING} and “*was developing into a mature young man.*” ^{ERV}

The point is not the various stages of youthful development, but growth that culminated in maturity. His mission would only be fulfilled when He was a man. While He was a youth, no part of His mission was fulfilled – unless it be that He partook of “*flesh and blood*” (Heb 2:14), and of the experience of temptation (Heb 2:15). However, when it came to the putting away of sin (Heb 9:26), reconciling the world to God (Col 1:21), destroying the devil (Heb 2:14), and sanctifying the people (Heb 13:12), none of that was accomplished while He was growing up. Rather, He grew up

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so He could carry out those matters.

The Parallel in Spiritual Growth

The development of “newness of life” is parallel to the growth of Jesus. Just as being a Babe was not the intention of Jesus coming into the world, so becoming a “Christian” is not the real objective of newness of life. The new believer is expected to “grow up into Christ in all things” (Eph 4:15). He is expected to come to the point where he can discern good and evil (Heb 12:11), and minister edification to the body of Christ (Eph 4:11-16). **A “Christian” who does not grow up is like a Jesus who never grew up – they really serve no purpose if they remain in an infant stage of spiritual life.** In our time, it is obvious that very few professing “Christians” know this.

HE WAXED STRONG IN SPIRIT

“the Child . . . waxed strong in spirit . . .”

Other versions read, “become strong,” ^{NASB} “became strong,” ^{NIV} “waxed strong,” ^{ASV} “was strengthened in spirit,” ^{MRD} “strong, robust lad,” ^{LIVING} “became stronger,” ^{IE} “gain in strength,” ^{WILLIAMS} “was fortified in spirit,” ^{ABP} “was comforted of the Spirit,” ^{JUB} “wise in spirit,” ^{MESSAGE} and “became strong in spirit.” ^{AMPLIFIED}

Several of the versions omit the words “in spirit.” This is because several of the Greek manuscripts omit that Greek word (pneuma). This omission is not honored by most commentators. Aside from that circumstance, it seems to me that the text is providing a full depiction of Jesus’ growth within and without, in body and in soul. I take “strong in spirit” to be the maturing of His mind, and of His grasp of the things of God.

HE WAS FILLED WITH WISDOM

“ . . . filled with wisdom . . . ”

Other versions read, “increasing in wisdom,” ^{NASB} “full of wisdom,” ^{DOUAY} “filled with wisdom,” ^{ERV} “known for wisdom beyond His years,” ^{LIVING} “wiser,” ^{IE} “continued to increase in wisdom,” ^{WILLIAMS} “thoughtful,” ^{GOODSPEED} and “wise in spirit.” ^{MESSAGE}

The extent to which the Word humbled Himself, making “*Himself of no reputation,*” and taking on Himself “*the form of a servant*” transcends man’s intellectual capacity. As if that was not enough, after He was “*found in the fashion as Man,*” mature in years, and cognitive of all things, He “*humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*” (Phil 2:6-8).

Lord during His youthful years. The fact that He went through the experience of increasing in wisdom, means that He can effectively guide you in going through that same process.

THE GRACE OF GOD WAS UPON HIM

“ . . . and the grace of God was upon Him.”

Other versions read, “the favor of

A “Christian” who does not grow up is like a Jesus who never grew up – they really serve no purpose if they remain in an infant stage of spiritual life. In our time, it is obvious that very few professing “Christians” know this.

In the expression of this verse (“filled with wisdom”), we see that becoming a Man involved having to “learn,” which is the appointed link to becoming wise. In order to save men, “the Word” submitted to this arrangement, which, for a season, would make Him subject to others who would teach Him.

In doing this, Jesus sanctified the path that we also must take. God is not glorified by simplistic and ignorant followers. All believers are told, “*Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is*” (Eph 5:17). And again, “*Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time*” (Col 4:5). In fact, salvation includes the provision of wisdom. Thus Paul prayed, “*That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him*” (Eph 1:17). And again, “*For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*” (Col 1:9).

This is an area where we are expected to increase, as did our blessed

God was upon Him,” ^{NRSV} “*God’s favor was on Him,*” ^{CEB} “*the grace of God was with Him,*” ^{TNT} “*God poured out His blessings on Him,*” ^{LIVING} “*the favor of God rested upon Him,*” ^{WEYMOUTH} “*the spiritual blessing of God was on Him,*” ^{WILLIAMS} “*God blessed Him,*” ^{CEV} “*God was blessing Him,*” ^{ERV} “*God’s blessings ere upon Him,*” ^{GNB} “*the grace (favor and spiritual blessing) of God was upon Him.*” ^{AMPLIFIED}

What is involved in the grace of God being on someone? It was said of the early church, “*and great grace was upon them all*” (Acts 4:33). The phrase “the grace of God” is mentioned twenty-one times in Scripture, all from Matthew through Revelation. **This text is the first time it is mentioned in Scripture, and the only place in the Gospels that it is mentioned.** There are five references to it in the book of Acts It is mentioned 14 other times (Rom 5:15; 1 Cor 1:4; 3:10; 15:10; 2 Cor 1:12; 2 Cor 6:1; 8:1; Gal 2:21; Eph 2:2; 3:7; Col 1:6; Tit 2:11; Heb 2:9; 12:15).

Prior to Christ any references to God’s grace were few and far between. I think the following is all of them. None of them refer to God’s grace being “on” anyone. Most of the time, it referred to being spared from punishment or death.

- ⇒ MOSES: *"that I may find grace in Thy sight."* (Ex 33:13; 34:9)
- ⇒ GOD TO MOSES: *"Thou hast found grace in My sight"* (Ex 33:12-17).
- ⇒ NOAH: *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."* (Gen 6:8).
- ⇒ THROUGH JEREMIAH: *"Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest"* (Jer 31:2).

Meanings assigned to the word "grace" are as follows.

- ⇒ THAYER (GREEK): "GOOD-WILL, LOVING-

KINDNESS, FAVOR; ATTENDS AND ASSISTS ONE; TO BE COMMITTED OR COMMENDED TO THE PROTECTING AND HELPING FAVOR OF GOD; KINDNESS WHICH BESTOWS UPON ONE WHAT HE HAS NOT DESERVED; THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF ONE GOVERNED BY THE POWER OF DIVINE GRACE."

- ⇒ FRIBERG: "AS A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE; (A) ACTIVE, OF WHAT IS FELT TOWARD ANOTHER GOODWILL, FAVOR."

- ⇒ MCCLINTOK AND STRONG'S CYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLE KNOWLEDGE says this about grace: "FAVOR, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, BENEVOLENCE, FRIENDSHIP OF GOD TOWARDS MEN; GOD'S FORGIVING MERCY, AS GRATUITOUS AND OPPOSED TO MERIT."

- ⇒ EASTON'S BIBLE DICTIONARY says: "FAVOR, KINDNESS, FRIENDSHIP; GOD'S FORGIVING MERCY."

