



Luke 2.41-52

27<sup>th</sup> December 2009

We have 'fast forwarded' 12 years for our gospel reading on this first Sunday of Christmas. Billie and I were just talking about how hard it is, letting go of our children as they get older – our two youngest are both 21 years old. For Mary and Joseph this process began when Jesus was only 12, with this incident at the Temple in Jerusalem.

It seems strange to us that his parents took a whole day to notice that Jesus wasn't with them, but they were travelling in a large, loosely organized group of relatives and friends and this could easily have happened. We can imagine how they felt when they did realize he was missing and raced back to Jerusalem to search for him.

What can we learn from Mary and Joseph?

Firstly, they were bringing Jesus up as well as they could, within a loving family environment and within their religious tradition, observing the Festivals.

Secondly, they showed great flexibility and trust in God, even when the unexpected happened.

We can also learn from Jesus, without underestimating his uniqueness.

- He is aware of his unique calling and responsibility to God, even from a very early age. He already has a special affinity with his heavenly Father and the Temple, his Father's house.
- Obedience to his earthly parents is important to Jesus (v51), but obedience to God comes first. Notice the two uses of the word 'father' in verses 48 and 49.
- Jesus puts himself in a place where he can learn more about his calling and be equipped to serve. Notice that he SITS AMONG teachers, LISTENS to them and QUESTIONS them.

In this episode at the Temple, we see the prophecies about Jesus starting to come true, for example:-

*Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple.*

Malachi 3.1

The result is amazement and astonishment (v47 and v48).

Jesus grows up, increases in wisdom and in favour with God and people (v52). We are also told that Mary 'treasured all these things in her heart', and indication that she is a source for Luke's gospel.



St George's Church  
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What about us?

- We too, like Jesus, 'must be in our Father's house. Thanks to Jesus we are adopted children of God and His home is our home.
- We too need to discover our unique calling as early as possible, and pursue it.
- We too need to mix with people we can learn about the faith from. We need to listen to them and question them in order to know the truth and grow in wisdom.
- We need to put obedience to God first and be prepared to astonish and to be astonished.

As a new year beckons may we do all these things together at St George's, to God's glory.