



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

FEBRUARY 06 2021

growing up

Scripture Story: Luke 2:39-52.

Commentary: *The Desire of Ages*, chapters 7-9.

Key Text: Luke 2:52.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

Jesus grew up in Nazareth during a period of about 30 years that the Bible summarizes in a handful of verses. Except for Luke including the single incident of Jesus' visit to the Temple at age 12, the Gospel writers possibly didn't know a great deal about Jesus' childhood and youth and were not prompted by the Holy Spirit to record it.

The little we do learn creates a picture of a boy who was obedient to His parents, but above all had a strong desire to honor God in everything He did. Jesus grew physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Luke 2:52 may suggest that Jesus was not a prodigy who developed in one area of life at the expense of all others. Rather, He was a well-rounded person, liked and respected by those around Him, respectful of His parents but not afraid to tell them when He needed to get on with the work of His heavenly Father.

Joseph was most likely a carpenter, and Jesus became a carpenter as He grew up. This was His trade until He began His public ministry of proclaiming the gospel at the age of 30. The people of His hometown saw Him as just that, a local carpenter, son of a carpenter, nothing special.

It may be difficult to grasp, but as a child and a teenager Jesus never committed sin. He was selfless, pure, caring, and honest. The traditions of the Jewish rabbis decreed that a young man must begin to observe all the commandments and ceremonial obligations of their religion at the age of 12, but Jesus didn't wait until then. By the age of 12 Jesus was so

familiar with the law of God, in both theory and practice, that He could teach the teachers of His time. The childhood and youth of Jesus show us that we can gain wisdom through the study of the Holy Scriptures and the guidance of the Holy Spirit at any age.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Know that Jesus faced many of the challenges and trials of youth but remained sinless. (*Know*)
- Feel drawn to Jesus as to the truest friend who understands each young person best. (*Feel*)
- Ask God for the grace to be like Jesus as they mature. (*Respond*)

III. EXPLORE

God the Son, Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs no. 4: "God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God." (Isa. 53:4-6; Dan. 9:25-27; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-3, 14; 5:22; 10:30; 14:1-3, 9, 13; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17-19; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2).

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Tally the responses to see how many people chose each of them. Discuss their responses.

Ask people to share why they chose the answers they did.

Say: “We often like to picture Christianity as a friendship with Jesus, and in fact He told His disciples that He would not call them servants, but friends. What would need to change—in you, or in your image of Jesus—before you could feel comfortable calling Him a friend?”

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

Jesus’ parents left Jerusalem after the Passover and began the journey home. They were with crowds of people going the same direction and did not miss Jesus at first. After two days they realized He was not anywhere in the crowd headed for home. They returned to Jerusalem and found Jesus in the Temple. Jesus’ response to His parents was that He needed to be attending to His Father’s business.

However Jesus showed perfect obedience not only to His heavenly Father but also to His earthly parents. Ellen White records: “For eighteen years after He had recognized that He was the Son of God, He acknowledged the tie that bound Him to the home at Nazareth, and performed the duties of a son, a brother, a friend, and a citizen” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 82).

Debriefing

Ask: How can we apply the lessons from the example Jesus set in His young life? What are some of the blessings and rewards that come from obeying God and following the guidance of our parents, who want what’s best for us?

How have you benefited from being obedient to God’s law and to your parents?

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

Every young person goes through a period of distancing themselves from their parents and establishing their independence. This is one of the normal developmental tasks of adolescence. According to the Bible, Jesus wasn’t rebellious or difficult. To a certain extent, it’s normal for parents to worry about their children’s independence. But Jesus had the ability to grow into the young adult He was destined to be without having to create conflict with His parents.

Mary and Joseph were always aware that Jesus was a special child, different from any other human being in some ways. They raised Him to be respectful and to obey them.

Jesus had a normal human family upbringing, with the usual tensions and sibling conflicts. He grew up with older brothers and sisters who must have seemed less than ideal compared to their Brother. Jesus did not draw attention to Himself, and always treated His siblings with kindness and fairness.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- Discuss the *Out of the Story* questions from the student lesson.
- Go around the class (or divide into small groups if you have a large class) and ask each student to share about a time when they got lost or separated from their family when they were younger. Ask how they think their experience compares with Jesus’ experience of being left behind at the Temple at age 12. Did their parents react as Mary and Joseph did?
- Talk to the students about Jesus never committing a sin as a child. Ask for reactions to the idea that it is possible for human beings to obey God at a very early age. Students may express doubts. Be prepared to talk about how God works in a person’s life to help them let go of sin.
- Ask: “What can we learn from this week’s Bible passage that can relate to the challenges young people face today as they’re growing up and becoming a little more independent from their

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

Questions That Facilitate Higher-Level Thinking

Use questions frequently during Sabbath School. They are effective both for activating the learner's prior knowledge on the topic of the lesson and for eliciting further thought and application of the main instructional elements found in the Bible story. Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane Pollock recommend that:

1. Questions should focus on what is important as opposed to what is unusual.
2. Higher-level questions produce deeper learning than lower-level questions.
3. "Waiting" briefly before accepting responses from students has the effect of increasing the depth of students' answers.
4. Questions are effective learning tools even when asked before a learning experience (*Classroom Instruction That Works* (2001), pp. 113, 114).

Questions that merely ask for a retrieval of information, such as "What is _____?" or "When did _____ happen?" are activating lower level thinking skills. On the other hand, questions such as, "How is _____ related to _____?" or "How could _____ be improved?" are eliciting higher-level thinking skills.

Aim at engaging your learners in asking and answering important questions that facilitate deep understanding of the spiritual truths under study.

parents? How can we use Jesus as our example for how to live as a teenager?" On a chalkboard or flipchart at the front of the room, write suggestions from the class.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light

on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

Discuss the implications of the following passages to our lives: "In our association with one another, we should take heed lest we forget Jesus, and pass along unmindful that He is not with us. When we become absorbed in worldly things so that we have no thought

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**

Invite students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Flashlight**

Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book *The Desire of Ages*. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from *Out of the Story*.

- **Punch Lines**

Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that spoke most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.

- **Further Insight**

Ask them how the quote in Further Insight conveys the point of the story in this lesson.

for Him in whom our hope of eternal life is centered, we separate ourselves from Jesus and from the heavenly angels. These holy beings cannot remain where the Savior's presence is not desired, and His absence is not marked. This is why discouragement so often exists among the professed followers of Christ. . . .

“As we associate together, we may be a blessing to one another. If we are Christ's, our sweetest thoughts will be of Him. We shall love to talk of Him; and as we speak to one another of His love, our hearts will be softened by divine influences. Beholding the beauty of His character, we shall be ‘changed into the same image from glory to glory’” (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 83).

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Pass out cards on which you have preprinted this

week's key text, with the expression “I want to grow _____” below it. Say: “The Bible passage we've been studying this week tells us that Jesus grew into a well-rounded person, with His development appropriate to His age—physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. In what area do you feel you most need to grow? In a few words, write on this card how you would like to grow at this point in your life. As we pray, ask God to help you become more like Jesus.”

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Jesus faced the normal growing-up challenges of childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. Even though His time and culture were very different from ours, there's still a lot we can learn from Him. We too can increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and humanity, if we take Jesus as our example. We can learn to listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and learn to obey Him at all times. And like Jesus, we are responsible to keep that close relationship with our parents, who love and care for us. Jesus is our example that we can grow harmoniously physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially to be in favor with God and humanity.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*),* chapters 7-9.

*A special adaptation, *Humble Hero*, has been created by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.