- ⇒ SMITH'S BIBLE DICTIONARY says: KINDNESS TOWARD MANKIND SHOWN BY THE LORD JESUS.

Most of these definitions presume a moral need for grace, and that it is not deserved. But that certainly is not the meaning in our text. I gather that here God's grace accounts for the continued protection of the child, especially from malicious intent, either by Satan or by men. It was like a shield around the child that allowed for his advancement in every intended way. However, with Him it was not undeserved.

THEY WENT EVERY YEAR

"⁴¹ Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover."

HIS PARENTS

"Now His parents . . ."

Other versions read, *"His father and mother,"* BBE/TYNDALE and *"His people."* MRD

While it may seem like a technical point, Joseph was not Jesus' "father," as the above version states. The word translated "parents," as used by Greek-speaking people, meant "BEGETTER, PARENT; THE PARENT," THAYER "PARENT; ONLY PLURAL IN THE NT— PARENTS," FRIBERG "BIOLOGICAL OR LEGAL PARENTS - 'PARENTS,'" LOUW-NIDA "ONLY PLURAL IN N.T. — PARENTS."

As used here, it refers to Joseph and Mary as the ones who raised Jesus. It is true that the people thought Joseph was His father: *"And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli"* (Luke 3:23). In our text, Mary will refer to Joseph as Jesus' father (Lk 2:48). Jesus, even at the age of twelve, rebuked her for it (Lk 2:49).

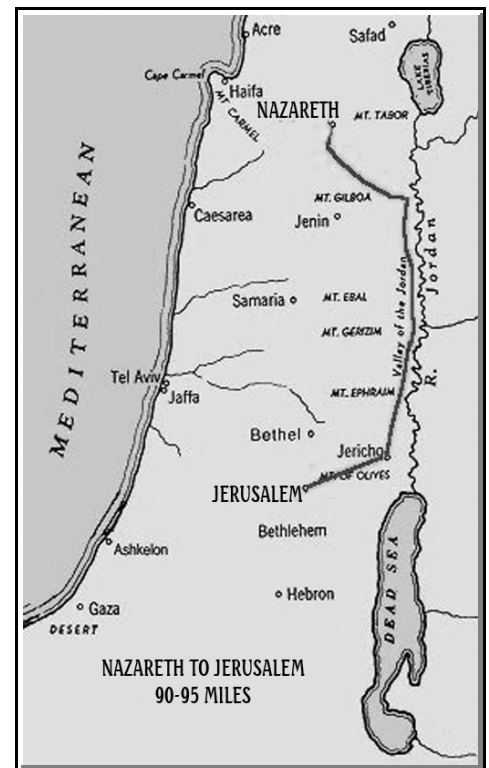
In spite of this circumstance, and the case of the Holy Spirit on the matter, many versions of Scripture refer textually to Joseph as Jesus' "father" = "his father" ASV/NASB/NIV/NRSV/RSV/BBE/CEB/CJB/CSB/DARBY/DOUAY/ERV/ESV/GWN/NET/NJB/IE/WEYMOUTH/ISV/WILLIAMS/MONTGOMERY/GOODSPEED/GW/PHILLIPS/LEB/MESSAGE (Lk 2:33). This again is owing to a variance in the Greek manuscript. Some have the name Joseph, and some use the word for "parent." However, while the word translated "parent" technically may be translated "father," it properly applies to a legal parent as well as a natural one. This distinction is reflected in the Amplified Bible: *"His [legal] father."*

The liberties taken by some translators can in no way be justified. A mere awareness of what the Scriptures say about the Father of Jesus should have constrained the translators to prefer the word "parent."

WENT TO JERUSALEM EVERY YEAR

" . . . went to Jerusalem every year . . ."

Joseph, Mary, and their family made an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This covered a one-way distance of 90-95 miles. It was done in



fulfillment of the commandment of the First Covenant (Ex 12:24-27; Lev 23:4-8; Num 9:2-4; Deut 16:1-2).

AT THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

" . . . at the feast of the Passover."

As indicated in the texts above, the commandment to keep the Passover Feast was quite clear. There was no ambiguity about it at all. There is no indication that they kept this feast during their wilderness wanderings.

⇒ However, it was renewed when entering Canaan (Josh 5:10-11).

⇒ Once again, the people quit observing the Passover, until it was again renewed during the reign of Hezekiah (2 Chron 30:1).

⇒ After lapsing again into

disobedience, it was renewed by king Josiah (2 Kgs 23:21-23).

⇒ There is no record of the Passover being observed during the Babylonian captivity. However, it was once again renewed after Judah returned from that captivity (Ezra 6:19-20).

⇒ Ezekiel, inspired by God, also gave instructions about observing the Passover (Ezek 45:21-24).

As the time of Messiah's entrance into the world came, it appears that this

feast had been firmly put in place once again (Matt 26:2,17-19; Mk 14:1, 12-16; Lk 2:41; 22:1,7-8,11-15; John 2:13,23; John 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:28,39 ; 19:14).

All of this was by Divine intention, for Jesus was the ultimate Passover Lamb, accomplishing the greatest deliverance. Therefore, although the Passover Feast had been historically neglected many times, and for many years, it would not be so when the sacrifice for sin was accomplished. At that time, the Passover Feast was firmly in place.

HE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD

"⁴² And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast."

This was not the first time Joseph and Mary went up, to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover. Already, the Spirit has testified that they went up "every year" to this feast. This time, however, would be a special time, when they would be reminded of the significance of Jesus.

HE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD

"And when He was twelve years old . . ."

This was probably the twelfth

the correctness of the manner in which Joseph and Mary raised Jesus.

This was the manner in which devout Jews lived their lives. Even during the time when Jesus was crucified, and up until after He had risen from the dead *"there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven"* (Acts 2:5) – there to observe the Passover, just like Joseph and Mary had faithfully done.

I think this is a good time to note the times in which we are living. **This kind of commitment is virtually unknown in the professing church.** Even

10:25), is much neglected in favor of other preferences.

It is a sad state of affairs when those living under the Law are more devoted and consistent than those professing to have been *"saved by grace."* Ponder the many advantages that are realized in Christ Jesus. Here a few of the fundamental benefits.

⇒ They have been *"blessed with all spiritual blessings"* (Eph 1:3).

⇒ They have been given *"all things that pertain to life and godliness"* (2 Pet 1:3).

⇒ The Holy Spirit leads them to *"mortify the deeds of the body"* (Rom 8:13-14).

⇒ They have access to God *"with confidence"* (Eph 3:12).

⇒ They can *"obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need"* (Heb 4:15-16).

⇒ The Lord can keep them, *"from falling"* (Jude 1:24).

⇒ They have been provided with the *"whole armor of God"* (Eph 6:10-18).

⇒ They can *"do all things through"*

The young Jesus was raised in a culture of obedience to the Lord – where what the Lord commanded took the priority over everything else.

