God’s Big Story: Jesus Grows Up

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| scripture focus |
| Luke 2:41-52 |

big picture

This is the only story we have about what Jesus was like as a child, and it leaves us with so many wonderings. Even Mary and Joseph failed to understand what was going on, and Mary treasured up what happened in her heart and thought about it often, pondering what Jesus’ behavior meant. Think of all the places Jesus had lived by then – Bethlehem, Egypt, and Nazareth. Why was it that the Jerusalem temple felt like “home” to him – the place where he truly belonged? This is a story of Jesus’ realization that his primary allegiance was to his heavenly Father – yet even after this realization, Jesus chose to return with his family and obey them, remaining with them in Nazareth for almost two more decades. Like Mary, spend some time wondering about this story; perhaps think about what your own child(ren) might be called to that you will find hard to understand and accept.

|  | storybooks | bible readings |
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| read aloud | \*The story of Jesus visiting the temple at age 12 is not in the *Jesus Storybook Bible,* so you’ll need to read it in another storybook Bible or retell it from Luke.\*Psalms for Young Children:Psalms 27, 42 | Luke 2:41-52Psalms 27, 84, 122 (psalms about longing for God’s house) |
| discuss/ ask | Where do you feel at home? Why do you feel at home there? Where were all the places that Jesus lived by the time he was 12 (Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth)? Why do you think he felt at home in the temple in Jerusalem?Can you think of a time when you were separated from your family in a public place? What happened? How did you feel? Tell the story. How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they finally found Jesus? How do you think Jesus felt?Mary and Joseph struggled to understand why staying in the temple was so important to Jesus. What is something that somebody in your family treasures that you don’t totally understand? Ask a curious question about it. Is there something you treasure that you wish your family members would be more curious about?Even though Jesus was God and amazed the temple leaders with his wisdom and knowledge, he returned to Nazareth with his parents, obeyed them, and honored them. Why do you think it was important to Jesus to obey and honor his parents? |
| do together | (*Idea from Illustrated Ministry 2021):* Just as Mary & Joseph learned new things about Jesus, we can learn new things about each other. Make a “curiosity” seat in your living space. Invite each family member to take turns to sit there and answer three or more questions about themselves. (Make up your own, or find some good questions [here](https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/50-questions-to-ask-your-kids-at-the-dinner-table/), [here](https://www.sixsistersstuff.com/50-family-dinner-conversation-starters/), & [here](https://marriage365.com/blog/40-family-questions-to-ask-at-the-dinner-table/).) When you finish, share what you learned or what surprised you about the experience. |

\*If you don’t have access to this story in a child-friendly format, see video on church website of Heather reading the story from a children’s Bible.