

A Good Shepherd Story of Jesus

Jesus, Boy in the Temple

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JESUS, BOY IN THE TEMPLE ... MATERIALS

- large wicker basket to hold:
 - wooden Joseph figure
 - wooden Mary figure
 - wooden boy Jesus figure
 - 2 wooden teacher figures
 - wooden temple
 - brown felt road



Joseph



Mary

Boy Jesus



Teachers

JESUS, BOY IN rnn TEMPLE ••• LUKE 2:41-52

ACTIONS

After speaking, go to the shelf and get the basket. Carry it to the circle, sit and place the basket in front of you.

Allow 10-15 seconds of silence while you gently touch one or more of the wooden figures to center yourself and the children.

Place the brown road in front of you horizontally. Place the temple at the right end of the "road".

Place the boy Jesus figure in center front.

Place Mary, Joseph and Jesus on the road starting at the left end of the road. Move them all down the road and stop near the temple.

Move Mary and Joseph back toward Nazareth (left). Move the Jesus figure to the right side of the temple.

Move Joseph and Mary off the road in every direction to "look for Jesus".

Shake your head slowly.

Turn Joseph and Mary and move them back to Jerusalem (right).

Near the right end, move the figures off the road to look in other places.

WORDS

Watch carefully where I go to get this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

All the words to this story are inside me. Will you please make silence with me so I can find all the words to my story?

Jesus grew from a baby to a boy.

When he was twelve years old he went, as he always did, with his parents to Jerusalem, for the feast of the Passover.

After the feast his parents started home. Mary thought Jesus was with Joseph.

But Joseph thought Jesus was with Mary, or maybe with some of his cousins or friends.

At the end of the day, Joseph and Mary went to look for Jesus among all his friends and relatives.

But Jesus was not there.

Mary and Joseph went back to Jerusalem, a day's walk.

They looked everywhere in the busy city.

Move Mary and Joseph back to the temple near Jesus.

Place the teachers next to Jesus.

Nod your head as you raise your eyebrows.

Touch the Mary and Joseph figures as you talk.

Touch the Jesus figure reverently.

Shake your head and look puzzled.

Move Mary, Joseph and Jesus back to the left=on the road toward Nazareth.

Put a hand over your heart.

Finally they went to the temple.

There was Jesus, talking with the teachers who were amazed at his understanding and his answers to questions.

Mary and Joseph were very surprised to find Jesus in the temple.

Mary said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been very worried looking for you. "

Jesus said, "Why did you look everywhere for me? Didn't you know I would be in my Father's house?"

Mary and Joseph didn't understand what Jesus meant.

But Jesus went back to Nazareth with them and obeyed his parents.

Mary remembered all these things and kept them in her heart.

And the boy Jesus grew in years and wisdom.

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

I wonder if Jesus was afraid when he couldn't find his parents?

I wonder where Jesus slept at night?

I wonder if Mary and Joseph realized their son was special?

Put all wooden figures into the basket.
Place the felt road in the basket.

Watch carefully how I put these materials away so you will know how to use them if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

After speaking, carry the basket back to its shelf. Come back to the circle and be seated.

Watch carefully where I return this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

Dismiss the children to their work ONLY after everyone has had a chance to choose their work.

What will you make your work today?
Let's go around the circle and decide what each of us will work on.

JESUS, BOY IN THE TEMPLE ..•. TEACHER HELPS

We have so little information about Jesus' childhood and early years that this look into Jesus' life becomes very special. At the age of twelve Jewish boys began their "preparation for adult status in the religious community." (Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible, edited by David and Pat Alexander, Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., 1973, p. 516) All faithful Jews tried to go to Jerusalem for Passover. They traveled together in large groups of extended family and friends. It's not strange then that Jesus wasn't missed until nightfall. There are many wonderments about what was going through Jesus' mind when he was without his parents. Did he miss them? Did he think they were still in Jerusalem? Who did he stay with? Was he with people he knew?

Many of the children will identify with being separated from their parents in a large store, a mall or perhaps at an athletic event. And each parent who hears or tells this story will know the immediate panic that hits when you suddenly realize your child is missing. Mary's and Joseph's reactions were normal. They were both relieved and angry. "How could you do this to us?" (Why have you treated us so? vs. 48) and "We have been worried sick looking for you." (Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously. vs. 48) Jesus' answer seemed strange to his parents. This account would lead us to believe that Mary and Joseph had not completely accepted or perhaps understood the words of the angel. They may not have realized the special relationship Jesus had with God, or they may have believed that if he was indeed to be the Messiah, he would be a king - not a son of God in heaven.

There is a great deal of question as to whether or not Jesus understood what his task was to be. I do not believe that at age twelve Jesus understood all that was before him. However, it is possible that he was beginning to realize that he was different from other children and that he had a special affinity for understanding the scriptures he'd been taught in the synagogue in Nazareth.

There are two special messages for the children from this lesson. One is that although Jesus was a normal twelve year old child, he was also God's son and was just beginning to understand that. The other is that although he was beginning to understand a special relationship with his heavenly Father, he returned to Nazareth and was obedient to his earthly father and mother. Even the Son of God was not ready at the age of twelve to begin his actual ministry on earth. For all children there is time given and needed to grow, learn and understand the world about them. Jesus' parents were the formative people in his life until he was thirty years old. No matter how sophisticated our twelve year olds are, let's remember that they are children and need the guidance and support and love of their parents, teachers and those who surround them in the community of faith.

The first wondering question deals with Jesus' feelings when he realized his parents were not with him. Was he afraid? The responses to this question will no doubt come directly from the experiences of each child and the different levels of independence each of them has. We're not told how Jesus felt, so this is a question that has no right or wrong answers.

The second question is a very practical one. If Jesus was in Jerusalem at least one night without his parents, where did he go to sleep, or eat for that matter? During Passover the homes of faithful Jews were opened to strangers and all were made welcome. Although we don't know for sure, most likely Jesus found a place to sleep with other persons of his faith who fed him and kept him safe.

The final question asks about Mary and Joseph and their understanding about their child. According to the text Mary and Joseph didn't completely understand what Jesus was saying to them. But we read that Mary kept these things in her heart. She must have had an inkling. The memories of the angel's words, the visit of the shepherds and the wisemen must have moved through her mind at times like these.

This is the only story we have about the child, Jesus. We understand that he was comfortable with his religion, had been taught in the synagogue, had a father and mother who responded as normal parents and was basically a normal twelve year old who didn't think about checking with his parents before he made an extended trip to the temple. We also know there was some stirring within him that he was different, somehow. After this account the scriptures are silent for the next eighteen years of Jesus' life.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN:

Jesus seemed very "at home" in his church. How do you feel when you're in your church?

Sometimes there are very special adults who come into our lives with whom we can talk about lots of things. Think of one or two adults, other than your parents, that you can talk to as comfortably as Jesus talked with the teachers in the temple.

Jesus seemed surprised that his parents were looking for him. He didn't know he was lost. Share a time when you were "found" but hadn't realized that you had been lost. How did you feel?