Passover Jesus had attended with Joseph and Mary. **The young Jesus was raised in a culture of obedience to the Lord – where what the Lord commanded took the priority over everything else.** Our text will confirm

the weekly assembly, of which the saints are admonished, *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"* (Heb

Christ" who strengthens them (Phil 4:13).

- ⇒ They have been "made accepted in the Beloved" (Eph 1:6).
- ⇒ They can "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph 4:24).
- ⇒ As they behold the glory of the Lord, they are being "changed from glory to glory" by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3:18).

These advantages belong to everyone who is in Christ Jesus.

AFTER THE CUSTOM OF THE FEAST

" . . . they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast."

Other versions read, "according to the custom of the feast," NKJV "as usual," NRSV "according to custom," RSV "as their way was," BBE "according to the custom of the festival," CSB "as they were accustomed," MRD "which they attended each year," LIVING "as they always did," IE "the custom of the holiday," ABP "went there as usual for the celebration," CEV "made their customary stay," GOODSPEED and "as was their custom." AMPLIFIED

There are two differing views set forth by the various versions. Some read that the family went up according to the custom of the feast, while the other says they went up according to their custom. The word "custom" is translated from a Greek word (ethos) meaning, "USAGE PRESCRIBED BY LAW, INSTITUTE, PRESCRIPTION, RITE," THAYER "(1) HABIT, CUSTOM, USAGE; (2) AS FIXED OR TRADITIONAL LAW AND ORDER CUSTOM, LAW," FRIBERG "A PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR MORE

I do not know what compelled some translators to represent this as being the custom of Joseph and Mary. While they certainly did go up to this feast regularly, that regularity was according to the directives of the Law.

OR LESS FIXED BY TRADITION AND GENERALLY SANCTIONED BY THE SOCIETY - 'CUSTOM, HABIT,' LOUW-NIDA "CUSTOM, HABIT," LIDDELL-SCOTT AND "CUSTOM, LAW." GINGRICH

I do not know what compelled some translators to represent this as being the custom of Joseph and Mary. While they certainly did go up to this feast regularly, that regularity was according to the directives of the Law. The action of Joseph and Mary confirmed their devotion to God, not to self-formed habits.

The Passover was among the "set feasts" (Num 29:39). It commenced on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, with the feast itself beginning on the fifteenth day, lasting for one week (Num 28:16-17).

- ⇒ In the first day, there was to be no work (Num 28:18).
- ⇒ A burnt offering was to be made of two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year, and without blemish (Num 28:19).
- ⇒ A meal offering was to be made for the bullock, ram, and seven lambs (Num 28:20).

- ⇒ One goat was to be offered for a sin offering (Num 28:22).
- ⇒ These offerings were made in addition to the morning burnt offering (Num 28:23).
- ⇒ These offerings were to be made for seven days (Num 28:24).
- ⇒ On the seventh day they were to do no servile work (Num 28:25).

I do not know how precisely the feast was observed by the Jews at this time. The point I am making is that the feast was observed in a certain way, or manner. I understand this to be the manner, or custom, in which Joseph and Mary observed the Feast. This was also one of the Feasts the proscription was stated, "they shall not appear before the Lord empty" (Deut 16:16).

The devotion of Joseph and Mary was not seen in a mere habit they had developed, but rather in their willing and thoughtful obedience to God's commandment. The thought of this being cared out perfunctorily is offensive to me. God has never accepted that kind of service.

THE CHILD JESUS TARRIED BEHIND

⁴³ *And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it."*

AND WHEN THEY HAD FULFILLED THE DAYS

"And when they had fulfilled the days . . ."

"THESE WERE EIGHT DAYS IN ALL — ONE DAY FOR KILLING THE PASCHAL LAMB, AND SEVEN DAYS FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD, (EXODUS 12:15; LEVITICUS 23:5,6)." ALBERT BARNES

They remained in Jerusalem for the full time specified by the Law. This was the manner of faithful Jews – **they made no attempt to rob God of the time He required – seven days in all** (Ex 12:15; 13:6; 23:15; 34:18; Lev 23:6; Num 28:17,24; Deut 16:3).

Some are of the opinion that God no longer requires specific times from His people – even though He has revealed Himself as a God who does things at certain times.

- ⇒ Noah had to build the ark at a **certain time** (Gen 6:14-16).
- ⇒ Abraham had to leave Ur at a **certain time** (Gen 12:1).
- ⇒ Jacob had to return to Canaan at a **certain time** (Gen 31:13).
- ⇒ Israel was commanded to leave Egypt at a **certain time** (Ex 12:41).
- ⇒ Israel was required to appear before the Lord at certain times (Ex 23:17).
- ⇒ The day of atonement was observed at a **certain time** (Lev 23:27).
- ⇒ Habakkuk was given a vision for an appointed time – at a **certain time** (Hab 2:3).
- ⇒ Jesus was born at a **certain time** (Gal 4:4).
- ⇒ Jesus was required to lay down His life at a **certain time** (John 17:1).
- ⇒ He rose from the dead at a **certain time** (Lk 24:46).
- ⇒ The day of Pentecost came at a **certain time** (Acts 2:1).
- ⇒ The Holy Spirit called Barnabas and Saul at a **certain time** (Acts 13:2).
- ⇒ Jesus will return in glory at a **certain time** (1 Tim 6:15).
- ⇒ God's determined purpose will be fulfilled "in the dispensation of the fulness of the times" (Eph 1:10-11).
- ⇒ The "first day of the week" is of

special significance to the saints of God (Mark 16:9; John 20:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2).

- ⇒ There is such a time as "**a certain day**" that limits the time given to respond to God (Heb 4:7).

ISRAEL WAS AN ENVIRONMENT FOR HOLY WORKING AND CONFIRMATION

The Divinely chosen people of Israel provided an environment in which a God who works within the framework

John points out the relevance of men's response to Divine requirements.

- ⇒ "**We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.**" (1 John 3:14)
- ⇒ "**My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall**

Now, in this text we will find the heart of young Jesus revealed. It is within the framework of a Divinely structured state that His character will be made known: an appointed feast, held at an appointed time, and within an appointed place.

of "times and seasons" (Dan 2:21; Acts 1:7; 1 Thess 5:1) could be made known. **He does not accomplish His will in a helter-skelter environment – one of chaos and disorder.** The Scriptures immediately introduce us to this fact in the account of creation. The work began by first eliminating chaos and disorder. The creation was then accomplished in an orderly and timely manner – which is God's way.

Now, in Israel, and through the Law and its attending ordinances, men were introduced to Divine timeliness and orderliness.

