

CONNECTING FAITH AND LIFE

KEY POINT

Last week, we heard about Simeon and Anna in the temple, welcoming and recognizing the baby Jesus as a long-awaited king. This week, the story leaps ahead a number of years as we focus on Jesus' desire to stay behind and learn from the elders in the temple. They are amazed at his understanding. Clearly, Jesus is more than an ordinary child.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:41-52
(Psalm 2:7-8)



OPENING PRAYER

Begin your time together with this, or another, prayer:

Teaching Lord, open our ears, our minds, and our hearts to hear the lesson that you would teach us today. Help us to hunger for knowledge and wisdom about God. Help us to walk away from the daily expectations of our busy lives to spend time with you. Amen.

READ

Luke 2:41-52

ABOUT THE STORY

Today we read the story of the boy Jesus at the temple. The Gospel skips over Jesus' young childhood, picking up with Jesus at the age of twelve. His family went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. The was one of the three main pilgrimage festivals—the other two being the Festival of Booths and the Festival of Weeks. The Passover is a commemoration of God delivering the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.

Luke describes that the family traveled in part of a large caravan. On their way home, Mary and Joseph could not find Jesus. They returned to the temple to find Jesus among the teachers at the temple, asking questions that amazed all around him.

Once again, the Gospel of Luke uses other people's reactions to Jesus—in this case, the teachers at the temple—to reveal who Jesus is. The teachers gathered around were amazed at Jesus' wisdom. His parents scolded Jesus, but his reply to them is out of character for a typical twelve-year-old child, and the text says that they "did not understand what he said to them" (Luke 2:50).

SHARE

- The distance between Nazareth and Jerusalem was about 65 miles, or a five-day walk. Why do you think Mary and Joseph made this journey every year? How would you feel about having to take a five-day walk with a young child?
- Why do you think Jesus remained in the temple?
- What does it mean that Mary "treasured all these things in her heart?"

PRAY

Pray this or another prayer aloud together:

Jesus, Thank you for coming to bring the kingdom of God to us all. Thank you for the teachers in our lives that have led us to you. Help us always seek you more. Give us opportunities to teach others about you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

BLESS

Share this verbal blessing with one another: "Jesus teaches. Be a learner of the good news."

FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION AT HOME:

- The boy Jesus learns and teaches in the temple. Say a prayer for all teachers and students.
- Think of someone in your life who has shared or shown wisdom. Consider writing a note of thanks to him or her.
- Think about where you see the kingdom of God in your everyday life.

