

Luke: The Mission
Week 1 – “Where Will You Be in 2023?”

Summary:

After the familiar Christmas stories in Luke 1 and 2, Luke gives us a bridge to the ministry of Jesus by telling a story of the boy Jesus making pilgrimage to Jerusalem with his parents at age 12. Among the four New Testament gospels, only Luke tells this story.

Maybe you’ve wondered, “When did Jesus know that he was Jesus?” Of course, we don’t mean his name – but his calling, his identity as God’s son. The scriptures are largely silent on this question. But Luke’s story gives us a clue, a brief glimpse at Jesus’ emerging sense of who he was.

The focal moment of the story comes in 2:49. In her message, Marnie explained that this verse can be understood as Jesus speaking of “in my Father’s house” or possibly “about my Father’s business.” As we begin a new year, with all of our hopes and aspirations and resolutions, few things deserve our attention more than knowing who we are and what God is calling us to do.

Scripture Text:

Read Luke 2:39-52

For Discussion / Reflection:

1. Can you recall a time when you “lost” a child? What happened and was it like? How did things resolve?
2. Read Exodus 23:14-15 and Deuteronomy 16:16. Luke says Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for Passover “every year” and “according to the custom.” As a child, did your family have a weekly habit of “going to church?” How did this shape you? how do you think this “custom” might have shaped the young Jesus?
3. Focus on vv. 46-47. Jesus’ parents find him “sitting among the teachers.” He is asking questions – and yet, everyone who hears him is “amazed at his understanding.” What does this suggest to you about Jesus and the kinds of questions he might have asked?
4. Verses 48-49 have been called a “mutual rebuke.” What does v. 48 reveal to you about the “Holy Family” – Mary, Joseph, Jesus? How does this compare with the family we picture in our nativity scenes?

5. After Jesus' statement in 2:49, Luke tells us that Mary and Joseph "did not understand what he was saying to them." From our perspective as readers of the story, what do you think Jesus was saying?

6. Think about the phrase "I had to be in my Father's house." Studies have recently determined that a "regular church attender" will attend a worship gathering about once each month. What do you think has happened to our sense of needing to be in the Father's house?