A Point of Revelation

The commandments and ordinances of the Lord are points at which the attitude and commitment of the people are revealed, or made known. How a person responds to God reveals the state of their hearts and minds. Dullness (Matt 13:15; Acts 28:27; Heb 5:11) and slowness (Lk 24:25; Tit 1:12) are intolerable qualities in the Divine arrangement – yet they are dominant qualities in the professing church.

assure our hearts before Him." (1 John 3:18-19)

- ⇒ "**And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.**" (1 John 3:24)
- ⇒ "**By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments.**" (1 John 5:2)

Now, in this text we will find the heart of young Jesus revealed. It is within the framework of a Divinely structured state that His character will be made known: an appointed feast, held at an appointed time, and within an appointed place.

THE CHILD JESUS TARRIED BEHIND

"... as they returned, the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem..."

At least seven days had passed, each of which were wholly devoted to the Lord (Ex 12:15). On the first day and seventh day there was a "holy convocation" (Ex 12:16; Lev 23:7-8),

or “sacred assembly.” ^{NIV} The word “convocation” means “A CALLING TOGETHER, SACRED ASSEMBLY.” ^{STRONG’S} There was, then, both private and public activities – one full week during which they could do “no work” (Ex 12:16; Deut 16:8). Seven full and uninterrupted days devoted to the Lord, and particularly the deliverance of the people from an Egyptian bondage and oppression that lasted for four centuries.

I suppose that would have sufficed for most of the people – but not for young Jesus. It had apparently whetted His appetite, and He wanted more. This was done with a devoted heart and mind, and hungering and thirsting for the things of God: “He tarried behind in Jerusalem.” It was certainly not to do some sight-seeing, or to spend some time with the young people who lived in Jerusalem.

JOSEPH AND HIS MOTHER KNEW NOT
“ . . . and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.”

Jesus had apparently been separated from Joseph and Mary, and now they had no idea that as they returned home, Jesus was not with them. This confirms how trustworthy young Jesus was. They just assumed He was with the traveling group.

THEY FOUND HIM NOT and THEY TURNED BACK AGAIN TO JERUSALEM

“ ⁴⁴ But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. ⁴⁵ And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him.”

SUPPOSING HIM TO HAVE BEEN IN THE COMPANY

“But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey . . .”

Other versions read “in the caravan,” ^{NASB} “the group of travelers,” ^{NRSV} “some of their number,” ^{BBE} “their band of travelers,” ^{CEB} “with friends among the other travelers,” ^{LIVING} and “the company of pilgrims.” ^{MESSAGE}

Here we learn something else

time, they traveled together. This togetherness surfaces several places in the Gospel accounts of Christ. Andrew, Peter, James and John were fishers together (Lk 5:4-7). Following Christ’s death, the disciples gathered together (Lk 24:33). The Temple was a gathering place (Lk 24:53). People flocked together to hear Jesus (Lk 5:1; 6:17).

Speaking only for myself, I have no respect for a form of religion, or a religious persuasion, that does not cause the people to come together for purposes of edification.

THEY SOUGHT HIM AMONG THEIR KINSFOLK AND ACQUAINTANCES

“ . . . and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. . . ”

Behold the caliber of the kinsfolk

now they are returning to their homes together. Even though this kind of camaraderie should be increased among those professing the name of Christ, it has actually decreased, and is continuing to do so. I also am aware that there is a kind of people who do not have the faintest idea what I am talking about.

THEY FOUND HIM NOT AND TURNED BACK

“ . . . And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him.”

They are one day away from Jerusalem, a day’s journey being estimated at eighteen to twenty miles. ^{MCCLINTOK & STRONG’S} They will have to journey that far back to Jerusalem, making the total travel 36-40 miles – quite a delay.

I do not know if they had passed any villages or stopovers during that first day, but if they did, it apparently did not enter their minds that young Jesus was anywhere except Jerusalem.

A PRINCIPLE TO BE SEEN

Being unable to find Jesus, Joseph and Mary had to return to the last place they were aware of Him – Jerusalem. All totaled, it took two full days. – one third of the total journey home (100 miles @ 18 miles per day = 5.5 days; 100 miles at 24 miles per day

about Jewish manners. It was their religion that banded them together. When they journeyed to an appointed Feast in Jerusalem, at an appointed

and acquaintances of Joseph and Mary. They had traveled together for around one hundred miles to observe a feast that had been ordained of God – and

It would be nice if such recoveries were instantaneous, but that is not always the way it really is. It is possible for recovery to take a while.

= 5 days.

Spiritual recovery involves a similar process. One has to find where

he departed from the way, or lost Christ, and pick up where they left off. This could be viewed as recovering from the snare of the devil (2 Tim

2:26). It would be nice if such recoveries were instantaneous, but that is not always the way it really is. It is possible for recovery to take a while.

THEY FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE

"⁴⁶ And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers."

AFTER THREE DAYS

"And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him . . ."

Other versions read, *"On the third day they found him,"* ^{CJB} *"Three days later"* ^{GWN} and *"The next day."* ^{MESSAGE}

It is generally considered that the three days consisted of a days journey away from Jerusalem, a day's journey back, and a day of searching in Jerusalem. It is true that Jerusalem was probably packed with pilgrims. However, I do not doubt that Joseph and Mary knew the kind of place in which young Jesus could be found. It would not be in a place of pleasure or commerce.

THEY FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE

" . . . in the temple . . ."

Other versions read, *"in the temple courts,"* ^{NIV} *"in the Temple court,"* ^{CJB} *"temple complex,"* ^{CSB} *"temple courtyard"* ^{GWN} and *"in the [court of the] temple."* ^{AMPLIFIED}



HEROD'S TEMPLE - SCALE MODEL IN ISRAEL MUSEUM

The Temple proper is where the priests and high priest ministered. The people did not have access to this part of the Temple. There were, however, numerous courtyards in the Temple, and the young Jesus was found in one of these. This is where the lame man Peter healed was found leaping and praising God (Acts 3:8). It is also the area in which Jesus often ministered (Matt 21:23). The apostles did the same (Acts 5:25). It is also one of the places where early believers met (Lk 24:53).

SITTING WITH THE DOCTORS

" . . . sitting in the midst of the doctors. . ."

Other versions read, *"in the midst of the teachers,"* ^{NKJV} *"sitting among the teachers,"* ^{NRSV} *"the wise men,"* ^{BBE} *"the rabbis,"* ^{CJB} *"teachers of Law,"* ^{LIVING} and *"religious teachers."* ^{ERV}

The Greek word translated "doctor" [didaskalos] means, *"a teacher; in the N. T. one who teaches concerning the things of God, and the duties of man,"* ^{THAYER} *"teacher; as a title of dignity and respect master, teacher."* ^{FRIEBERG}

In the Jewish economy, men who were perceived as authorities on the Word of God were given the precedence. Even to this day, experts who are educated in a certain field are given the title of "doctor." The terms *"Rabbi"* and *"Master"* are used in the same way in Scripture. Thus when Jesus came to dwell among men, He was known as *"Rabbi"* (John 1:38; 3:2; 6:25), *"Master"* (Matt 8:19; 12:38), and *"Teacher"* (John 3:2).

It is of interest to me that Jesus is rarely considered a "Teacher" today, nor indeed, are good teachers

considered church leaders.

However, among the people God cultured, and those who took the things of God seriously, teachers were given the priority.

Notice how young Jesus was sitting in the middle of *"the doctors,"* surrounded, as it were, with those considered experts in the Scriptures. These were men with an advanced knowledge of what was contained in the Scripture, and also were above average in their understanding of the prophetic and practical implications of Scripture (Matt 2:4-5; 17:10; 22:41-42; John 7:41-42).

I want to again underscore the Jews commitment to the Scriptures, even though they did not do well in adapting their lives to them. Among them, those who handled the Scriptures were held in high regard. Compare this with the kind of men who are highly esteemed by the nominal church.

We are being exposed to the mindset of Jesus at the age of twelve. His inquiries were not concerning what **young people were to do, but focused in what the Scriptures had said.**

BOTH HEARING AND ASKING

" . . . both hearing them, and asking them questions. . . ."

Other versions read, *"listening to them and asking them questions,"* ^{NKJV} *"giving ear to their words and putting questions to them,"* ^{BBE} *"listening to them but questioning what they said,"* ^{CJB} *"both hearing them and posing them,"* ^{TNT} and *"discussing deep questions with them."* ^{LIVING}

Young Jesus was in a different

environment than He was at home. Now He was in the Temple. Later in His life He will refer to this same Temple as “My Father’s house” (John 2:16), and “a house of prayer” (Matt 21:13). Here He seemed to sense He had access to things that could not be appropriated in the local synagogue. **There was more going on here that was associated with God.** He could hear things here that could not be heard in other places, and could ask questions that could be asked with expectation elsewhere. Other people came here perfunctorily, just to fulfill a duty. But young Jesus felt more at home here, and was taking full advantage of the opportunity. He had been hearing and asking questions for three days, and was apparently taking great delight in the opportunity.

I realize that this is a matter that can be taken too far, but I feel as though I should say a little more about it. I know that God is everywhere, and that He can be accessed from the floor of the Jonah’s sea to mount Pisgah’s lofty heights. **And yet, there are environments where more can be experienced, more can be seen, and more can be asked.** I have been in religious environments where I felt constricted and handicapped, while in others I felt as though I had been freed. There are some places where I want to linger, and listen, and ask questions, while other environs do not awaken such desires.

Our desire is that our gatherings might be such as awaken spiritual desires in both young and old—a place where valid questions can be asked and answered, and listening can be a profitable experience.

ALL THAT HEARD HIM WERE ASTONISHED

“ . . . And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and

answers.”

Other versions read, “were amazed,” ^{NASB} “full of wonder,” ^{BBE} “marveled,” ^{TNT} “astonished at His intelligence and at the answers He gave,” ^{WEYMOUTH} “surprised at how much He knew and at the answers He gave,” ^{CEV} “amazed at His intelligent answers,” ^{GNB} “His answers stunned everyone who heard Him,” ^{GW} “amazed at His insight,” ^{LEB} “impressed with the sharpness of His answers,” ^{MESSAGE} “astonished and overwhelmed with bewildered wonder at His intelligence and understanding and His replies.” ^{AMPLIFIED}

7:14,28; John 8:2,20; 18:20).

There was no rational explanation for the obvious wisdom and understanding of this twelve year old boy. No one could simply say that He had been raised properly, and taught thoroughly in the home. **They perceived something in Jesus that had not been given to Him through natural channels.** At this time He was not omniscient, for He was asking questions. He was, as will be attested later, increasing in wisdom as well as stature (Lk 2:52). Until this time He had “waxed strong in spirit,” was “filled with wisdom,” and “the grace of God was upon Him” (Lk

Many professing Christians grossly underestimate the level of spiritual understanding that is possible for children to obtain. However, they must be in a proper environment.

The word translated “astonished” [existemi] means, “TO DISPLACE: TO THROW ONE OUT OF HIS MIND, DRIVE ONE OUT OF HIS SENSES; TO AMAZE, ASTONISH, THROW INTO WONDERMENT; TO BE AMAZED, ASTOUNDED,” ^{THAYER} “TO BE AMAZED BEYOND COMPREHENSION CONFUSE, ASTOUND, AMAZE,” ^{FRIBERG} “CAUSE SOMEONE TO BE SO ASTOUNDED AS TO BE PRACTICALLY OVERWHELMED - TO ASTONISH GREATLY, TO GREATLY ASTOUND, TO ASTOUND COMPLETELY.” ^{LOUW-NIDA}

Apparently people had gathered around to hear this rather lengthy dialog. There were, then, others in the Temple who had an interest in the things of God. **Later in Christ’s ministry, the Temple will be a place where He taught and answered various questions** (Mk 12:35-37; Lk 19:47; 20:1; John

2:40). But now, at the age of twelve, He was grasping more than others His own age – and apparently even more than some considerably older than He.

At this point all things had not been given into His hand, as they would be when He began His ministry (Matt 11:27; John 3:36; 5:22; ,17:2). There is a sense in which He was given what all of God’s children are given, with the exception that it was eventually “without measure” given to Him.

Many professing Christians grossly underestimate the level of spiritual understanding that is possible for children to obtain. However, they must be in a proper environment.

THEY WERE AMAZED

“⁴⁸ And when they saw Him, they were amazed: and His mother said unto

him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold, Thy father and I have

sought Thee sorrowing.”

AND WHEN THEY SAW HIM

"And when they saw Him, they were amazed . . ."

Other versions read, *"astonished,"* NASB *"surprised,"* BBE *"shocked,"* CEB *"They wondered,"* DOUAY *"overwhelmed"* NET *"overcome,"* NJB *"didn't know what to think,"* NLT *"s m i t t e n w i t h amazement,"* WEYMOUTH *"utterly amazed,"* WILLIAMS *and "were not impressed; they were upset and hurt."* MESSAGE

The word translated *"amazed"* [ekplesso] has the following lexical meaning: "TO STRIKE ONE OUT OF SELF-POSSESSION, TO STRIKE WITH PANIC, SHOCK, ASTONISH; PASSIVE TO BE STRUCK WITH ASTONISHMENT, ASTONISHED, AMAZED; ABSOLUTELY," THAYER "BE AMAZED OR ASTOUNDED, BE STRUCK WITH ASTONISHMENT (MT 7.28); (2) BE OVERWHELMED, BE BEWILDERED," FRIBERG and "TO BE ASTONISHED AT A THING." LIDDELL-SCOTT

What Joseph and Mary saw and heard on this occasion was something that could not be wrapped in their thinking. They were unable to process this situation in a logical and sound manner. They were apparently bewildered or perplexed by the fact these doctors had allowed the young Jesus to sit among them, and had even impressed them with His understanding. **To this point it appears they had not clearly seen this aspect of Jesus, which being in the Temple brought out of Him.**

Keep in mind the truth to which

father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

- ⇒ Gabriel told Mary, *"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."* (Luke 1:35).
- ⇒ Joseph was told that Mary had conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit, and that He would *"save His people from their sins"* (Matt 1:21).
- ⇒ The shepherds had told them what was revealed to them, namely *"glad tidings"* which would be *"to all people,"* that a *"Savior,"* had been born, which was *"Christ the Lord"* (Lk 2:10-11).
- ⇒ When Jesus was yet an infant, Simeon had taken the child in his arms, and said to God in their presence, *"mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel"* (Luke 2:30-32).
- ⇒ Simeon had told them, *"Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a Sign which shall be spoken against"* (Luke 2:34).

Child and present gifts to Him. Jesus is twelve years old, and Joseph and Mary react to Him being in the Temple just as though they had never known anything about this Holy Child. He had grown up under their faithful tutelage, and yet they had apparently lost a grip concerning the absolute distinctiveness of Jesus. How could such a thing be possible?

As long as men and women are in the body, regardless of the amount of truth to which they have been exposed, it can all, under certain circumstances, elude their understanding. This is why even *"pure minds"* must be stirred up (2 Pet 3:1). I understand that following Christ's exaltation there are Kingdom circumstances that did not exist during the time of our text: the new birth (1 Pet 1:23), *"the new man,"* regeneration (Tit 3:5), the laws of God written upon the heart (Heb 10:16-17), the gift of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 4:8), etc.

The Jeopardy

For us, the jeopardy of forgetfulness is not owing to any deficiency in the new creation (2 Cor 5:17). Rather, it is because of the lingering presence of *"the flesh,"* and *"the law of sin and death"* that remains in our members (Rom 8:5-8,12-13; 13:14; Gal 5:16-26; Phil 3:3; 1 Pet 2:11). **This situation requires constant vigilance and spiritual alertness.** It is possible, though not admirable, to get to a point where we are amazed at things that should bring confirmation and cause joy.

HIS MOTHER SAID UNTO HIM

". . . and His mother said unto him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? . . ."

Other versions read, *"Why have you done this to us?"* NKJV *"Why have you treated us this way?"* NASB and *"why have you behaved thus to us?"* WEYMOUTH

To some, all of this may sound like a legitimate complaint. After all, young Jesus may not have apprised Joseph and Mary that He was remaining in the Temple. However, had they failed to see Him there, and had they failed to pick up on His keen

He had grown up under their faithful tutelage, and yet they had apparently lost a grip concerning the absolute distinctiveness of Jesus.

Joseph and Mary had already been exposed.

- ⇒ Gabriel had told Mary she would give birth to Jesus, who would *"be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his*

- ⇒ Wise men from the east had come to worship the babe when He was two years old, presenting gifts to Him who was *"born King of the Jews"* (Matt 2:1-2,9-11).

Now, ten years have passed since the wise men came to worship the

interest in being there? Is it ever really wrong to defer to the Lord? At this point it appears that Mary and Joseph thought so. However, their's was wrong thinking. **Settle it in your mind, it is never wrong to defer to God.**

THY FATHER AND I

" . . . behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing."

Other versions read, *"Your father and I have sought You anxiously,"* NKJV *"have been anxiously looking for you,"* NASB *"anxiously searching for You,"* NIV *"in great anxiety,"* NRSV *"Your father and I have been worried. We've been looking for you!"* CEB *"terribly worried"* CJB *"sought thee distressed,"* DARBY *"with*

very heavy hearts," GENEVA *"been worried sick,"* GWN *"have been frantic,"* NLT *"in anguish,"* MONTGOMERY *"in agony of mind,"* WILLIAMS and *"anxiously looking for You [distressed and tormented]."* AMPLIFIED

Technically, Joseph knew he was not the father of Jesus, and Mary knew it even better than he did. Maybe some can dismiss this on the basis that Joseph was, so to speak, Jesus' legal father. **However, the reply of Jesus to this statement obliterates that view.**

From heaven's point of view, which is THE point of view, Jesus was *"the Son of God."* In fact Gabriel specifically told Mary, *"therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of*

thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). He also said He would be called *"the Son of the Highest"* (Lk 1:32). However, at this moment the frame of mind in which Mary finds herself caused her to forget, and to refer to Joseph as Jesus' father.

I suppose that Mary was not the last person to think of Jesus differently than He really is. There is enough weakness in the best of us to know why it is imperative to put on the whole armor of God. Of course, Mary did not have the advantage of possessing this armor, for the presence of sin did not justify the dispensing of that armor at the time of our text. Still, it is of more than passing interest to hear Jesus now.

HOW IS IT THAT YE SOUGHT ME?

"⁴⁹ And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

We must remember that this text is written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who dictated the writing of all Scripture (2 Tim 3:16-17). If there is anything about the reply of young Jesus that is inappropriate, or that required further explanation, the Spirit will make an editorial remark, as He did elsewhere (Mk 9:5-6; John 7:39-39; 11:49-52; 12:6,33; 18:31-32; 21:18-19).

HOW IS IT THAT YE SOUGHT ME?

"And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? . . ."

Other versions read, *"Why did you seek Me?"* NKJV *"Why is it that you were looking for Me?"* NASB *"Why were you searching for Me?"* NIV *"Why did you have to look for me?"* CJB *"But why did you need to search?"* LIVING

Jesus appears to be questioning why they did not simply come to the Temple, instead of engaging in an exhaustive search throughout the city of Jerusalem. Why would there be any reason for Him to be elsewhere.

Joseph and Mary are not the last people who looked for Jesus in the wrong place.

WIST YE NOT

" . . . wist ye not . . ."

Other versions read, *"Did you not know,"* NKJV *"knew ye not,"* ASV *"Didn't you realize,"* LIVING *"You should have known,"* IE *"was it not clear to you,"* BBE and *"Did you not see and know."* AMPLIFIED

The words *"wist ye"* are translated from a single Greek word [eido]. As it is used here, the lexical meaning of the word is as follows: "TO SEE, THE OTHER TO KNOW; TO PERCEIVE, NOTICE, DISCERN, DISCOVER: TO TURN THE EYES, THE MIND, THE ATTENTION TO ANYTHING; TO PAY ATTENTION, OBSERVE," THAYER AND "SEE MENTALLY, TO SEE IN HIS MIND'S EYE." LIDDELL-SCOTT

In other words, there had been enough evidence in the life of young Jesus to have brought the realization of His priorities. However, they had been overcome by normality, getting used to Jesus being around, and yet not picking up on His extraordinary interest in the things of God. It appears that people are still being caught in this trap.

I MUST BE ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS

COMMENTS: "MY FATHER'S BUSINESS"

"But the twelve silent uneventful years of life at Nazareth, the poor home, the village carpentry, the natural development of the sacred Child, had gradually obscured for Mary and Joseph the memories of the infancy. They had not forgotten them, but time and circumstances had covered them with a veil. Now they were very gently reminded by the Boy's own quiet words of what had happened twelve years before." PULPIT COMMENTARY

" . . . whatever we owe to men must yield to the first table of the law, that God's authority over us may remain untouched. Thus we ought to obey kings, and parents, and masters, but only in subjection to God: that is, we must not, for the sake of men, lessen or take away any thing from God. And, indeed, a regard to the superior claims of God does not imply a violation of the duties which we owe to men." JOHN CALVIN

" . . . that I must be about My Father's business?"

Other versions read, *"I had to be in My Father's house,"* ASV/NASB/NIV/NRSV *"My right place was in My Father's house,"* BBE *"it was necessary for Me to be in My Father's house"* CEB *"I had to be concerning Myself with My Father's*

affairs," ^{CJB} "I ought to be occupied in My Father's business," ^{DARBY} "in the things of My Father it behooveth Me to be," ^{YLT} "that I would be here at the Temple, in My Father's House," ^{LIVING} "I must be where My Father is," ^{IE} "it is My duty to be engaged upon My Father's business," ^{WEYMOUTH} "among the things of My Father it is necessary for Me to be," ^{ABP} "I must be where My Father's work is," ^{ERV} "I must be busy in the affairs of My Father," ^{LITV} "I had to be here, dealing with the things of My Father," ^{MESSAGE} and "it is necessary [as a duty] for Me to be in My Father's house and [occupied] about My Father's business." ^{AMPLIFIED}

Many of the versions follow the Syriac version which reads, "My Father's house," instead of "My Father's business." Essentially, the differing translations mean the same

thing, for the Father's "business" was carried out in the Temple, which Jesus Himself called His "Father's house" (John 2:16).

This is where they should have sought for Jesus first. However, as the Pulpit Commentary observes, "the normality of life had thrown a veil over the reason why Jesus came into the world – something of which they had been apprised when He was born (Matt 1:21; Lk 2:34)."

THE DISTRACTING POWER OF ORDINARY LIFE

O, how the people of God must be aware of the distracting influence of ordinary life. The only way to avoid this distraction is to live unto the Lord, who died for us and rose again (2 Cor 5:15). Should we fail to recognize this, and devote ourselves wholly to the Lord, we

will soon forget why Jesus came into the world, and what our relationship to Him is all about.

This circumstance confirms to us the natural hostility of the flesh, and the alienating effects of this present evil world. Actually, there are few professing "Christians" who see these things. Such people reason like Mary and Joseph in this text. They also tend to be upset when He does not instantly appear at their beck and call. What has actually happened during such times is that they have **not** been expecting Jesus to be where He abides continually. He is still about His Father's business. Like Jesus, we will not leave where He is. **If you want His Presence and fellowship, you have to eventually get where He is.** Your personal experience with Him will confirm this is the truth.

THEY UNDERSTOOD NOT THE SAYING

⁵⁰ **And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them."**

Other versions read, "But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them," ^{NKJV} "But they did not understand what He was saying to them," ^{NIV} "His words seemed strange to them," ^{BBE} "But they didn't understand what He meant," ^{CJB} "they did not comprehend the word that He spoke to them," ^{MRD} "they did not understand the significance of these words," ^{WEYMOUTH} "they did not perceive the saying which He spoke to them," ^{ABP} and "they had no idea what he was talking about." ^{MESSAGE}

This is the second time Mary and Joseph had difficulty comprehending what was said concerning Jesus.

⇒ **SIMEON'S PROPHECY.** "And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him" (Luke 2:33).

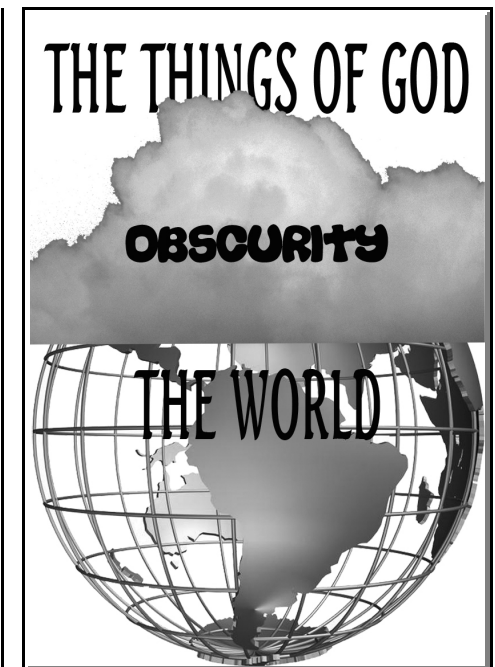
⇒ **JESUS RESPONSE TO MARY.** "And they understood not the saying which He

spake unto them" (Luke 2:50).

Later, those who heard Jesus had the same difficulty with some of the things He said.

⇒ **WHEN SPEAKING OF HIS DEATH.** "For He taught His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him" (Mark 9:31-32). **"But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying"** (Luke 9:45).

⇒ **WHEN HE RODE INTO JERUSALEM.** "And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. **These things understood not His disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things**



were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him" (John 12:15-16).

⇒ **THE PEOPLE WHEN THEY ASKED JESUS WHO HE WAS.** "Then said they unto

him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but He that sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him. **They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.**" (John 8:25-27).

⇒ **THE PHARISEES WHEN HE SPOKE OF BEING THE GOOD SHEPHERD.** "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the

voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: **but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.**" (John 10:5-6).

THE OBSCURING EFFECT OF THE WORLD

The closer one is to the world, and the more one is absorbed with the things of the world, the more difficult it is to comprehend the things of God. It can get so bad that the things of God will appear foolish to such an individual

– even though such a one may be a professing believer.

It is therefore written concerning those absorbed with this world and the flesh, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*" (1 Cor 2:14). Such people are mystified by Divine affirmations, confused by exceeding great and precious promises, and undiscerning concerning Divine threats.

HE WENT DOWN WITH THEM, AND WAS SUBJECT TO THEM

⁵¹ **And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart.**"

HE WENT DOWN WITH THEM

"And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them . . ."

Other versions read, "continued in subjection to them," ^{NASB} "was obedient to them," ^{NIV} "did as he was ordered," ^{BBE} "lived under their authority," ^{NJB} "always obeyed them," ^{IE} "remained in submission to them," ^{ISV} and "was [habitually] obedient to them." ^{AMPLIFIED}

Jesus was an obedient teen-ager.

a child is free to be disobedient and unsubmitive.

We will read not one word about Jesus for the next eighteen years of His life. At "thirty," He will commence His ministry (Lk 3:22-23). However, we have this marvelous summation of those eighteen years: "He continued in subjection to them." ^{NASB}

BUT HIS MOTHER KEPT ALL THESE SAYINGS

" . . . but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart."

Other versions read, "treasured all these things in her heart," ^{NASB} "cherished every word," ^{CEB} "stored up all these

⇒ **WHEN THE SHEPHERDS REPORTED.** "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).

⇒ **NOW THAT JESUS HAS SPOKEN ABOUT HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS.** ". . . but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart."

Jesus spoke of things that were treasured up in the heart. "Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of **his treasure** things new and old" (Matt 13:52). This was spoken in answer to one of the disciple's inquiries: "Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord" (Matt 13:51).

A believer's heart and mind is like a treasure house in which arresting and challenging declarations of truth are stored. Some are old, being first heard long ago - like the report of the shepherds, and the prophecy of Simeon. Some are new, just being heard – like Jesus' words concerning being about His "Father's business."

A profitable assembly is one during which a number of things can be treasured up in the heart – reserved, as it was, for future reference and consideration. Such are things that are

A profitable assembly is one during which a number of things can be treasured up in the heart – reserved, as it was, for future reference and consideration.

He was always submitted and obedient to Joseph and Mary. Thy had raised Him that way. He is the example for our young people. He sanctified that stage of life, as well as from two through twelve, young manhood, and adult life. **There is, then, no stage of life in which**

things," ^{CJB} "laid up all these things," ^{MRD} and "kept and closely and persistently guarded all these things." ^{AMPLIFIED}

The contemplative nature of Mary again surfaces.

not thoroughly comprehended when they are first heard. Yet, they have

tugged at the heart as one senses in his/her spirit that there is something

more to be comprehended in those sayings.

HE INCREASED IN WISDOM, STATURE, AND FAVOR

⁵² *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."*

INCREASED IN WISDOM

"And Jesus increased in wisdom..."

Other versions read, *"kept increasing in wisdom,"* ^{NASB} *"grew in wisdom,"* ^{NIV} *"advanced in wisdom,"* ^{ASV} *"matured in wisdom,"* ^{CEB} *"continued to learn more and more,"* ^{LIVING} *"gained in . . . wisdom,"* ^{WEYMOUTH} *"grew constantly in wisdom,"* ^{WILLIAMS} and *"increased in wisdom (in broad and full understanding)." AMPLIFIED*

As used here, the word *"wisdom,"* from *"sophia,"* means *"THE ABILITY TO USE KNOWLEDGE FOR CORRECT BEHAVIOR INSIGHT, UNDERSTANDING,"* ^{FRIBERG} *"THE CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND AND, AS A RESULT, TO ACT WISELY - 'TO BE PRUDENT, AS A RESULT,"* ^{LOUW-NIDA} *"SOUND JUDGMENT, INTELLIGENCE."* ^{LIDDELL-SCOTT}

When something that is known is comprehended, the individual can use that knowledge profitably. In the matter of living, when the Divine utterances about life are discerned, one can go about structuring a life that brings glory to God, helpfulness to men, and personal satisfaction.

Jesus continued to grow in wisdom, or the ability to translate knowledge into profitable living. Remember, we are being exposed to Jesus, beginning with the age of twelve.

INCREASED IN STATURE

"And Jesus increased in . . . stature . . ."

Other versions read, *"in years,"* ^{NRSV/BBE} *"age,"* ^{DOUAY} *"maturity,"* ^{GWN} *"grew . . . tall,"* ^{LIVING} *"grew taller,"* ^{IE} *"in body,"* ^{WILLIAMS} *"grew strong,"* ^{CEV} *"grew older,"* ^{GOODSPEED} *"more mature,"* ^{ISV} *"in*

stature and years." ^{AMPLIFIED}

As used here, the word *"stature"* means *"in height and comeliness of stature,"* ^{THAYER} *"as dimension of the physical body stature, size,"* ^{FRIBERG} *"of the body, stature, growth, as a sign of age,"* ^{LIDDELL-SCOTT} and *"bodily stature."* ^{GINGRICH}

It is true that some Greek philosophers (Homer) used this word to denote age. However, that is not how it is used here. Luke uses it in the sense of the maturity of the body, which Harmonized with the maturity of the mind, or an increase in wisdom. Jesus used the word *"stature"* in this sense: *"Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"* (Matt 6:27). Just as Christ's perfection was reflected in His heart and mind, so it also was in His body.

INCREASED IN FAVOR WITH GOD

"And Jesus increased . . . in favor with God . . ."

Other versions read, *"in grace before God,"* ^{BBE} *"gaining favor . . . with God,"* ^{CJB} *"gained favor from God,"* ^{GWN} *"was loved by God and man,"* ^{LIVING} *"He pleased God,"* ^{IE} *"God was pleased with Him,"* ^{CEV} *"won the approval of God,"* ^{GOODSPEED} and *"blessed by . . . God."* ^{MESSAGE}

The word translated *"favor"* [charis] means, *" . . . GOOD-WILL, LOVING-KINDNESS, FAVOR: WHAT IS DUE TO GRACE; A. THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF ONE GOVERNED BY THE POWER OF DIVINE GRACE,"* ^{THAYER} *"AS A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE; AS A RELIGIOUS TECHNICAL TERM FOR GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HUMAN BEINGS KINDNESS, GRACE, FAVOR, HELPFULNESS,"* ^{FRIBERG} *"SHOW KINDNESS TO SOMEONE, WITH THE IMPLICATION OF GRACIOUSNESS ON THE PART OF THE ONE SHOWING SUCH KINDNESS - 'TO SHOW KINDNESS, TO MANIFEST GRACIOUSNESS TOWARD,"* ^{LOUW-NIDA} *"AND FAVOR, GRACE, GRACIOUS CARE OR HELP, GOODWILL."* ^{GINGRICH}

The fact that Jesus grew in Divine favor confirms that God's love, grace, or favor is not something that is static, or is experienced by everyone in the same way. As Jesus matured, He received more and more favor from God. This was not going from unworthy to worthy, or from being undeserving to being blessed. This was growing in grace (2 Pet 3:18) – and it is what is to take place in the saints of the Lord (Eph 4:15; 2 Pet 3:18).

INCREASED IN FAVOR WITH MAN

"And Jesus increased in . . . favor with . . . man."

The point here is that no one could say Jesus was a lawbreaker, or that He was obnoxious to men. His Person was, in the words of Paul, *"acceptable to God, and approved of men"* (Rom 14:18). Paul also said, *"Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men"* (2 Cor 8:21). This is referring to our outward lives. Our manner of life must not be abrasive and offensive to men. The things we say can offend men, but our lives must not do so.

The early church experienced this as it was said of them, *"Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved"* (Acts 2:47). Paul referred of this kind of favor when he wrote, *"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God"* (2 Cor 4:2). For us, this is *"showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things"* (Titus 2:10). Jesus increased in this kind of approval.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 1/23/15. We will continue our series of lessons in the Gospel of Luke. The tenth lesson will cover verses 1 thru 18 of chapter 3: "THE APPEARANCE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST." According to Divine purpose, in keeping with the promise of God, and at precisely the right time, John the Baptist suddenly appears on the scene. He is a new kind of prophet, powerful in his presentation and influence, and is preparing the way for Christ. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.